

GENERAL PLAN UPDATE



Joint Study Session

August 25, 2016



AGENDA

- Progress and Process Update
- Policy Input and Direction

THUS FAR...

- ✓ Existing Conditions Report
- ✓ Shared Community Vision and Supporting Principles
- ✓ Issues and Policy Considerations Report
- ✓ Opportunity Sites
- ✓ Land Use Alternative Concepts
- ✓ Policy Topic Papers (ongoing)

Continued Efforts and Research



THUS FAR...

Community Engagement

- ✓ Citizens Planning Academy
- ✓ Community Visioning Workshop
- ✓ Mobile studios – Issue Identification
- ✓ Individual and Group Meetings
- ✓ Topic Workshops
- ✓ Online Workshop – Opportunity Sites
- ✓ In-person Listening Sessions on Opportunity Sites
- ✓ HOA and Community Group Meetings

Since May Study Session:

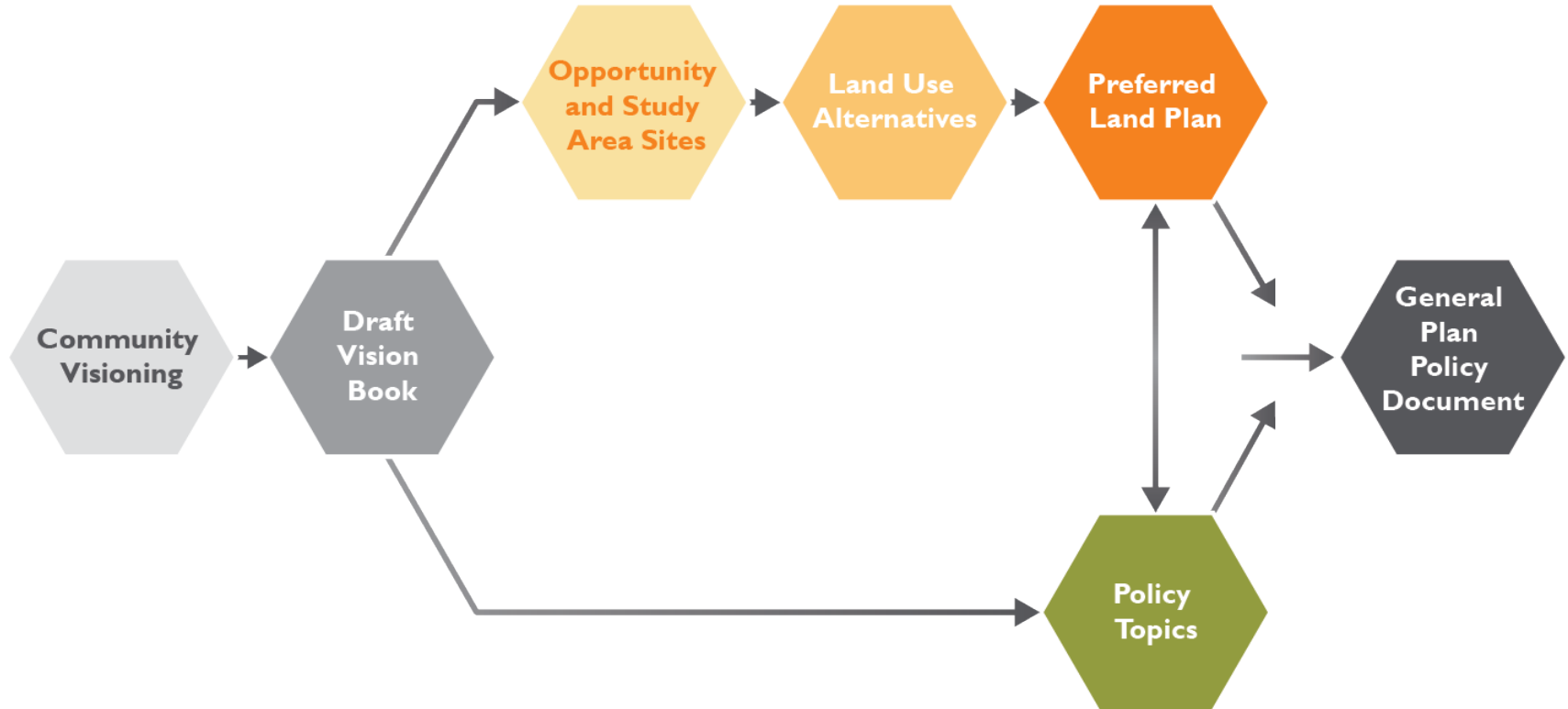
- ✓ *Online Workshop – Land Use Alternative Concepts*
- ✓ *In-person Listening Sessions on Land Use Alternative Concepts*



KEY ISSUES AND SUPPORTING PRINCIPLES



PROCESS



POLICY INPUT AND DIRECTION



MEETING PURPOSE

- Review topic information presented
- Discuss implementation options presented and consider range of solutions
- Provide direction to staff on how topic is to be incorporated in the General Plan

The information presented is a starting point and does not represent final product. The intent is to have a discussion of these topics and identify the best solutions for Elk Grove.

POLICY TOPICS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9 Policy Topic Papers
- Papers on each topic provide context, considerations, and recommendations
- Summary recommendations describe the content that may eventually go in the plan. The balance is context for the recommendation
- There will continue to be opportunity for additional direction in the General Plan Update process

Policy Topics	
Specific Plans and Special Planning Areas	✓
Community and Area Plans	✓
Governance	✓
Complete Streets	✓
Fixed Transit	✓
Jobs/Housing	✓
Clustering	←
Annexation Strategy	←
Mobility Standards	←

May 26

July 28

Tonight's Meeting

What We Have Heard To Date

- Community feedback has trended to **limiting new development** in the existing City at **densities consistent with historical levels**. A desire for higher-density infill development has not presented itself.
- City should have a strong jobs/housing target – a reach but not outside of our grasp
- Get on the MTP/SCS list of “major employment centers”

Other Takeaways from the July Study Session

- Recognize the local context (land use, complete streets)
- Update bike/trail planning with better connections to the north and more defined and consistent standards – Implement, not follow
- Define the service area for transit based upon ability to provide service and focus transit efforts in meaningful ways

POLICY TOPICS

3.0 - GOVERNANCE



4.0 – COMPLETE STREETS



5.0 FIXED TRANSIT



6.0 – CLUSTERING POLICY



7.0 – JOBS/HOUSING



8.0 – ANNEXATION STRATEGY



9.0 – MOBILITY SYSTEMS STANDARDS



6.0 – CLUSTERING POLICY



What is Clustering?

- Clustering of development as a method to facilitate preservation and protection of woodlands, grasslands, wetlands, stream corridors, scenic areas, or other natural features as open space

Issues with Clustering

- Two development projects approved by City
 - Consistent with gross density allocation, but net density was higher than otherwise allowed
 - Preservation of open space and natural resources
 - Required Special Planning Areas (zoning) to approve

Issue Areas

- Determination of compatibility – architecture and scale
- Rural Area applicability
- Resource types for protection
 - Natural creek corridors
 - Floodplains
 - Agricultural land
 - Historic or cultural resources

Issue Areas

- General Plan-Zoning Consistency
 - Option A: Continue to utilize SPAs
 - Option B: Add a footnote to the General Plan consistency table
 - Option C: Adopt a new clustering permit

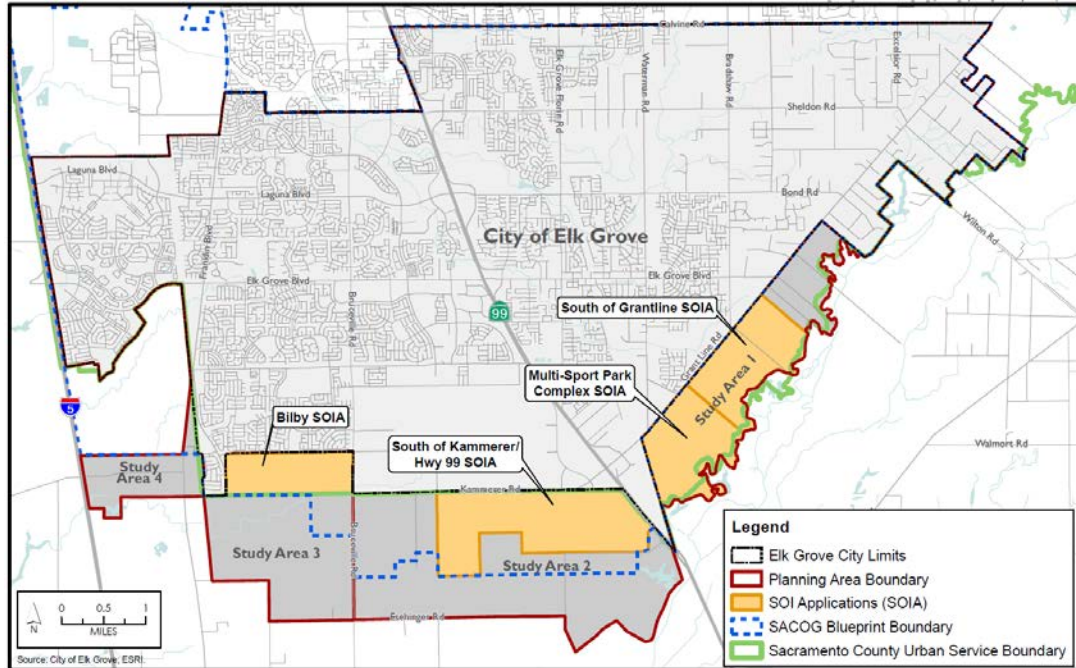
Policy Questions - Should the City...

1. **Retain a clustering policy** as an optional form of development?
2. Continue to require that the **scale of new clustered development be consistent** with the character of existing development and planned future land uses in surrounding areas?
3. Continue to **prohibit the application** of the clustering policy **in the Rural Area?**

Policy Questions - Should the City...

4. Expand the applicability of the clustering policy to continue to protect natural features and open space and **add protection of active agricultural uses and historic or cultural resources?**
5. Retain Special Planning Areas (SPAs) as a tool for implementing the clustering policy and **create a new Clustering Permit** to provide an additional mechanism to implement the clustering policy without requiring a rezone?

8.0 – ANNEXATION STRATEGY

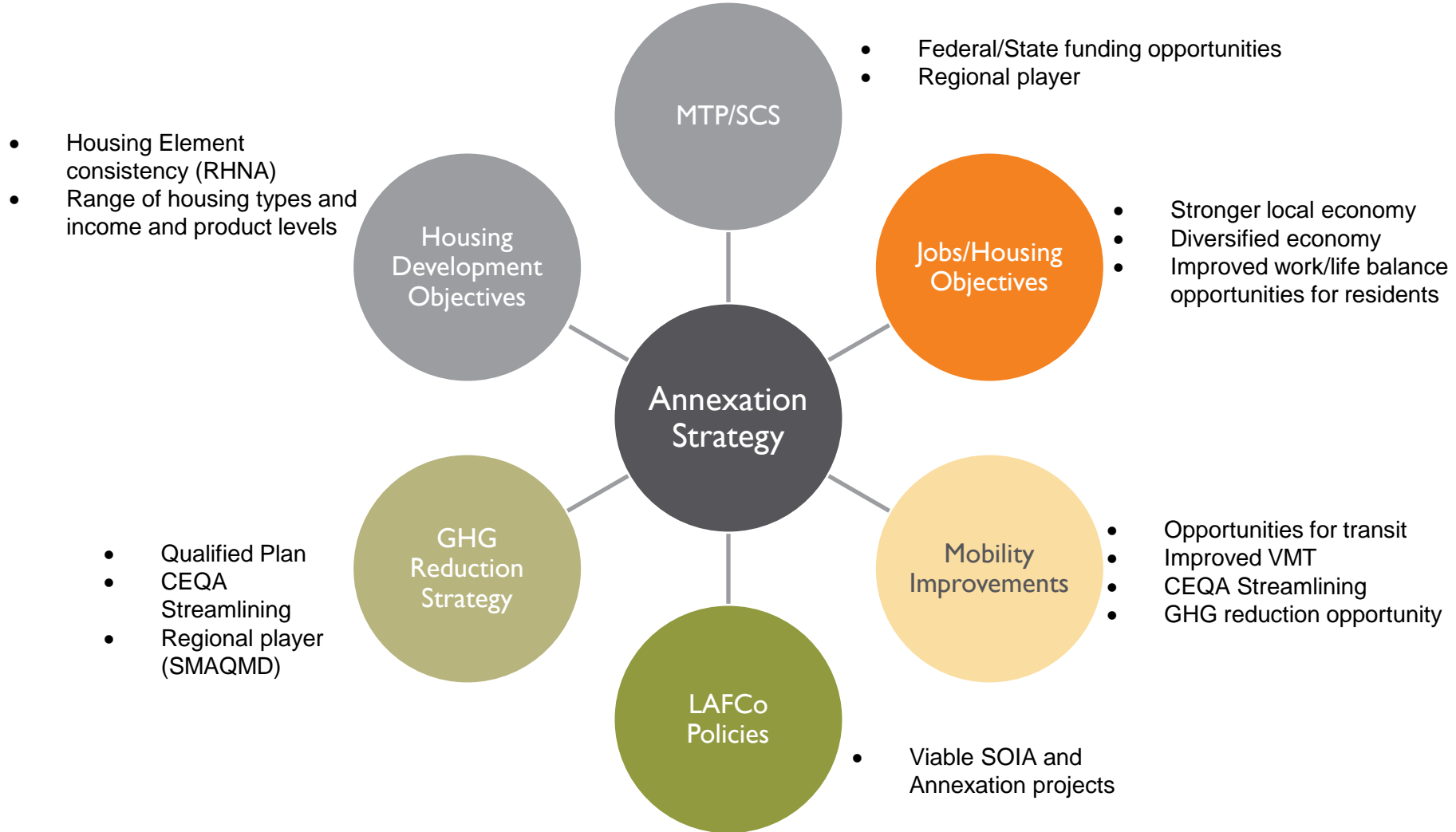


Context

- Growth demand is occurring
 - 46,000 people by 2036
 - Continued demand beyond
- Just over 1,800 acres of vacant residential land in City today
- Jobs-Housing balance targets

Growth Management Approaches

Growth within existing City limits	Limit new growth	Growth beyond existing City limits
Benefits		
<p>Encourages increased densities at key locations</p> <p>Uses existing infrastructure and services</p> <p>Limits the need for expansion</p>	<p>Uses existing infrastructure and services</p> <p>Preserves conservation areas or other areas of interest</p>	<p>Provides the most flexibility in planning for future growth</p>
Challenges		
<p>Limited housing options</p> <p>Limited economic growth opportunities</p> <p>Potential impact to affordability</p> <p>Limits to existing infrastructure and services</p> <p>May not accommodate all projected growth</p>	<p>Limits ability to respond to market demand</p> <p>Potential impact to affordability</p> <p>Shifts projected growth elsewhere</p>	<p>Managing growth to ensure appropriate expansion of infrastructure and services</p> <p>Increased service demands</p> <p>Maintaining existing community character</p> <p>Loss of agricultural land and other resource lands</p>



An annexation strategy is necessary in order to

- Provide a process for analysis of future development applications.
- Define how the development of these areas implements the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan. Examples include jobs-housing balance objectives and addressing mobility issues.
- Provide a framework for ensuring Elk Grove's long-term interest and needs are represented in regional planning efforts, such as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

Annexation Process

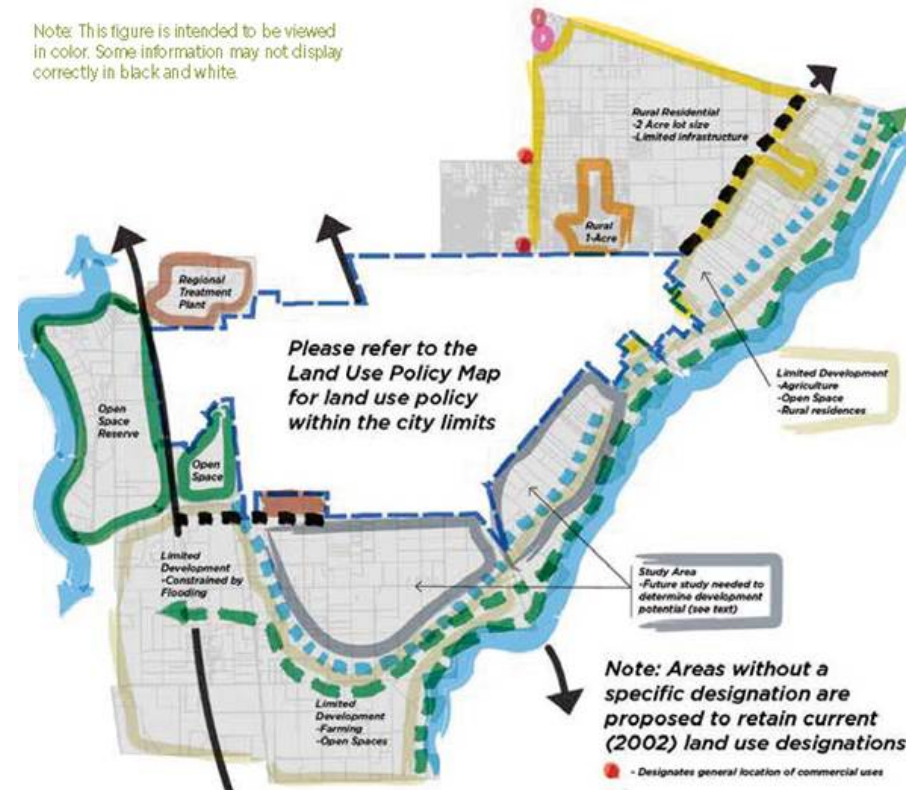
1. Sphere of Influence Amendment
2. General Plan amendment and Land Use Plan
3. Rezoning and Other Entitlements
4. Annexation

Regional Examples

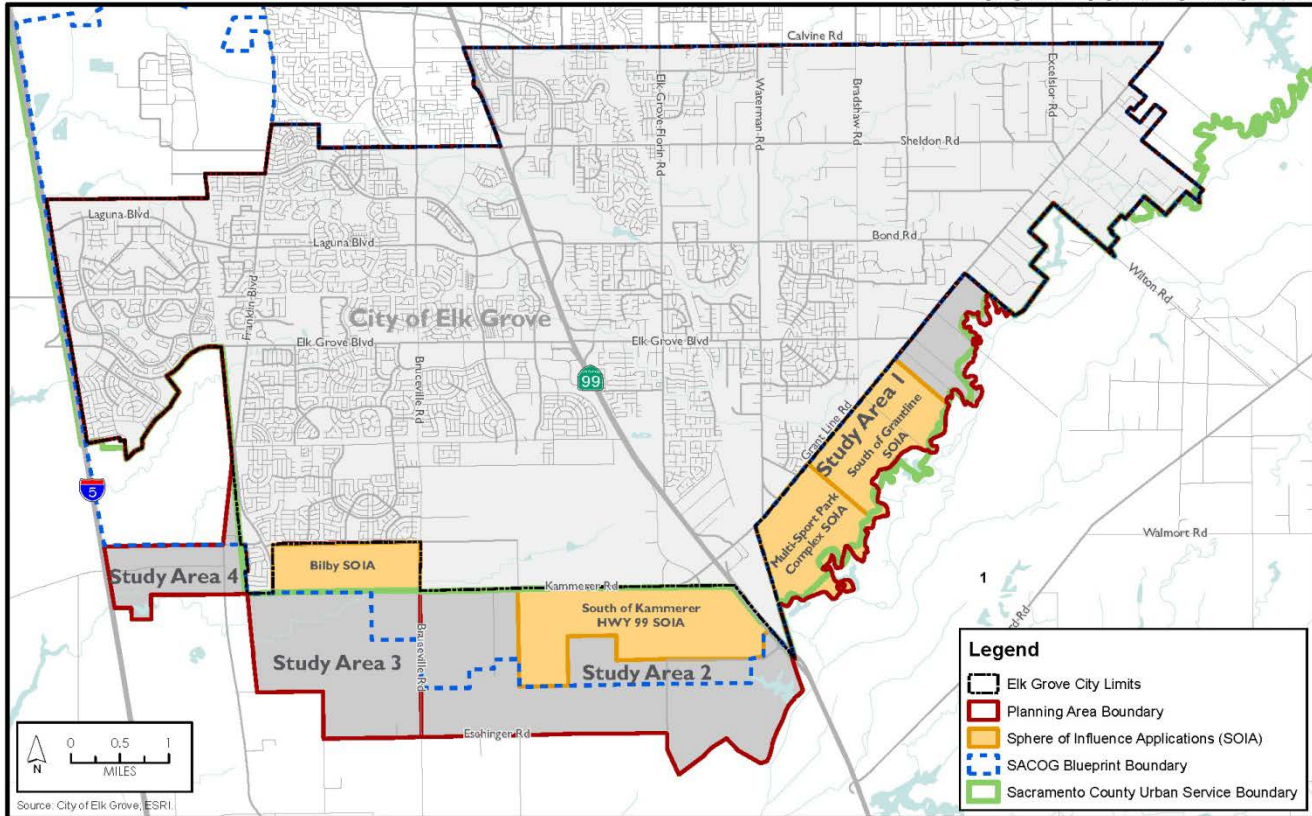
- City of Sacramento
 - “...ensure that regional growth is adequately accommodated and served by the City, particularly when it cannot be absorbed by infill areas.”
- City of Folsom
 - “...insure the orderly growth of the City”
 - “...annex all areas within its General Plan area and Sphere of Influence at the earliest time consistent with” the General Plan
- City of Roseville

2003 General Plan

- 2003 General Plan includes a “Study Area” that goes beyond existing City limits
- Includes area both inside and beyond the Sacramento County Urban Growth Area
- Does not include a land plan for the area beyond the City limits
- 2008/2013 SOI Amendment looked at a smaller area



Study Areas



Direction from May 2016

- Explore land use assumptions for each study area
- Assumptions to be expressed through “programmatic concepts” supported by a number of “design principles”
 - General location and intensities of land uses
 - Conceptual relation of uses to one another
 - Other factors

Potential Actions

- Implementation of May direction – Programmatic Land Principles
- Consider how planning will occur within the Study Areas
- Evaluation Criteria for Expansion Proposals

Programmatic Land Principles - SAMPLE

SAMPLE **Programmatic Land Principles for Study Area X**

Land Use Concept

- **Locate activity nodes of community commercial and employment along the major arterials**
- **Provide a mix of residential uses, including products in the estate residential range**
- **Transition the density and intensity of development from north to south**
- **Integrate open space and parks throughout the plan**
- **Provide buffers from adjoining agricultural uses, water courses, and flood zones**

Program Considerations

Land uses within the study area will conform to these ranges of land uses on a land area (gross acreage) basis. The arrangement of land uses shall be in keeping with the land use concept above.

- **Commercial: 5-10%**
- **Employment Center: 5-20%**
- **Residential:**
 - **High Density: 5-10%**
 - **Medium Density: 5-15%**
 - **Low Density: 10-30%**
 - **Estate: 10-20%**
- **Parks, Open Space, and Schools: as necessary to support the planned land uses**

How Planning Will Occur Within the Study Areas

- 4 “possible considerations” are identified:
 1. Comprehensive Land Planning
 2. Augmenting the Programmatic Land Principles
 3. Dividing the Study Areas into Smaller Areas
 4. Combining the Study Areas into Larger Areas
- Could select one or more of the above (e.g., 2 & 4)

Option I. Comprehensive Land Planning

Concept

- Require a General Plan-level land use plan for an entire study area prior to or in conjunction with a specific development application
- Similar to City of Sacramento approach

Pros

- Confirms the implementation of GP policies
- Informs rezoning
- Could identify anticipated phasing

Cons

- Requires large-scale coordination between property owners and development interest
- Increased time and cost considerations
- “Non-participating” owners
- May require a City-initiated effort, like SEPA – cost implications for City and timing issues for development

Option 2. Augmenting the Programmatic Land Principles

Concept

- Add the Land Planning Criteria to the General Plan, along with the Programmatic Land Principles
- Similar in some ways to Sacramento, but more like Rancho Cordova

Pros

- More than broad policy formulation – more of a comprehensive plan
- Inflection point connecting goals and policies of the GP with expectations for future development
- Allows individual applications to be considered without compromising the City objectives
- Does not require intensive cross-property coordination

Cons

- Not directly integrated into the Programmatic Land Principles

Option 3. Dividing the Study Areas into Smaller Areas

Concept

- Existing boundaries are based upon roads and topographic features
- Would further the comprehensive planning requirement in Option 1
- How should areas be divided?

Pros

- Greater property independence

Cons

- Potentially moves conversation from GP to individual SOI applications
- SOI application boundaries and future annexation applications may be different

Option 4. Combining Study Areas into Larger Areas

Concept

- Rather than 4 study areas, only have 1 or 2
 - General Plan “Vision Area” - areas where the City wants to consider future development in keeping with the broader goals and objectives of the General Plan
 - “Planning Area” – areas included in the Amended Sphere of Influence by LAFCo
- Resembles the Folsom approach
- Similar to existing General Plan

Pros

- Very flexible

Cons

- Precludes land planning a General Plan level
- No better than the current General Plan
- By itself, doesn’t articulate a vision for the area
- Places a lot of reliance on LAFCo to decide value of SOI applications

Likely best implemented in combination with Option 2

Evaluation Criteria

- Used by Council to decide individual development applications
- 4 criteria drafted for consideration
 - Compliance with the land use program and design principles for the study area
 - Demonstrate an identified market need
 - Further the community vision
 - Demonstrate adequate services are available

Policy Questions

- I. How should the City review and consider future development applications for consistency with the goals and policies of the General Plan?
 - Require comprehensive land planning
 - Augment with Land Planning Criteria
 - Divide the study areas into smaller areas
 - Combining the study areas into larger areas

Policy Questions


2. In keeping with the direction from December 2015, what types of evaluation criteria should be incorporated into the General Plan? Possible criteria, as described in the paper, include:
 - Compliance with the land use program and design principles
 - Demonstrated market need
 - Furtherance of the community vision
 - Demonstrated service availability

9.0 – MOBILITY SYSTEMS STANDARDS



How Roadway Impacts are Measured Today

- **Level of Service** – Letter grade representing the flow of traffic at an intersection or along a roadway
- Projects that impact the Level of Service below the City's threshold (**LOS D**) must mitigate
 - Project Analysis
 - CEQA Analysis
- Not all roads in Elk Grove meet this standard – Existing Deficiencies

Level of Service		
A	Free Flow	
B		
C		
D		
E		
F		Gridlock

Senate Bill 743

- Requires that **level of service be replaced** with an alternative method for evaluating transportation impacts under CEQA
- The Office of Planning and Research (OPR) has **recommended using vehicle mile traveled** as the preferred alternative

What is Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)?

VMT counts the number of miles traveled by motor vehicles that are generated by or attracted to a project

Does not count trips taken by other modes (e.g., bike, transit)

Why OPR has chosen VMT?

- Historical data is available
- Relationship to vehicle emissions
- Responsiveness to policy and land use influence
- Indicator of roadway function and safety
- Benefits of VMT analysis to identify transportation system impacts
 - Mitigation burden
 - Air quality and greenhouse gas emissions
 - Project location and design choices

CEQA and Thresholds of Significance

- Thresholds of significance allow for a determination of project impacts under CEQA. Levels of impacts include:
 - **No impact or less than significant impact**
 - Does not require specific mitigation measures
 - Does not require an environmental impact report
 - **Less than significant impact with mitigation**
 - Requires specific mitigation measures
 - Does not require an environmental impact report
 - **Significant impact**
 - May require mitigation measures
 - Requires an environmental impact report

State Law and Recommendations from OPR

- CEQA guidelines would not include a set threshold of significance
- State law requirements for VMT thresholds:
 - Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions
 - Development of multimodal transportation networks
 - Diversity of land uses
- Various State laws and executive orders set targets for greenhouse gas reduction
- OPR is **recommending a 15% decrease** in VMT
- Local agencies set their own thresholds

Process to Implementing

- Establishing a baseline
- Establishing a VMT metric
- Establishing CEQA Thresholds of Significance
- Retaining LOS

Establishing a Baseline

- Baselines can address the City and the region
- Options include:

A	B	C
Baseline based on existing conditions at the time a project is being analyzed (typical CEQA practice)	Static 2015 existing conditions baseline	Static 2015 existing conditions baseline by land use type
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creates a moving target• Becomes increasingly difficult to achieve 15% reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Baseline would not shift over time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Baseline would not shift over time• Allows more flexibility to consider specific project types

Establishing a VMT Metric

- The City needs to establish a VMT metric to use for determining VMT reductions
- Because land use designations dictate the type of project allowed (e.g., commercial, residential, office, mixed use), the City should consider establishing different VMT metrics based on land use. Options include:
 - VMT per capita
 - VMT per household
 - VMT per employee
 - VMT per service population
- This approach is consistent with the recommended baseline by land use type

Establishing Thresholds of Significance

Type of Threshold	Purpose	Level of Impact
Screening Threshold	“Screens” projects from further analysis based on size or location. <i>Minimizes project-level analysis.</i>	<u>Below numeric threshold:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less than significant impact <u>Above numeric threshold:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Needs project-specific analysis; subject to numeric thresholds
Numeric Threshold	For projects that are not “screened” out, a numeric threshold is used to determine project impacts. <i>Requires project-specific analysis.</i>	<u>Below numeric threshold:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less than significant impact <u>Above numeric threshold:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires mitigation• May require an environmental impact report
Land Use Plan Threshold	Thresholds may include consistency requirements (General Plan consistency or regional plan consistency) or may include numeric thresholds.	<u>Below numeric threshold:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less than significant impact <u>Above numeric threshold:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires mitigation• May require an environmental impact report

VMT Recommendations

- Establish a land use type-based approach to setting VMT reduction targets, including:
 - Establish a **2015 static existing conditions baseline by land use type** at the Citywide level and the SACOG regional level
 - Identify the **appropriate VMT metric by project type** (e.g., residential, commercial, office)
 - Identify **absolute thresholds of significance for each project type by land use designation** (e.g., Low Density Residential, Community Commercial, Employment Center, Mixed Use Village Center)
 - Recommend **criteria-based screening thresholds**
 - Establish **plan-level criteria** for analysis of future area-wide plans that may include consistency requirements

Mitigation Options (As Recommended by OPR)

- Relevant to Elk Grove:
 - Improve or increase access to transit
 - Improve pedestrian or bicycle networks, or transit service
 - Implement or provide access to a commute reduction program
 - Increase the mix of land uses
- Other ideas (likely not relevant):
 - Unbundle parking costs
 - Limit or eliminate parking supply
 - Deploy management (e.g., pricing, vehicle occupancy requirements) on roadways

Existing Elk Grove Programs that Could Mitigate VMT

- Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan
- Capital Facilities Fee (Transit)
- These programs may not fully mitigate the impacts, so a Statement of Overriding Considerations would be required



What Becomes of Level of Service?

- LOS standards establish necessary roadway improvements when evaluating projects
 - Intersection safety
 - Roadway impact fee determination
 - Street capacity and sizing
- If LOS policies are retained in the General Plan:
 - LOS would become a General Plan consistency requirement for evaluating projects
 - Would need to ensure that any LOS policy is not in conflict with VMT goals
- Consider roadway efficiency standards instead of LOS
 - Could identify priority improvement types by roadway function

Level of Service Recommendation

- A revised LOS policy that identifies:
 - The City desires a robust and efficient roadway network that provides access to properties in a safe and convenient manner
 - The design of specific intersection and roadway segment improvements should balance these needs with:
 - the character of the surrounding area
 - cost to complete the improvement
 - ongoing maintenance obligations
- No letter-grade system

Policy Direction Recommendation

1. Develop a land use-based approach to setting VMT reduction targets through the draft land use plan
2. Develop VMT CEQA-significance thresholds that are aligned with the policies and objectives of the draft General Plan
3. Prepare a new policy on roadway efficiency that replaces LOS
4. Prepare revisions to the Citywide Roadway Fee Program that are aligned with the updated policies, targets, and roadway improvements identified in the draft General Plan
5. Develop options to mitigate VMT impacts that are viable in the local context

Summary of Direction Items

- Provide direction on the Policy Topic Paper recommendations:
 - Clustering
 - Annexation Strategy
 - Mobility Standards

Next Steps

- Staff will begin compiling the direction to date into summary of policy direction
- Next Joint Study Session will focus on the Land Use Plan
 - Candidate date: October 6, 2016 (in lieu of Planning Commission mtg.)



ELK GROVE
A BRIGHTER FUTURE