



Chapter 1

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN

A place where all citizens enjoy opportunities to thrive in a safe, healthy, and productive community.
- The Tuolumne County Vision

Introduction

The Community Development and Design Element forms the core of the General Plan by establishing what land uses can be conducted in which locations. This Element provides land use diagrams to illustrate the land use designations for all parcels within the unincorporated area of Tuolumne County. This Element also addresses the density and intensity to which these land uses can be developed.

The Community Development and Design Element encourages growth in areas where services exists, such as infrastructure, and directs development away from areas with limited growth potential due to the lack of adequate public services and facilities and/or are constrained by natural characteristics that do not lend themselves to development, such as steep slopes.

Purpose

The purpose of this element is to enhance the unique nature of existing communities while providing for services and amenities for residents, businesses, and visitors in Tuolumne County.

Overarching Vision

OAV1. Promote development in Tuolumne County that reflects the values and vision of the community and implements the latest legal, statutory, scientific, and technical changes and advances.

OAV2. Achieve, enable and preserve maximum flexibility within the constraints of state and federal law and an ever-evolving legal, cultural and environmental landscape.

OAV3. Recognize that the County has a unique role to collaborate with special districts/stakeholders within the County to promote the delivery of efficient and cost effective public services.



GOAL 1A:

Protect and enhance the quality of life for all residents of Tuolumne County while facilitating growth and development to meet the present and future needs of the County's residents, visitors and businesses.

POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Policy 1.A.1: Promote the efficient use of land to conserve natural resources.

Implementation Programs

1.A.a: Establish criteria for the amount of land for land uses necessary to meet the needs of the County's population and maintain zoning districts and land use patterns that reflects these criteria. For example, the criteria may be a ratio of acres of commercial land per number of residential units within an identified community or the amount of recreational facilities needed per population on a County-wide basis.

1.A.b - Provide an appropriate range of land use designations to serve the needs of the residents of the County and designate an adequate amount of land in each land use category to provide a balanced pattern of development. Use overlay designations to recognize special features or characteristics of areas of the County that may affect development potential or create opportunities for conservation of special resources.

Policy 1.A.3: Address the impacts associated with new development on cultural resources and conserve such resources where appropriate.

Policy 1.A.4: Focus urban growth in identified communities, emphasizing infill development and the intensified use of existing development.

Implementation Programs

1.A.c - Designate land between identified communities for non-urban land uses to protect the individual character of each community and to maintain distinct boundaries between communities.

1.A.d - Maintain the County's rural character by utilizing transitional land uses around urban areas as buffers between communities and agricultural areas and timberlands, including rural density development, recreation areas, cluster developments, and natural features such as streams, ridgetops and large stands of trees.

1.A.e - Designate adequate land in and around identified communities for urban land uses to allow for the growth accommodated in the General Plan. Limit the future conversion of non-urban designated land to urban designations to parcels immediately adjacent to identified communities.

Policy 1.A.5: Promote infill and clustered patterns of development that facilitate the efficient and timely provision of infrastructure and services.



Implementation Programs

1.A.f - Encourage a compact development pattern in and around identified communities through the General Plan land use diagrams.

1.A.g - Target public funds toward identified communities to increase community revitalization and the efficiency of public works investments and safeguard rural landscapes.

1.A.h - Provide incentives to applicants with approved undeveloped projects that are modified to be consistent with High Density or Medium Density land use designations where allowable densities have been increased.

Policy 1.A.6: Establish growth areas to provide community services and enhance the quality of life by providing for economic, housing and cultural opportunities within identified communities. Where possible, these growth areas should be placed near transit stops, commercial centers, and other services.

Implementation Program

1.A.i - Establish areas for growth in identified communities on the General Plan land use diagrams and zone the land in accordance with these maps.

Policy 1.A.7: Encourage comprehensively planned and well-balanced, separate, and distinct communities.

Implementation Programs

1.A.j - Designate an adequate amount of land for industrial development, business parks, commercial facilities and recreational development to provide jobs for the County's workforce, facilities for the County's residents and visitors and promote a healthy economy.

1.A.k - Provide an appropriate mix of land uses and amenities in community cores to attract and retain quality businesses and institutions.

Policy 1.A.8: Designate adequate areas for greenbelts, open areas, parks and recreational facilities in and around identified communities to meet the needs of growing populations and to reflect the County's changing demographics.

Policy 1.A.9: Encourage the clustering of community-oriented services and amenities in and near residential neighborhoods, including schools, branch libraries, open areas and parks and limited neighborhood commercial uses to provide a community center for neighborhoods.

Implementation Program

1.A.l - Formulate community plans for identified communities that provide adequate lands for community-oriented services and amenities in and near residential neighborhoods, including schools, libraries, open areas and parks, and limited neighborhood commercial uses to provide and community center for neighborhoods. These plans should also promote the linking of these types of facilities through pedestrian/bicycle paths.

Policy 1.A.10: Establish urban development boundaries within identified communities on the General Plan diagrams to promote the efficient use of infrastructure and services. This will also serve to promote the improvement of infrastructure within the communities to meet standards for infill development, such as fire flow.



Policy 1.A.11: Encourage growth to be dispersed among identified communities rather than concentrated in just one or two areas in the County.

Policy 1.A.12: Identify special features or characteristics, such as unique topography, critical view sheds, or sensitive habitat, in areas throughout the County that affect development potential or opportunities for conservation.

Policy 1.A.13: Encourage the extension and upgrading of services to Disadvantaged Legacy Communities as identified in the General Plan Technical Background Report.

Implementation Program

1.A.m - Promote the extension of public water, sewer, stormwater drainage and structural fire protection services to identified Disadvantaged Legacy Communities, where feasible, and identify funding mechanisms that could make the extension of services and facilities to these communities financially feasible.

Policy 1.A.14: Encourage a mix of uses in isolated identified communities that minimize the need for nearby residents to travel greater distances to access goods and services.

GOAL 1B: Minimize conflicts between incompatible land uses.

POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Policy 1.B.1: Protect existing land uses from the infringement of and impacts associated with incompatible land uses.

Implementation Programs

1.B.a - Designate, where possible, land around existing non-residential land uses, such as agriculture, timberlands, mining preserves and industry, for new development that is compatible with these existing uses.

1.B.b - Designate, where possible, land around existing residential neighborhoods for uses that are compatible with residences. Designate areas for new urban residential development away from existing incompatible land uses, such as agriculture, mining, industry, solid waste facilities, airports and sewage treatment facilities.

1.B.c - Separate new urban residential development from land uses that potentially conflict with housing, such as agriculture, mining, industry, airports and sewage treatment facilities.

1.B.d - Consider buffer areas around existing industrial land uses to protect them from infringement of new residential and other potentially incompatible land uses. These buffer areas



may include building setbacks and/or limiting land uses within an established distance of these existing land uses.

Policy 1.B.2: Protect public facilities from the infringement of incompatible land uses.

Implementation Programs

1.B.e - Designate land around the County's airports for uses that are consistent with the Tuolumne County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan and airport master plans.

1.B.f - Identify solid waste facilities in the County on the General Plan Land Use Diagrams and designate land around these facilities for compatible land uses, recognizing that some potentially incompatible land uses may already exist.

Policy 1.B.3: Require new commercial development to be designed to minimize the visual impact of parking areas on public roads and on public viewsheds.

Implementation Program

1.B.g - Require proponents of new commercial development to locate parking areas behind buildings or sufficiently screen them from public roads and public viewsheds, or, if locating behind buildings and screening are determined to be infeasible, provide other landscaping or design features to visually enhance the parking areas.

Policy 1.B.4: Maintain information in the County's land use diagrams to identify military "low-level flight paths."

Implementation Program

1.B.h - Provide early notification to the military of proposed developments that have the potential to affect military operations, testing or training activities within the identified military low-level flight paths.

Policy 1.B.5: Preserve the existing nighttime environment by limiting the illumination of areas surrounding new development. New lighting that is part of residential, commercial, industrial, or recreational development shall be oriented away from off-site sensitive uses, and shall be hooded, shielded, and located to direct light downward and prevent glare.



GOAL 1C:

Promote a jobs-housing balance in the County and encourage new communities to be designed to provide a jobs-housing balance.

POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Policy 1.C.1: Encourage new residential development projects of 100 or more units, except those targeted for seniors or retirees, to be phased to occur with development that will provide for new jobs in the County unless the need for housing dictates otherwise.

Policy 1.C.2: Encourage a Countywide jobs-housing balance as some communities in the County are not suited for extensive job-related or residential-related development.

Implementation Program

1.C.a Designate adequate land for commercial, recreational, industrial, business park and mixed use development within and near identified communities that have adequate infrastructure and services.

GOAL 1D:

Encourage development to build facilities that promote the use of alternative transportation systems.

POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Policy 1.D.1: Encourage pedestrian oriented development to reduce the use of motor vehicles.

Implementation Programs

1.D.a - Update the local street design standards in suitable communities to include Universal Design criteria for street infrastructure such as sidewalks, pedestrian curb ramps, crosswalks, street lighting, shade trees, and curb extensions to accommodate all users, including people with disabilities and other special needs.

1.D.b - Work with transit providers and developers to encourage the construction of affordable housing developments that use transit-oriented and pedestrian-oriented design principles.

1.D.c - Encourage building site designs that cater to transit riders, pedestrians and cyclists, as well as those arriving by car. Examples of transit, pedestrian and bicycle friendly building site design features include, but are not limited to, segregated entrances, pavement markings and warning and directional signage.

1.D.d - Establish criteria for walkability for the various land uses within identified communities to encourage development of active communities. The criteria may include a maximum walking distance to transit nodes from multi-unit housing of specific densities or a requirement for the provision of pedestrian routes connecting specific land uses to transit stops.



Policy 1.D.2: Promote neighborhood commercial development that provides retail stores and service businesses within walking distance of residential areas.

Implementation Programs

1.D.e - Designate land for neighborhood commercial development within walking distance of residential areas to encourage alternative methods of transportation and eliminate the dependence on automobile transportation.

1.D.f - Encourage new commercial centers to be designed to facilitate pedestrian circulation within and between commercial sites and nearby residential areas.

1.D.g - Promote development within identified communities that meets a walkability standard of a quarter- to half-mile for access to daily retail needs, schools, transit stops and recreational facilities.

Policy 1.D.3: Encourage urban residential development projects in identified communities to be located within a quarter mile of a transit stop.

Implementation Programs

1.D.h - Designate areas for new higher-density residential uses and appropriate support services within walking distance of public transportation facilities.

1.D.i - Designate areas for new mixed-use, high and medium density residential development and appropriate support services within walking distance of public transportation facilities. (formerly 1.E.c)

Policy 1.D.4: Encourage transit oriented development by providing planning tools, such as design guidelines, and incentives, such as a streamlined permitting process, increased densities or reduced on-site parking requirements.

Implementation Programs

1.D.j - Provide incentives to encourage high and medium density residential development projects located within a quarter mile of a transit stop. Incentives could include a streamlined permitting process, increased densities or reduced on-site parking requirements.

1.D.k - Provide incentives, such as reduced parking requirements and permit streamlining, and remove zoning and other barriers to mixed-use and higher intensity development at transit nodes and along transit corridors.

Policy 1.D.5: Promote the provision of multi-modal access to activity centers such as public facilities, commercial centers and corridors, employment centers, transit stops, schools, parks, recreation areas, and tourist attractions.

Policy 1.D.6: Promote a balance between commercial, industrial, recreational, residential and mixed-use land uses in identified communities to optimize the potential for the use of alternative modes of transportation.



Implementation Programs

1.D.l - Designate land for integrated mixed-use areas including residential, retail, office, recreational, open space and public uses to facilitate travel by transit, bicycle or foot, as well as automobile.

1.D.m - Designate areas on the General Plan land use diagrams for urban residential development near community centers, major commercial areas, neighborhood commercial centers, integrated mixed-use areas and other community facilities, such as schools and parks, and identify routes for non-motorized travel between identified communities to provide for travel by bicycle or foot, as well as automobile.

1.D.n - Designate land within identified communities for mixed use in areas that are close to public transportation routes, commercial centers and community facilities, such as parks. Consider allowing additional commercial facilities in the Mixed Use (M-U) zoning district of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code. Provide incentives to encourage the creation of mixed use development. Incentives could include a streamlined permitting process, density bonuses, or reduced parking requirements. Promote flexibility in the application of parking standards to support mixed-use and transit-oriented development.

GOAL 1E:

Designate adequate land in appropriate areas to accommodate a range of residential densities and amenities to accommodate the housing needs of all income groups residing in Tuolumne County.

POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Policy 1.E.1: Encourage and promote the development of housing for all income levels.

Implementation Programs

1.E.a - Identify areas of the County suitable for development of housing for all income levels and designate adequate amounts of land for such development on the General Plan land use diagrams.

Policy 1.E.2: Promote affordable housing throughout Tuolumne County.

Implementation Programs

1.E.b - Provide incentives to developers to build new housing units that are affordable for the County's residents. These incentives shall include density bonuses, "fast-track" processing of land development permits, reduced parcel sizes and waivers of fees for affordable housing units, as defined by the County of Tuolumne.

1.E.c - Designate an adequate amount of land in various density and parcel size ranges to meet the need of all income levels of the County's population.

1.E.d - Maintain the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code in accordance with Accessory Dwelling Unit regulations established by the State of California. Develop local regulations to address life safety concerns.



Policy 1.E.3: Consider amending the Uniform Zoning Ordinance to allow land designated Low Density Residential by the General Plan land use diagrams to be divided into six parcels per acre without requiring an exception to the development standards.

Policy 1.E.4: Maintain development standards for housing projects that reflect and consider natural and cultural features, noise exposure of residents, fire hazard, circulation, access and the relationship of the development to surrounding land uses. These requirements determine residential densities and patterns which may result in a density that is less than the maximum specified by General Plan designations.

Policy 1.E.5: Require subdivisions to be designed to provide well-connected internal and external streets and pedestrian facilities, where appropriate.

Implementation Programs

1.E.e - Establish development standards for new housing projects to provide well-connected internal and external streets. Pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks, ramps, crosswalks, street lighting, shade trees, and curb extensions, should be required, where appropriate. Amend Title 11 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code to reflect these development standards.

GOAL 1F: Promote the development of commercial uses to meet the present and future needs of Tuolumne County's residents and visitors and maintain economic vitality.

POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Policy 1.F.1: Encourage the retention and expansion of existing businesses.

Implementation Programs

1.F.a - Designate adequate amounts of land in appropriate areas for new commercial development to meet the needs of the County's residents and visitors as growth occurs to reduce retail leakage to areas outside the County.

Policy 1.F.2: Promote new commercial development in rural communities that provides for the immediate needs of the local residents and services to tourists. The scale and character of such commercial development should be compatible with and complement the surrounding area.

Implementation Programs

1.F.b - Provide for commercial facilities in rural areas that have limited public services by maintaining a land use designation for such facilities that has unique development standards.

Policy 1.F.3: Encourage commercial development to be designed to be compatible with the scale and architectural style of historic buildings located in the community.

Implementation Programs

1.F.c - Establish design guidelines for new commercial development in communities desiring design review to be compatible with the scale and architectural style of the existing buildings and integrate where appropriate natural and cultural amenities such as creeks, hillsides, scenic views, historic buildings and structures, and archaeological sites.



1.F.d - Encourage street frontages in historic communities to reflect the historic "Main Street" character and ambiance.

Policy 1.F.4: Encourage commercial development to be designed in an architectural style that reflects the County's indigenous materials or is compatible with the historic Mother Lode design features or is consistent with the architectural guidelines in communities with design review.

Policy 1.F.5: Amend the Uniform Zoning Ordinance, Title 17 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code, to provide for off-site parking in historic districts to encourage parking for new commercial development to be consolidated in well-designed and landscaped lots or parking structures instead of on-site and to recognize the limitations of constructing parking facilities on undersized historic parcels.

Policy 1.F.6 Continue to require development on land designated Neighborhood Commercial, General Commercial or Heavy Commercial to be served with public water and sewer.

GOAL 1G:

Promote the development of industrial uses to meet the present and future needs of Tuolumne County's residents and to provide jobs and promote economic vitality.

POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Policy 1.G.1: Designate adequate amounts of land in appropriate areas for industrial development that are suitable for accommodating a variety of industrial uses and uses to support industry.

Implementation Program

1.G.a - Designate specific areas for industrial development that are suitable for accommodating a variety of industrial uses and uses to support industry, to provide jobs for the County's population and that have adequate infrastructure.

Policy 1.G.2: Require industrial development to meet performance standards based on factors of noise, odor, traffic, air and water pollution, and underground resources in order to minimize its impacts on surrounding land uses.

Policy 1.G.3: Encourage industrial businesses which utilize the output of lumber and natural resource processors and other industries that can provide a broad economic base for Tuolumne County.

Policy 1.G.4: Encourage new industrial development to design parking areas that are sufficiently screened from public roads and surrounding public viewsheds.

Policy 1.G.5: Establish design guidelines for new industrial development in or immediately adjacent to historic communities desiring design review to be designed to be compatible with the scale and architectural style of the historic buildings.