



**CITY OF ELK GROVE  
CITY COUNCIL/PLANNING COMMISSION  
STAFF REPORT**

**AGENDA TITLE:** General Plan Update: City Council/ Planning Commission Joint Session

**MEETING DATE:** December 17, 2015

**PREPARED BY:** Christopher Jordan, AICP  
Assistant to the City Manager  
Jeff Henderson, AICP  
Special Projects Planner

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** Laura Gill, City Manager

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**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Staff recommends that the City Council and Planning Commission receive the report and presentation and provide feedback on the updated vision for the General Plan as appropriate.

**DISCUSSION:**

The City is embarking on its first comprehensive update to the General Plan since 2003. The updated process includes six phases of:

- **Discovering** the existing conditions, key issues and opportunities for the City of Elk Grove;
- **Listening** to the vision and desires of residents and other interested groups;
- **Vetting** concepts, policies, and approaches for the new plan;
- **Documenting** the vision and policies in the draft General Plan and preparing the required Environmental Impact Report (EIR);
- **Presenting** the draft materials for public review; and
- **Adopting** the General Plan after certifying the EIR through the public hearing process.

A joint meeting of the City Council and Planning Commission was held on June 1, 2015 to set the stage for the project, informing aspects of the scope and approach. From that meeting, the following key issues and opportunities were identified:

<b>Key Issue or Opportunity</b>	<b>Description</b>
Economic Vitality	Maximize potential of Elk Grove’s social capital and physical infrastructure to attract employers, retain and expand existing businesses, and create economic destinations.
Rural Areas	Affirm or modify the City’s policy to maintain the character of Elk Grove’s rural areas as a foundation for the plan.
Regional Goals and Influences	Consider and describe Elk Grove’s role in achieving regional growth, economic opportunities, and sustainability goals while protecting the ability to grow or evolve as we choose.
Infill Development and Outward Expansion	Identify appropriate infill strategies and plan for focused future growth in expansion areas outside the current City limits.
Neighborhood, District, and Community Identity	Create a stronger sense of place <sup>1</sup> . Preserve and enhance neighborhoods. Design dynamic places for social and cultural activities and connect them throughout the community to neighborhoods, districts, and employment centers with distinct identities.
Multimodal and Active Transportation	Plan for a long-term transportation system that provides multiple ways to get around within the community and the region while supporting economic growth and community health.
Sustainable and Healthy Community	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions, adapt to a changing climate, and improve community health.
Coordinated Services, Technology, and Infrastructure	Consider relationships with service providers and the City’s future role in providing community services and infrastructure. Leverage technology to improve infrastructure, City services, and economic development.
Open Space and Resource Management	Expand and categorize open spaces and manage changing habitat, energy, and water resources.

Discussion and development of goals and policies around these key issues are being approached in two steps. The first step involves asking what the community wants to achieve (documented through the community vision). The second step is framing how that vision is achieved (the goals and policies). The focus of tonight’s meeting is the first step.

<sup>1</sup> Having characteristics that make a place special or unique, as well as those that foster a sense of authentic human attachment and belonging.

## **Public Outreach to Date**

Staff has developed a robust public outreach program to gain input and feedback on these topics as the General Plan is developed and brought forward for adoption. In this early phase, staff has conducted the following activities:

- A one-day Citizens' Planning Academy
- Five mobile studios at community events between September and December 2015
- Individual and group meetings with community members, community service providers, regional governmental agencies and nonresident interest groups (including non-profit and business interests)
- Community visioning workshop

The outreach conducted to date is summarized in Attachment 1. Ranking of key themes during the outreach events are as follows:

### Visioning Workshop

#### 1. Economic Vitality

- More employment opportunities
- Better and higher paying jobs
- Improved/diversified retail (new mall desired)
- More/diversified restaurants
- Increase job opportunities in the technology and bio science sectors
- Expanded entertainment and tourist/vacation industry
- Support small businesses (new and existing)
- Expand higher education opportunities

#### 2. Coordinated Services

- Improve and expand youth services
- Expand senior services
- Maintain high level of elementary school education
- Maintain safety
- Expanded library facilities and programs
- Services for low-income residents
- Citywide WiFi
- Hospitals

### 3. Sustainable and Healthy Community

- Livable, healthy city overall (and in all neighborhoods)
- Community gardens + Farm to Fork
- Plan for drought through sustainable solutions (like tertiary water treatment)
- Expanded recycling program

### 4. Community & Neighborhood Identity

- Create a civic core / downtown (better connect East and West)
- Maintain small town feel and neighborly community
- Maintain and restore historic buildings
- Maintain, foster, and celebrate diversity

### 5. Multi-Modal Transportation

- Alleviate traffic congestion (shorter and/or coordinate traffic signals)
- Complete streets
- Improve/expand bicycle infrastructure and connect the trail system
- City-sponsored cycling events
- Light rail connects to other valley cities
- Expand reach of E-tran (more destinations, more frequent busses)
- Electric car charging stations

### 6. Infill and Outward Expansion

- Infill development, especially to complete existing projects and fill in vacant land
- Slow growth, and do not expand the city boundaries
- Mixed-use developments throughout the city
- Many participants were not supportive of outward expansion and suggested splitting infill and outward expansion into two separate categories

### 7. Rural Area

- Preserve and maintain commitment to the Rural Area

### 8. Housing

- Maintain balance of housing types

### 9. Open Space Management

- Maintain current open spaces

## Mobile Studios

1. Multimodal Transportation
  - More accessible transit to local destinations
  - Add traffic calming where needed
  - Create safer routes for cyclists
2. Open Space and Resource Management
  - Connect parks
  - More parks for specific uses
3. Sustainable and Healthy Community
  - Limit water use and reduce City emissions
  - Become more welcoming to families with special needs
  - Support cultural diversity
4. Coordinated Services
  - Improved sustainability services, recycling, grey water, etc.
  - More amenities for teens and kids
  - Leadership in education
5. Economic Vitality
  - Enhance economic and recreation destinations without adding traffic congestion
  - Balance big box opportunities with support for local businesses
  - Increase local job opportunities
6. Community and Neighborhood Identity
  - Preserve small town, community feel
  - Support community building events
  - Connect neighborhoods with better pedestrian infrastructure
7. Rural Areas
  - Maintain rural character
  - Balance rural and urban interests
8. Regional Goals and Influence
  - Share regional goals and promote them more widely
  - Improve regional transportation – create connections and reduce congestion
  - Create job and education centers

## 9. Infill Development and Outward Expansion

- Take advantage of vacant land
- Keep housing options affordable
- Consider walkability when choosing developable sites

### **Draft Vision and Supporting Principles**

Based on this input, staff has developed a draft community vision and accompanying supporting principles for each of the key issue areas (Attachment 2). Staff is seeking feedback on these draft materials.

#### **Draft Community Vision**

##### ***The City of Elk Grove is...***

*A great place to make a home and a great place to work. Our community is healthy and safe and is family-oriented, with thriving schools and plentiful parks, shops, and places to work. Agriculture, rural homes, and urban life flourish together. Our natural resources, including water and open spaces, are protected and offer a variety of recreational opportunities. Community members travel easily by automobile, by bicycle, on foot, or using transit. The City is proactive in making daily life healthy and sustainable – considering the needs of future generations while protecting what is valued today.*

*Well-maintained infrastructure and the right mix of services and amenities draw new and dynamic businesses and development to Elk Grove. Development is guided to ensure responsible growth and opportunities for a diversity of individuals that call Elk Grove home.*

### **Next Steps**

Over the next six months, staff will be working to gather the information and direction necessary to define the scope of changes to the goals and policies necessary to support the updated City vision. This includes further rounds of public outreach workshops in late January and early February, as well as additional City Council/Planning Commission joint study sessions in February, April, and June. Staff will share more details about these upcoming events during the presentation.

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Summary of Input on the General Plan to date
2. Vision Book



## ELK GROVE GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

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### MEMORANDUM

TO: Christopher Jordan  
FROM: Abby Woods  
DATE: Last updated December 10, 2015  
RE: Summary of Input on the General Plan

*In response to community member requests that a summary of input collected to date be made available as soon as possible, we are sharing a draft document. Please be patient as we work to summarize meetings as they occur and fill in the gaps in this document.*

This memorandum provides a summary of the input collected regarding the Elk Grove General Plan update. **Efforts to gather input began in September 2015 and will continue through June 2017. As meetings are completed, this document will be updated and modified with additional results. Please check back often.** When all outreach efforts have been completed, a notice will be shared with the General Plan update mailing list.

#### **GENERAL PLAN UPDATE**

The City of Elk Grove (City) is updating its General Plan. The City adopted its current General Plan in 2003. Since that time, the City has grown and changed. Additionally, new laws affecting General Plans have been passed, new social and environmental issues have emerged, and new planning strategies and practices have been developed.

This General Plan update is an opportunity to make adjustments now, based on current issues and emergent trends, which will best position the City for the future. The update will also bring the General Plan into compliance with new laws related to climate change, multimodal transportation, and floodplains.

#### **ROLE OF PARTICIPANTS**

Individual and group meetings with community members, community service providers, regional governmental agencies and nonresident interest groups (including non-profit and business interests) will ensure that a broad range of perspectives are included early in the General Plan update process. Feedback collected during these meetings will be used to enhance the project team's understanding of key issues, convey community interests to decision makers and to improve feedback activities included in broader public outreach events. To be clear, no decisions about the General Plan update will be made during any individual meeting, and all results will be reported through this document.

**MEETINGS**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Meeting Type</b>	<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
Historic Preservation Committee	Committee Meeting	09/14/2015	2
Multi Cultural Committee	Committee Meeting	09/15/2015	10
Community at Large	Educational Workshop (Planning Academy)	9/19/2015	50+
Trails Committee	Committee Meeting	09/21/2015	6
Industry Working Group	Roundtable Discussion	09/29/2015	10
Regional Agencies	Roundtable Discussion	09/30/2015	11
Community Based Organizations and Service Providers	Roundtable Discussion	09/30/2015	11
Community at Large	Mobile Studio (Neighborhood Summit)	9/30/2015	45*
Farm Bureau	Roundtable Discussion	09/30/2015	1
Youth Commission	Committee Meeting	10/13/2015	8
Chamber of Commerce	Committee Meeting	10/30/2015	
Community at Large	Mobile Studio (Safety Fair)	10/3/2015	55*
Community at Large	Mobile Studio (Food Truck Mania)	11/4/2015	50*
Community at Large	Interactive Workshop (Visioning)	11/7/2015	20+
Libraries	Roundtable Discussion	12/8/2015	4
Community at Large	Mobile Studio (Dickens Faire)	11/28/2015	149
<i>Community at Large</i>	<i>Mobile Studio (Merry Movie Night)</i>	<i>12/12/2015</i>	
<i>Disability Advisory Committee</i>	<i>Committee Meeting</i>	<i>1/20/2016</i>	

\*Many families, couples, or groups of people participated in the activities as a unit. As such, the actual number of participants in the mobile studios could be up to 50% greater than reported above.

**KEY THEMES**

*To be completed when the first phase of outreach has concluded in December 2015.*



## **MEETING SUMMARIES**

A summary of each meeting is included below.

### HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

*September 14, 2015*

#### **Attendees:**

- Gabrielle Flynn, Committee Member
- Dennis Buscher, Committee Member

*No members of the public were in attendance.*

Staff presented an overview of the General Plan process and asked committee members for input on the priorities for the General Plan in the next 20 years, including immediate needs and challenges in achieving priorities for the City of Elk Grove. Of key importance to the committee were economic development, and the preservation of historic resources.

Discussion included the following comments from committee members:

#### **Community Identity:**

- Community identity should be at the top of our priority list. Elk Grove is still growing. This is a good opportunity to develop its own identity, different from a lot of other areas. It is different from Sacramento.
- Our neighborhood identity is currently based on school districts. Our neighborhoods should be unique in order for folks to identify with them.
- We have a reputation based on amazing schools and parks. The people with kids in schools here are very happy.

#### **Historic Resources:**

- We should focus on our amazing architecture and history in the 20th century. We need a list of historic resources that are important to the citizens of Elk Grove—designate “local resources”.
- Historic resources are connected to Economic Vitality. We have some better restaurants coming into Elk Grove. We need more?
- We need to preserve the historic stories of Elk Grove—it’s not being done right now. What about plaques with virtual tours?
- Once the Council recognizes historic elements, we should tie it to technology. A “Walk Elk Grove” app.

#### **Economic Vitality:**

- Looking at a new district, consider the “wine district.” We should develop that as a tourist area, including the property purchased from the Railroad (Old Town Plaza).
- We need to bring tourists downtown with the Railroad property. Elk Grove historic society just had an event there. We need to improve access. It needs a lot of transportation work.
- We have an immediate need to recognize our historic resources—we are in the midst of losing two structures—Capitol Nursery (1868). The last remaining ranch house for the ranch there—also a bungalow.
- What is Elk Grove? It’s local business!
- We need a *jobs base*. The 2003 General Plan had space for jobs, it was overridden.

#### **Land Use & Transportation:**

- The General Plan (2003) did not set aside land for churches, there isn’t land after build out—having churches in neighborhoods would help the community.
- Elk Grove is growing too fast—need to do something for the people who live here now.

- What our community wants and what the council wants may be different things.
- How will the General Plan impact the SOI expansion?
- Streetscape improvements in Elk Grove are not helping. People still avoid Old Town because of the traffic.
- We have traffic problems around schools. Why do school kids always have to drive? Where is our public transportation?

#### MULTI CULTURAL COMMITTEE

*September 15, 2015*

#### **Attendees:**

- Scott Matsumoto, Committee Chair
- Mohinder Singh, Committee Vice Chair
- Orlando Fuentes, Committee Member
- Bernice M. Bass de Martinez, Committee Member
- Mukesh Patel, Committee Member
- Jinky Dolar, Committee Member
- Marie Mertz, Committee Member
- R. Ashok Shankar, Committee Member
- Jana Shoher, Committee Member
- Kris Tan, Committee Member

*3 members of the public were also in attendance.*

Staff presented an overview of the General Plan process and asked committee members for input on the priorities for the General Plan in the next 20 years, including immediate needs and challenges in achieving priorities for the City of Elk Grove. Of key importance to the committee were neighborhood identity, diversity, transportation, and economic vitality.

Discussion included the following comments from committee members:

#### **Land Use & Infill:**

- More homes are being built—all of these issues are connected to one another—we have problems with parking.
- There are abandoned development projects around town. There are “new phase” signs that have been up for seven years. What are we going to do about the abandoned buildings?
- We have other potential main streets—not just old town.
- We should build up rather than out.

#### **Transportation:**

- Think about conservation and safety. Risk of fire. Long term impacts on soils, carbon emissions, and trees.
- Traffic between 99 & 5—Laguna and Elk Grove Blvd—a lot of non-local traffic is a concern.
- Laguna Blvd is packed with cars. A lot of traffic.
- Traffic around schools is horrible—it is dangerous for kids to walk to school. Need safe routes to school.
- Transportation is also a priority. It is connected to air quality and economic development.
- Transportation is really our biggest issue.
- What happened to school busses?
- We need to connect to light rail.

- How long does it take to build things like a freeway interchange—were the things they planned for in 2003 all built?
- We have spent a lot of money on the train tracks in Old Town, we can easily make improvements for rail.

**Housing:**

- We need nice houses that bring middle class jobs. But to balance that we need to address the need for lower income housing—need a mix of affordable housing.
- Safety and crime—we do pretty well, but we still need to keep our eyes out there.
- We need to complete our bike path network. We need a network where you don't need to cross at the intersection.
- Make housing more accessible.

**Economic Vitality:**

- We need a big university in Elk Grove. We need more economic vitality.
- Education—we need university extension buildings—like UC Davis.
- How much planning has been implemented since 2003?
- The City put an emphasis on economic development since 2003.

**Culture and Diversity:**

- We should be celebrating the diversity of Elk Grove. We need linguistic access, a cultural breadth of understanding, and representation in what the face of the City is.
- Will future employers welcome employment of diverse individuals? What can the City do to ensure we have these policies?
- There needs to be implementation that will ensure collaborative efforts as a part of the whole—we can't imagine what will look like in the General Plan Update—the plan needs to be able to adjust.

**Identity:**

- Neighborhood identity is really important. We should have more gatherings like the Neighborhood Summit.
- People identify with schools more than neighborhoods.

**Services:**

- Public safety—we need to send our police officers to the academy.
- Are our services distributed differently? Are there different standards for different neighborhoods?
- This is a good opportunity for things that are not just economic development.
- Can we divert stormwater?
- We need citywide WiFi to ensure everyone has access to the internet.
- We need community gardens—that is something really effective in other cities—do that here!

CITIZEN PLANNING ACADEMY

*September 19, 2015*

**Attendees:** 44 community members signed an optional sign-in sheet. Other community members attended but did not sign in. Based on seats filled, staff estimates approximate attendance by community members to be between 50 and 60 people.

This Citizen's Planning Academy was an educational workshop that introduced community members to the General Plan update and prepared community members for ongoing and productive participation in the process.

### TRAILS COMMITTEE

September 21, 2015

#### **Attendees:**

- Mark Doty, Committee Member
- Mark D. Mendenhall, Committee Member
- Timothy Jordan, Committee Member
- Sharon Anderson, Committee Member
- Aaron Silva, Committee Member

#### **Summary:**

Following a brief project overview presentation, attendees made the following comments about the General Plan update:

#### **Multi-Modal Transportation:**

- The plan needs more teeth and a roadmap for trails.
- We want to build more character with our trails.
- Identifying 4 or 5 major corridors and getting those completed is a major issue for us—filling the gaps.
- In 15 years would love to see the main corridors completed. Develop spurs as opportunity presents itself.
- When properties are not being developed, purchase of property could resolve this.
- Currently, property acquisition is funded by grants or by the collection of in lieu fees for development projects.
- Help clarify this goal in the General Plan—to fill the gaps.
- Could the City advance payment to pay for a trail?
- We should also focus on using existing infrastructure to get it to function better for bikes and pedestrians: example, Davis—not all streets are the “Cadillac” version of an off street bikeway.
- Have destination focused facilities that connect people to places we want to go.
- A commuter corridor is needed—not just trails for recreation.
- Need a connection to City of Sacramento cycle track.
- Focus on retrofitting major arterials.

#### **Regional Influence:**

- We need to encourage vitality regionally and regional participation. For example, code enforcement in areas of the County to the north of us.
- We have historic things and people want to move here for those.
- Davis is thriving and they have limited growth.

#### **Neighborhood Identity:**

- People don't identify by neighborhood, maybe by school.
- There are a few identifiable neighborhoods: Camden, Lakeside, Ranch Park, East Franklin.

#### **Open Space:**

- Need more open space here, too many channelized corridors—need more like the Cosumnes River Preserve.
- Not a lot of undeveloped parkland—we are losing people to the foothills.

- Need more like Folsom—we’re attempting this along Laguna creek, but we don’t really have “wildland corridors”.

INDUSTRY WORKING GROUP (IWG)

*September 29, 2015*

**Attendees:**

- Brian Spillman, Silverado Homes
- Jay Pawlek, Taylor Morrison
- Jim Gillum, Gillum consulting
- Joe Anderson, McKay & Soms
- Ken Allred, Kamilos Companies
- Les Hock, HCM, Inc.
- Thad Johnson, Pappas Investments
- Todd Chambers, The True Life Companies
- Matt Spokey, Wood Rodgers

**Summary:**

Following a brief project overview presentation, attendees made the following comments about the General Plan update:

- The City should consider growth opportunities outside of the current boundary.
- While General Plan policies and a vision are good, people tend to look at compatibility with what is on the ground rather than what is in the Plan. Better education is needed on what is called for in the Plan and how to address it. There should be a clear dialogue that the Plan is a “vision document.”
- Don't set buffers for proposed land uses when adjacent areas are already the same use.
- The General Plan should not assume full build-out of the plan. Consider the staging of the infill sites versus outward growth, and acknowledge the potential infeasibility of development sites.
- The General Plan should minimize the introduction of new regulations, and the EIR should consider reasonable mitigations and not be afraid to override them. Workarounds are sometimes more painful than the impacts themselves.
- There is always a lot of talk about adding additional density and keeping things more urban. There needs to be a balance, and there will be some pushback from those who are buying homes. What we think is awesome isn’t always perceived as such.
- There will likely be comments looking for new development projects to include civic amenities. As the EIR is prepared, consider that those are amenities that serve populations beyond new development and distribute costs accordingly.

REGIONAL AGENCIES

*September 30, 2015*

**Attendees:**

Sacramento Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) (Peter Brundage and Don Lockhart)  
Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) (Kacey Lizon)  
Elk Grove Unified School District (EGUSD) (Kim Williams and Bill Heinicki)  
Los Rios Community College District/Cosumnes River College (Kathy McClain)  
Sacramento County Planning and Environmental Review Division (Surinder Singh)  
Sacramento County Transportation Department (Dean Blank)

Sacramento Municipal Utility District (Susan Oto)  
Cosumnes Community Services District, Parks and Recreation (Paul Mewton)

*Note: Some agencies were represented by more than one person.*

**Summary:**

A presentation was given by staff. Following this, discussion was initiated and the following comments were given by attendees:

**Cosumnes River College**

- Regarding the Elk Grove Center expansion: ensure there are transportation linkages to allow students to access the center from the Cosumnes River College campus.
- Growth and expansion have links and relationships to future growth and enrollment at CRC and Elk Grove Center.
- Since 95% of the travel to the Elk Grove Center is by automobile, there is a parking capacity issue. Three phases are planned for the expansion, but there will continue to be parking issues.

**Elk Grove Unified School District**

- The School District appreciates the focus on alternative transportation, but there is not enough infrastructure to handle the demand. The School District is working on active transportation, Safe Routes to Schools, and trail issues. Glad to see these are a focus of the General Plan update.
- The School District is interested in infill and densification because it affects existing facilities and it is not always easy to add facilities to existing sites. They would be interested in participating in discussions on infill locations, and have already seen this in some locations. Adding 200 – 300 homes to an area affects the capacity of existing schools and could create overcrowding—this is particularly acute at the middle school level. With new land use plans, we've gotten a system down to ensure we're factoring the proper facilities and fees.
- The School District is working on a ten-year master plan at this time, expected to be released early 2016. It could be used as a resource.

**Sacramento Metropolitan Utility District**

- Providing service to infill development areas is possible, but fitting the services and facilities into infill areas is a challenge. As lots are getting smaller, it is harder for the utilities to locate facilities because of tighter easements, more difficulty in locating sites for substations, and other concerns.
- Please consider alternative parking spaces, such as plug-in charging for electric vehicles, alternative fueling stations, and other technologies. There are also different types of generation and distributed generation. Battery storage should consider the needs for energy generation in the residential environment.

**Community Services District, Parks Division**

- The benefit of infill depends on where it is located. Older, established parks need attention, and infill development needs to help fund the improvement of parks. If adding population through infill, we need a way to improve existing parks, just as we would have required new parks for new development.
- Water management is a big issue. Managing water use so that parks meet community expectations is a challenge. People have certain expectations for what landscaping is like in a suburban community. Those perspectives need to change and the General Plan could help.

- Some parks were developed during lean financial times in an expanding economy, and we don't have what's needed. Expectations aren't well aligned with resources.
- Elk Grove needs a signature park. Historically, it has been the Elk Grove Regional Park, but funding mechanisms aren't there to support it.

#### **Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG)**

- The issues identified in the presentation resonate – they are a microcosm of what's happening in the region. SACOG is looking forward to coordinating with Elk Grove.
- Regional planning relies on input from local jurisdictions. SACOG is preparing a financially constrained Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Demographics are changing, household structure is changing to later marriage and later children, and shared mobility is changing travel behavior. How does that work with (or not) the urban forms that we have? Different land use patterns and economics here affect how those services work. We are trying to understand and plan for the uniqueness of all of the communities to define the character of neighborhoods in Elk Grove. Through the Rural-Urban Connections Strategy, SACOG has profiled communities by economic assets, challenges, and opportunities, and these resources are available to the City.
- The region has grown quickly in 50 – 70 years. Lots of existing communities are in need of maintenance and reinvestment. There's a funding gap on the transportation side to maintain this, so how best can we maintain existing communities?

#### **Sacramento County Local Agency Formation Commission**

- The recent Sphere of Influence (SOI) expansion proposal brought out some consistent messages. Infill isn't really a cure-all. There are facility and service costs. City should fortify what an infill strategy looks like in the General Plan. There should be a program describing impacts, and spelling out how services will be provided.
- Regarding expansion with purpose – Elk Grove is seeing the development pressure now. The story of "why" needs to be told... why now, where is the demand, what's the benefit, how's the phasing going to work, etc. Incremental growth is more difficult for major facility planning and financing.
- Is everyone using the same baseline demographic numbers? Or does everyone use something different?
  - Response: Elk Grove baseline profile is based on SACOG baseline.
- As proposals are made to change SOIs and City limits, LAFCo has to rely on the City's General Plan to make findings of consistency. New guiding points/policies need to be in the General Plan to address these. The City should develop some comprehensive annexation policies in the General Plan. It should also develop a comprehensive agriculture and open space preservation program. Perhaps base it on a regional program.
- Identify infill constraints. Describe the need for a balance, and set the stage for what's going to happen. The infill program needs to be multipronged: address vehicle miles traveled (VMT), services, infrastructure, and jobs. Not just housing.

#### **Sacramento County**

- The County is always amenable to having meetings with City staff. It is good to have check-ins and coordination. The County has done several commercial corridor infill programs, and a number of them have been adopted. If Elk Grove would like to meet to discuss how these have worked, the County is happy to do so. The County has also done Special Planning Area (SPA) plan updates and transit area plans for the Hazel and Butterfield light rail stations. They also just

completed an extensive zoning code update with a new mixed use zoning category and design review process for certain projects.

- Keep similar orientation and coordination between jurisdictions regarding transportation. The County has interest in developing a more regional trail network. In new growth areas, they want an extensive trails network. They have a desire to facilitate longer distance travel on regional trails.
- The County is open to level of service policy updates. How does [SB 743](#) figure in? City is anticipating both level of service and vehicle miles traveled standards.
- Infill potential? How much is there? What's going to be the opportunity – is there really potential, or is it just a buzzword? It may be more "reuse" or "reinvestment" than infill. To the south and east, the County is rural and served by a number of rural roadways. As development occurs, it puts pressure on rural roadways.
- The County would like to be involved in greater coordination.

#### COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

*September 30, 2015*

#### *Attendance:*

ECOS, Rob Burness

Sierra Club, Sean Wirth

Elk Grove Historical Society, Jim Entrican, Anna Claire Entrican

Sacramento Self Help Housing, Ken Bennett

Sacramento Housing Alliance, Darryl Rutherford

Point Pleasant United Methodist Church, Neal Harrell

Walk Sacramento, Chris Holm

Elk Grove Senior Center, Patricia Beal

Elk Grove Food Bank, Lynda Diaz

#### *Summary:*

A presentation was given by staff. Following this, discussion was initiated and the following comments were given by attendees. Note that comments shared may reflect the participant's personal opinions in addition to that of their organization.

#### **ECOS:**

- "Issues" are being addressed more as outcomes, whereas an issue is something that people disagree about. Suggest that the City can connect to people better if they can identify the issues within these topics and express them as key conflicts or tradeoffs. E.g., infill vs. outward expansion.
- A Community Resources Element may be a good idea.
- There is a jobs/housing imbalance. The City continues to keep jobs and housing as separate items. The Souza Dairy project recognized that housing has to come first. This General Plan needs to match jobs growth with housing growth in succession, with phasing.
- A Social Services Element should be included in the General Plan,
- The Plan needs actionable and accountable measures with timeframes and links to budgeting processes. There are a lot of general plans that end up in generalities. Too many terms like "encourage", "should", etc. that give Councils the ability to avoid a decision if they want to. Look for actionable types of policies and implementation strategies. There should be no policies without actions that are linked to timeframes and budget.



- Elk Grove needs to look more closely at its relationship with the nature preserves and refuges. How can they better relate? Is it possible to develop a bike path? Create better links to resources nearby.
- Cities don't have effective bus service unless you have the density to support it. The City needs to interlink parts of the General Plan to solve problems.
- Design a creative growth restriction strategy. The City has characterized reasons for outward expansion as a manifest destiny. Reasons for growth need to be driven by problems. Be creative and set your limits – be a great city!
- Look at strategies that address multiple issues simultaneously.
- Need to address these needs for the entire community (e.g., currently people with mobility limitations cannot safely cross existing intersections).

**Elk Grove Historical Society:**

- What is the tie between the budget and the plan? It would be beneficial to see what the dollar looks like when it is divided out, to see where resources are directed to see how preservation stacks up. We need to stop tearing down older houses. We want to keep our heritage, and it costs money.
- Implementation actions need to link to a process that is part of the annual or biannual budget process. This forces budget-makers to start from a different place.
- Elk Grove has really matured into an unbelievable town. Love the wider streets. Like what I'm seeing and would like to see more.

**Point Pleasant United Methodist Church:**

- Sustainability can enter the social services concept; the services need to be sustainable.
- Is there a set policy or attitude toward the value of farms or dairies? The existing plan attempts to talk about the need to support the importance of farmland. Outward expansion obviously has an impact on agricultural resources. The General Plan needs to set this forth.

**Elk Grove Food Bank:**

- We have poor folks along with those of higher income; we need to find a way to provide financially-stable services.
- There needs to be a master plan for social services. No social services are represented in the General Plan. Food Bank is serving many people, particularly an increase in seniors. They are feeding almost 1,200 seniors and 1,000 children. The General Plan should address social services in some capacity.
- It would address the needs of some of the neediest members of the community and guide requirements. The Housing Element addresses homelessness, but can go beyond just the minimum requirements of housing laws.

**Sacramento Housing Alliance:**

- County Social Services aren't represented here, including homeless and mental health. Often, people need to be transported downtown for treatment and assistance. There is no space for social services to have offices, facilities, etc.
- Regarding affordable housing, even the most affordable housing is too high-priced. We need affordable housing for the very low income families. Elk Grove clients are being sent to South Sacramento.

- We need more public transportation to support lower income families and needs. Nobody wants a food bank in their back yard, so it is in an industrial location that people can't get to via transit. Homeless are being hounded out by police.

**Elk Grove Senior Center:**

- There is a need for a high-functioning adult day care. They need more assistance to connect to County services.
- There's no service that gets seniors downtown for treatment. Para transit won't come down here, so users have to go to Calvine Road.

**Sierra Club:**

- Infill is not just demolition and redevelopment. There's a lot of underdeveloped land here, and we need to maximize what's been set aside first. Regarding conservation: Sierra Club believes that Elk Grove walked away from the Habitat Conservation Plan when the SOI expansion area wasn't removed from the plan. The General Plan needs to say how the City is going to do conservation planning in a regional context and go beyond the Swainson's hawk.
- The Plan should address how conservation planning occurs within the regional context and should consider the existing undeveloped area before allowing for new development.
- The City needs to show how Elk Grove is going to be consistent with the Sustainable Communities Strategy.
- There is a big water issue. Zone 40 improvements were predicated on being involved with the Habitat Conservation Plan.

**Sacramento Self Help Housing:**

- This may not be the time to discuss housing, but housing issues are at the forefront.
- The biggest obstacle to low income housing is financing. We need to look at ways to increase available financing. The Housing Element is a living document, and must be revised and updated. Think more outside the box.
- Elk Grove is still thinking about expansion? Need to start thinking inward and put efforts toward infill. Take a slow growth path. Look at greenfields within the City first, and grow upwards a bit. These are all obstacles that can be overcome with a good plan in place.
- Active transportation is key. The streets in Elk Grove are almost freeway-like, and are a big barrier to biking and walking. Make sure there are sidewalks everywhere, and make it safer to walk or bike.
- If it is determined that expansion is fundamental, that will reduce the resources available to retrofit and improve the transportation system for active users such as pedestrians and bicyclists.

**Elk Grove Historical Society:**

- Fully support historic preservation, sustainability, etc., but not at the expense of positive growth. These are sometimes used as NIMBY (not in my backyard) strategies. Don't empower anything to be a tool for NIMBYs.
- Create a landscape where we can maintain some of our most treasured properties and buildings.

**Walk Sacramento:**

- Walk Sacramento is also working toward improved health outcomes. Many people don't get enough activity. Get people walking then change the community design so that people can get out there and walk. Putting an emphasis on active transportation in the General Plan is key.

- New growth may not provide the resources needed to address the transportation needs of the older community, both in terms of health, community design, and mobility (see: Surgeon General's recent publication about community design).

SACRAMENTO COUNTY FARM BUREAU

*September 30, 2015*

*Attendees:* Charlotte Mitchell, Executive Director

*Summary:*

The following comments were offered:

- Please consider the regional aspect of development. It is assumed that the General Plan update will include more development, and this will likely put additional pressure on agricultural lands.
- The only important agricultural land left in the [City] is between the Cosumnes River and Grant Line Road.
- Be good stewards. Even if you build to a certain line, recognize that impacts extend beyond.
- Farmers are looking for the Regional Connector to solve some agricultural traffic issues. Grant Line Road is very dangerous.
- Build something together that is comprehensive and looks to the future. To Elk Grove that means development, having a balance of housing and high-paying jobs. But, be equally responsible for preserving the working landscape and farm-to-fork strategies.
- Technology is everything. It makes for more efficient service provision.
- Farm-to-Fork: land conservation is an important priority. Value-added agriculture is another priority. Processing has moved out of the region, and is mostly located south in San Joaquin County. There are no tractor companies anymore, and limited chemical products are available. This region prioritized things differently.
- How do we fix our agricultural issues? Elk Grove needs a business culture to ensure that agricultural processing works here. Processors need to be able to run 12 months a year to be economically viable. (e.g., Campbell's left, Solano County). We need commodity, we need enough of it, and it needs to be economically viable.
- Incubator centers were floated as an earlier idea in Elk Grove. But, it's hard to make this pencil.
- There are no good city examples of agricultural policies. Counties have good examples of working with agriculture.
- Cities should look regionally and participate in that way. Have a plan when the City wants to take additional agricultural land.
- Consider the neighbors around you when considering growth strategies. Don't ignore the different things going on. Why build a soccer stadium that will be surrounded by agricultural land? The south side of Grant Line Road will be gone sooner based on the purchase of 100 acres for soccer fields.
- The City should use the General Plan to describe its relationship to the lands around it. How will the land be viewed? Is it preserved agricultural land; is it future development area? What is the City's view toward agricultural lands? It can't be dissected with Chevrons and soccer stadiums.
- Change the culture in the City – recognize the values that neighboring agriculture provides to local residents. Keep agricultural production as good neighbors.

- People's perceptions of being close to agriculture are different. Buffers should not be large-lot residential. They should be green buffers that allow for wildlife preservation. Do not have trail systems onto agricultural lands; it introduces theft, trespassing, etc.
- Two-acre residential could be a buffer, if clustered, perhaps. Are there models for what works well in terms of development buffers? Don't let the agriculture folks create the buffers. Guard against trespassing, people wandering, etc.

### Youth Commission

10/13/2015

Attendees: Youth Commissioners

No members of public in attendance

### Summary:

The following comments were offered:

What could Elk Grove do to convince youth to move back after college?

- Elk Grove needs a better selection of jobs for college-educated people who are getting started in their career. This would be a determining factor for some of the youth that were raised here in moving back after college.
- Elk Grove could use more recreation, such as a water park, mall, mini golf course, laser tag facility. Currently the only thing like this is Strikes, but it is not centrally located.
- Elk Grove needs a central place with a community center and other amenities. Currently everything is either on the West or East side of town.
- Bikes lanes should be separated from the road. Everyone drives in the bike lanes, so it does not feel safe. Some suggestions were: greenways or mixed-use paths separated from the roadway, or painting the bike lanes green.
- Busses should run more frequently, routes should be more direct, and schedules should be more punctual. Many students do not take the busses because they are inconvenient (require multiple transfers), slow, and often arrive late at school. One Youth Commissioner suggested bus rapid transit on the major thoroughfares in the city.
- The City needs more sidewalks overall. However, most youth don't walk to their friends' houses because they live too far away.
- The bridge on Franklin that goes over the Railroad tracks needs another sidewalk.
- The trails should be connected and should connect the parks.
- The City would benefit from more community events, like the Running of the Elk.

Elk Grove's strengths:

- It is a quiet city that is not too congested.
- It offers a nice suburban environment.
- It has a lot of choices for restaurants and is welcoming to new small businesses (like Boba and Crème).
- It has opportunities to build more (especially at Sheldon & HWY 99 and on Kammerer).
- It offers some good community events (like the Running of the Elk).
- It has an impressive number of parks within walking distances of people's houses. Elk Grove Park is very nice.

Ways the City can address the immediate needs of youth:

- Do something to alleviate traffic. It takes too long to get around town and to get to school.

- Transportation is a huge problem. The major roads could use rapid transit, but do not widen the roads because that would harm the trees.
- Consider timing all of the street lights during rush hour and make pedestrians wait their turn for the lights to change.
- The trains cause a lot of traffic, especially through Old Town. Build an underpass for the trains.
- Drunk driving is a big problem. Need better enforcement.
- Drugs are a problem.
  - Get rid of smoke shops close to private schools.
  - The cops should stop kids from smoking pot and dealing drugs at school.
  - Elk Grove police should be in charge of schools, instead of the Sherriff.
- Kids should be provided with free condoms and pads at school.
- Free WiFi spots would be a great idea (like Google Fiber).
- Need a teen center, but don't call it a teen center. Currently all the teens hang out at Elk Grove Library.
- There are too many dogs off leash. Leash laws should be enforced, especially on the trails.

#### Chamber of Commerce

10/30/2015

The project team attended a Chamber of Commerce Meeting where the results of an economic development symposium (“Elk Grove 2025”) were presented. The following questions were answered during this symposium:

1. What is your current perception of Elk Grove?
2. What would you like the Elk Grove business community to look like in 2025?
3. What opportunities or challenges should be considered to create a brighter economic environment?

The results of the symposium will be summarized and made available by the Chamber of Commerce at a future date.

#### Visioning Workshop

November 7, 2015

**Attendees:** 23 community members signed an optional sign-in sheet.

This Visioning Workshop provided a forum for community members to come together to deliberate the future of their community. The results of this workshop, alongside other inputs from the public involvement process and direction from Council, will be further articulated as the General Plan Vision and Supporting Principles. The workshop began with individual activities, which were followed by a presentation about the General Plan Update process, and concluded with a series of small group activities. The results of each small group activity were reported back to the larger group. Throughout the event, the project team answered questions from participants.

As participants arrived, they were asked to sign in and place a pin on a large map to indicate the location of their residence. Of those who engaged in this activity, **8 placed a pin to the West of HWY-99 and 10 placed a pin to the East of HWY-99**. Participants were further invited to answer three questions by writing their responses on stickers showing the words “I Like...” “I Wish...” and “I Wonder...” A summary of participant responses to each question is shown below.

**What do you cherish about Elk Grove Today?**

- **I Like...** trails, parks, open space, rural area, diversity, neighbors, small-town feel

**What are the Future Challenges Facing Elk Grove**

- **I Like...** maintaining the rural area
- **I Wish....**traffic congestion, pedestrian safety, youth services, financing for projects
- **I Wonder...**growth/expansion, water security, East-West connectivity/cohesiveness

**What are the Future Opportunities?**

- **I Wish...** traffic and noise mitigation, connected trails and bike routes, new mall, tech firms, infill, slow growth, better recycling program, bigger library, focus on existing residents
- **I Wonder...** mixed-use zoning

The first group activity asked participants to each write three news headlines to describe their imagined future for the City of Elk Grove. The participant-written headlines can be grouped into the following topics: Economic Vitality (19), Multimodal Transportation (7), Coordinated Services (6), Open Space and Resource Management (5), Sustainable & Healthy City (4). The following are a few example headlines:

- Elk Grove has best paying jobs in the region*
- Elk Grove voted for the best restaurants in Northern California*
- Elk Grove completes trail system*
- Elk Grove has lowest crime rate in nation*
- Elk Grove is recognized as a city of green spaces/parks/rural spaces*
- Elk Grove leads the nation in recycling with state-of-the-art program*

After completing an exercise that asked participants to put themselves in the shoes of their neighbors and consider what issues might be important to various groups throughout the City, each attendee was asked to rate community priorities. An aggregation of results is shown below.

<b>Rate Our Priorities</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Mode</b>	<b>Overall Rank</b>
Economic Vitality	3	1	<b>1</b>
Coordinated Services, Tech, Infrastructure	3	2	<b>2</b>
Sustainable & Healthy Community	3	3	<b>3</b>
Multimodal Transportation	5	3	<b>4</b>
Infill Development and Outward Expansion	5	5	<b>5</b>
Neighborhood Identity	5	5	<b>5</b>
Open Space and Resource Management	6	7	<b>6</b>
Rural Areas	7	8	<b>7</b>
Regional Goals and Influence	8	9	<b>8</b>

The following list summarizes the key ideas, thoughts, and concerns that were put forth by participants during small group discussions, individual activities, questions, and private comment cards:

**1. Economic Vitality**

- More employment opportunities
- Better and higher paying jobs
- Improved/diversified retail (new mall desired)

- More/diversified restaurants
- Increase job opportunities in the technology and bio science sectors
- Expanded entertainment and tourist/vacation industry
- Support small businesses (new and existing)

## **2. Coordinated Services**

- Improve/expand youth services and programs
- Maintain and expand senior services
- Maintain high level of elementary school education
- Expand higher education opportunities
- Maintain safety/keep crime rates low
- Expanded library facilities/programs
- Services for low-income folks

## **3. Sustainable and Healthy Community**

- Livable, healthy city overall (in all neighborhoods)
- Community gardens + Farm to Fork program
- Plan for drought through sustainable solutions (like tertiary water treatment)
- Expanded recycling program

## **4. Community & Neighborhood Identity**

- Create a civic core / downtown (better connect East and West across railroad tracks/HWY)
- Maintain small town feel and neighborly community
- Maintain/restore historic buildings
- Maintain, foster, and celebrate diversity

## **5. Multi-Modal Transportation**

- Alleviate traffic congestion (shorter and/or coordinate traffic signals)
- Complete streets
- Improve/expand bicycle infrastructure and connect the trail system
- City-sponsored cyclovia events (temporary closure of streets for use by bikes and pedestrians)
- Light rail connects to other valley cities
- Expand reach of E-tran (more destinations, more frequent busses)
- Electric car charging stations

## **6. Infill and Outward expansion**

- Infill development, especially to complete existing projects and fill in vacant land
- Slow growth, and do not expand the city boundaries
- Mixed-use developments throughout the city
- Divide infill and outward expansion into two separate categories (only support infill)

## **7. Rural Area**

- Preserve and maintain commitment to the Rural Area

## **8. Housing**

- Maintain balance of housing types

## **9. Open Space Management**

- Maintain current open spaces

**(More meeting results will be added here as they become available)**

#### LIBRARIES

*December 8, 2015*

#### **Attendees:**

Cat Fithian, Franklin Library Branch Supervisor  
Neva Cosby, Elk Grove Library Supervisor  
Carolyn Rokke, Sacramento Public Library  
Jeff Rubin, President, Friends of the Sacramento Public Library

#### **Summary:**

The following comments were offered:

- Franklin library is getting a lot of community use, even though it's a joint School and Community library.
- Library = community facility, education, civic engagement, cultural identity, workforce training. Library is one tool that fits all. It's a unique community resource, which should be supported to grow.
- Funds in Elk Grove have been allocated to civic center, aquatic center, site improvements. However, previous General Plan called out the library as important.
- Both libraries that serve Elk Grove are operating at inadequate levels, due to inadequate facilities.
- Get libraries into the words that matter for the General Plan – how do we make it iconic?
  - San Bernardino has a performing arts center co-located with a library.
- Need community spaces within libraries for activities and lending (sewing machines, guitars, 3D printing, etc.) Think of libraries as centers of community learning and experimentation. Provide places for people to explore and experiment.
- Libraries can serve as job training, tutoring spaces.
- One of Elk Grove's strengths is its diversity – library allows people from all language groups to obtain materials. E.g., one of the most popular items is the Chinese language newspaper.
- People coming to story time are from all backgrounds. Multiple generations and nationalities are learning English together. Helps people to socialize. Helps to break down barriers.
- Libraries are not afraid to try out innovative ideas.
- Marrying public schools and libraries together may not always be the best approach. We're not maximizing public library locations at schools.
- Central location v. branch enhancement? Let's think about one facility ~23,000 sf, plus next-level services out in the community.
  - Highways tend to be barriers to people when they're accessing convenience services. People who live east or west of 99 want to stay on their own sides. While one facility might be iconic, having two smaller state-of-the-art branches would perhaps serve this community better.
  - We need to consider accessibility – parking, access, one-story buildings, etc. Those with mobility issues will struggle with a larger building. Those with strollers, etc. also could have trouble.



- Maybe augment the existing branches with a Central library that serves all of south County.
- Could identify a central facility, then have more flexible or temporary branch locations and functions.
- Met about 10 months ago with City leadership – let’s explore needs again, quickly, to figure out how to accommodate libraries better in the General Plan. Bring it up higher in the priorities.
- City and County managers are interested in libraries – this is a unique arrangement. City could build a state of the art facility, then rely on JPA to staff and program it.
- Library director is interested in exploring new ways of serving the community.
- How can the City be involved in the ongoing Libraries Strategic Plan process? Open for public comment now.

Disability Committee

*Notes to come following their meeting.*

Mobile Studios

*Input collected at Mobile Studios will be aggregated and reported after the final event is completed.*



# A SHARED COMMUNITY VISION



**City of Elk Grove**

**GENERAL PLAN UPDATE**

December 2015



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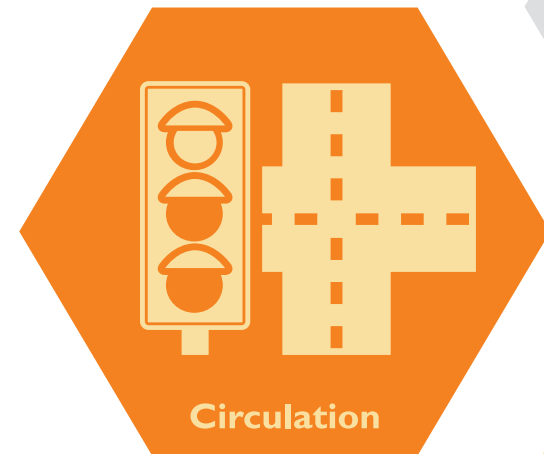
# Elk Grove's Vision for a Brighter Future

Elk Grove is updating its General Plan. The General Plan is an overarching policy document that guides City actions for both private development and public projects. The updated General Plan will be written based on the community's common vision for achieving a brighter future.

The General Plan is made up of "elements" that address major topics that are of importance to the City. Seven elements are required by the State. Elk Grove's existing General Plan has 11 elements, including the state-mandated elements as well as several others, including Historic Preservation, Economic Development, Public Facilities, and Sustainability. Certain elements may be added, removed, or modified in the update to best reflect the vision and needs of our community into the future.

This document begins to outline that common vision. It represents a summary of future hopes, dreams, and ideas captured during initial phases of the community engagement process for the General Plan update. Elk Grove residents have participated in the conversation through interviews, meetings, workshops, and visioning events.

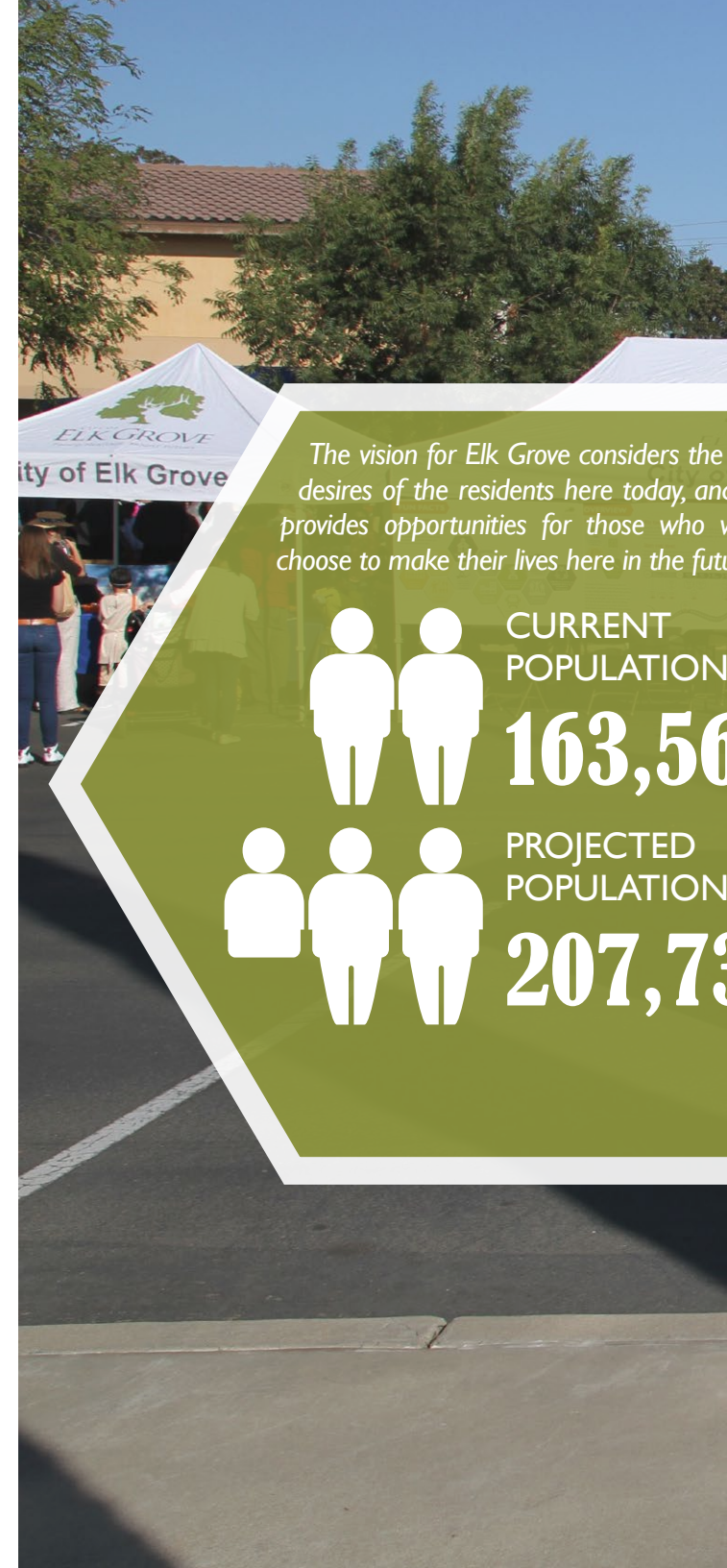
## GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS





# The Scope of Our Vision

The General Plan is a fundamental planning document that directs future growth and development and conservation policy. The City's current General Plan was adopted in 2003, with moderate changes made since then. The City is now updating its General Plan to ensure that the guiding policy document remains a useful tool, keeps pace with change, and provides workable solutions to current and future issues. The updated General Plan will provide a comprehensive policy framework that accurately reflects how and where the City may grow, resource protection priorities, and recent state legislation. The vision for Elk Grove includes areas within the City and areas into which the City may grow.



*The vision for Elk Grove considers the desires of the residents here today, and provides opportunities for those who choose to make their lives here in the future.*



CURRENT  
POPULATION

**163,500**



PROJECTED  
POPULATION

**207,700**

and will ure.




50

2035

36



The vision for Elk Grove considers where we live, where we work, and the journey in between. In 2014, there were:

-  HOUSING UNITS **53,531**
-  JOBS **30,287**
-  COMMUTE TO JOBS OUTSIDE ELK GROVE **90.1%**

The vision builds from community strengths, including:

-  HIGH QUALITY **Schools**
-  PARKS **100+**

Data Sources: 2013 5-year ACS; SACOG Forecast (May 2012)



# OUTREACH EVENTS

## CITYWIDE VISIONING

*Weekend community  
visioning workshop*

## PLANNING ACADEMY

*Training session to  
educate attendees about  
the planning process*

## MOBILE WORKSHOPS

*Pop-up workshops held  
at community events  
throughout the City*

## COMMUNITY & AGENCY SERVICE PROVIDER MEETINGS

*Interviews with committees,  
community organizations,  
and regional agencies*

## PLANNING COMMISSION CITY STUDY

*Joint Study  
presented to  
comm*





## PLANNING MISSION/ COUNCIL SESSION

*Study Session to  
and discuss the  
community's vision*

**MANY MORE  
WAYS TO  
ENGAGE YET  
TO COME!**

# Creating Our Vision

As part of the General Plan update, the City conducted community engagement events between August and December 2015. City staff and officials provided information at Council sessions and meetings. Representatives from organizations with an interest in the community shared their vision through interviews. Members of the public offered input at mobile workshops occurring at community events around town and at an all-day visioning workshop. The vision and supporting principles presented here are based on input provided during the engagement process thus far. They also draw on findings derived from research into the existing conditions, demographics, and trends across time in the City. This document is designed to both summarize the community vision thus far and to guide future conversations as the City hones in on specific alternatives for the future, areas of focus, goals, policies, and actions that will make up the General Plan.

# Community imagines future headlines...

“City of Elk Grove has connected alternative transportation.”

“Small businesses appreciate City’s support.”

“Elk Grove has best paying jobs in the region.”

“City of Elk Grove wins national recognition as a livable, healthy City!”

“Elk Grove voted for the best restaurants in Northern California!”

“Elk Grove celebrates 10 years with highest high school graduation rates in USA!”

“Elk Grove leads the nation in recycling with state-of-the-art program.”

Headlines were generated by community input gathered at the Elk Grove General Plan Visioning Workshop on November 9, 2015.

Camarillo  
Salon

THE ELM

School St





# Community Vision

## *The City of Elk Grove is...*

A great place to make a home and a great place to work. Our community is healthy and safe and is family-oriented, with thriving schools and plentiful parks, shops, and places to work. Agriculture, rural homes, and urban life flourish together. Our natural resources, including water and open spaces, are protected and offer a variety of recreational opportunities. Community members travel easily by automobile, by bicycle, on foot, or using transit. The City is proactive in making daily life healthy and sustainable—considering the needs of future generations while protecting what is valued today.

Well-maintained infrastructure and the right mix of services and amenities draw new and dynamic businesses and development to Elk Grove. Development is guided to ensure responsible growth and opportunities for a diversity of individuals that call Elk Grove home.

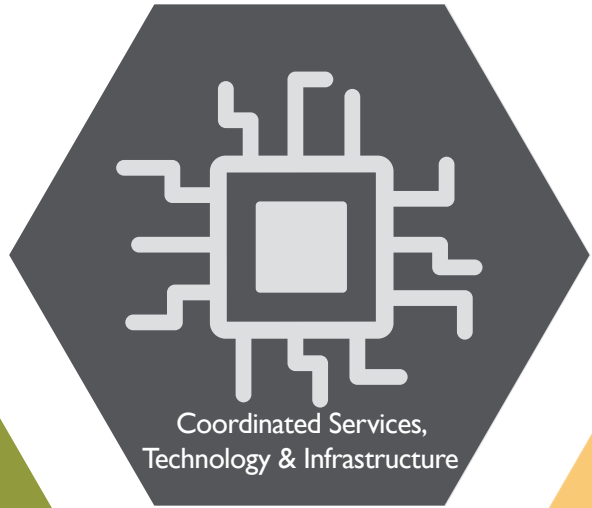
# Supporting Principles

The following statements are supporting principles that make up the larger community vision that will guide the General Plan. More practically, they provide an overarching rationale for more specific General Plan goals and policies.





Infill Development & Outward Expansion



Coordinated Services, Technology & Infrastructure



Rural Areas



Economic Vitality



Neighborhood, District & Community Identity



Multimodal & Active Transportation



Open Space & Resource Management





**Opportunities:**

- Infrastructure and space for new business development
- Growing population and livability



**Challenges:**

- Nebulous role in the region
- Varying goals between jurisdictions in the region



# Our Regional Neighbors Know Us & Our Contributions

Elk Grove occupies a prominent place in the regional dialogue. The City's identity and brand are clear in the minds of its neighbors. Our contributions to the region continue to strengthen that identity and include recreational opportunities, higher education, job centers, and quality neighborhoods. City officials engage with other cities and Sacramento County to plan and build for an ever more dynamic region. The City's employment potential within the regional economy is fulfilled. New businesses have emerged, providing new employment centers that support technology and build from our agricultural roots. Both housing and jobs are available in the community, providing flexible opportunities for many lifestyles.

# Development Fills in the Gaps

Unfinished, undeveloped gaps found throughout the City become opportunities to develop economically successful additions that provide added value to our community as well as new job opportunities and lifestyle improvements. Existing small businesses are protected even as we invite in new businesses and different economic opportunities. New development plans are grounded by community needs and market demand, and are carried out efficiently and holistically. New housing built in a variety of shapes and sizes to meet the needs and desires of our diverse community also fills in these gaps.

Infill development is consistently executed with programs that address impacts and encourage innovative building solutions. A creative growth management strategy allows expansion to occur only when economic need, community vision, and regional goals align. There is a strong system in place to guarantee that, as the community accommodates new neighbors and new jobs, it continues to maintain and improve facilities and services, such as schools, roads, and parks.





### Challenges:

- Securing funding for infill development
- Remaining true to rural character
- Outward growth pressure

### Opportunities:

- Existing infrastructure and facilities to accommodate growth
- World-class parks and schools





**Opportunities:**


- Educated, skilled residents
- Safe and crime-free environment



**Challenges:**

- Protecting small and existing businesses
- Retaining rural character

# Our Economy Thrives & New Business Adds Value



Major employment centers make their home in Elk Grove, providing employment opportunities and stimulating ancillary businesses as well. We continue to invite businesses that are competitive in the region and set the stage to attract these businesses by providing resources and amenities they need. Old and new businesses together improve our lives by providing new jobs as well as convenient places to get amenities and entertainment. Elk Grove has a diverse economy that builds from our heritage, but also invites in new and changing industries. Higher education and technical training are available to our community members as they pursue diverse job opportunities in these new industries. The City is leading the way in innovative technology infrastructure, technical education opportunities, plentiful activities and entertainment, and a safe and crime-free environment. These features attract business and provide a better quality of life for individuals and families of all incomes, ages, abilities, and backgrounds.

Growth and development in the City is built with mindfulness of our historic resources and identity. These businesses bolster the community by providing jobs, services, goods, and recreational opportunities for residents.

# City Core, Heritage, & Well-Known Neighborhoods



The City includes a civic core that offers central gathering spaces that all community members, including those from both the east and west sides of the City, enjoy and feel welcome in. The City and community organizations partner to foster the civic core to be both thriving and safe. Successful projects and annual events enhance vitality and camaraderie in this space.

Old Town Elk Grove continues to protect and showcase our heritage for the enjoyment of residents and visitors alike.

All of our neighborhoods are built around our top-notch parks and schools. Preservation and change in our neighborhoods are guided by values of diversity, neighborly spirit, and small-town character.





## Opportunities:

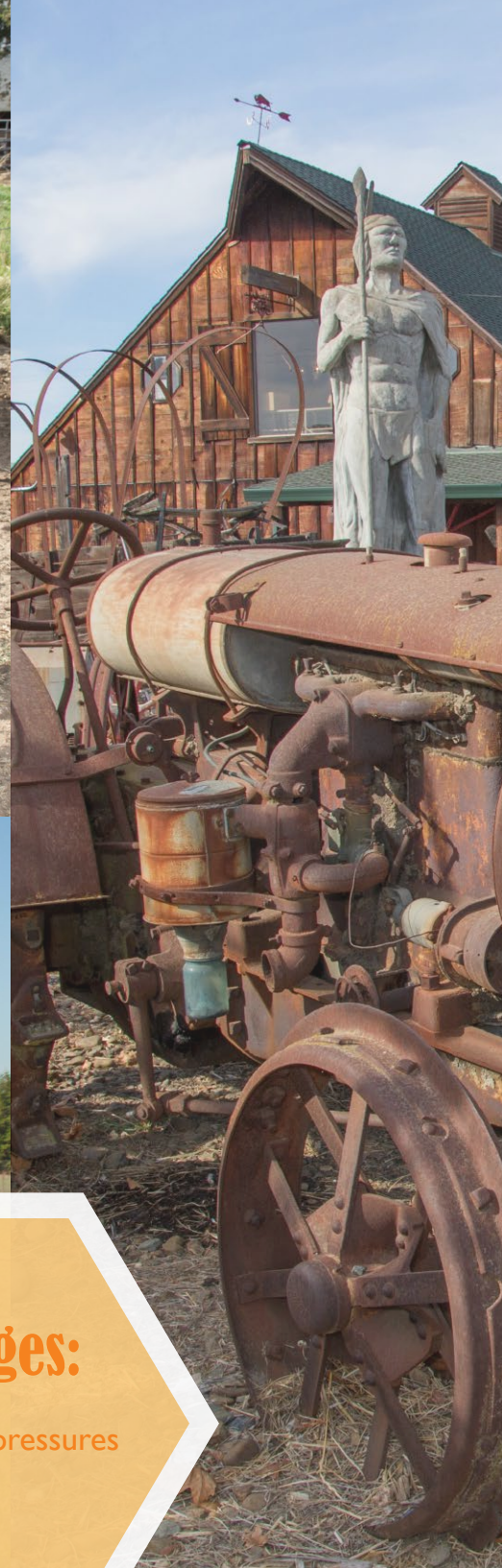
- Historic preservation
- World-class parks and schools

## Challenges:

- No strong common identity
- A divided east and west
- Funding limitations







## Opportunities:

- Cultural appreciation for rural life



## Challenges:

- Development pressures



# Protecting Our Farming Heritage & Rural Life

We celebrate the rural area and its heritage, and balance that heritage with other needs, services, and lifestyles desired in Elk Grove. Our commitment to maintaining the Rural Area is clear and codified in core planning documents through programs that preserve the aesthetics and style of our rural heritage. Agricultural producers and other land uses remain good neighbors, each with desired services and infrastructure needs fully met.

# Outdoor Recreation Is Right Outside Our Door



Our parks and trails are high quality and highly valued. We continue to enhance and maintain our recreational open spaces so that they are safe, connected, and accessible to all. Our trails connect easily to other trails and parks in the region, and community gardens are a source of local food and local involvement.





### Challenges:

- Coordination with the County and Cosumnes Community Services District
- Funding and maintenance

### Opportunities:

- Regional collaboration
- Current extensive park and trail system



**Opportunities:**

- Regional and local rail lines
- Active transportation infrastructure



**Challenges:**

- Funding and maintenance
- Maintaining acceptable traffic flow while creating safe spaces for bicycles and pedestrians



## Moving Around Anywhere, Any Way

Our residents, workers, and visitors need to move about efficiently, and have a variety of ways to do so. Connected transportation networks, regional coordination, and public and active transportation options are priorities for our community. Connected and mobile community members have the ability to travel within the City and to other places in the region by a variety of methods, with seamless transitions between modes and regions. Our community has roadways in place that allow for efficient movement and safe travel spaces for all modes of getting around. The infrastructure and facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users are clean, safe, and well maintained, and walkways and bike lanes are continuous and complete with convenient connections to local and regional transit.

# Clean, Green Practices & Healthy Living

Sustainable practices are at the forefront of environmental concerns in Elk Grove. Organizations, businesses, and residents all desire a city that is adaptive to and resilient against climate change, is a leader in conservation, and embraces innovations in green technologies. The City layout and land uses promote healthy living, with healthy grocery options and destinations nearby that people can get to by walking and biking.

The City's residents and businesses recognize the importance of responsible resource use, and they work together to conserve and use water and energy to their full potential.





### Challenges:

- Existing low-density land use patterns
- Low job-housing balance

### Opportunities:

- Established sustainability plans and policies
- New, energy-efficient building stock
- Infill development







## Opportunities:

- Top-notch existing services and providers
- Diverse community



## Challenges:

- Coordination between multiple service providers
- Funding options

# Services for the Needs of All Residents

Safety and services are important to all members of our community, and services for youth, seniors, and disadvantaged families are provided. Entertainment and social centers create a thriving and diverse economy and give residents a place to shop, play, and relax.

The City ensures that important services in our community, including social, housing, transportation, health, and education, are available and efficiently obtainable for community members that choose or need them to thrive.

# Where we go from here

The vision developed from these shared ideas provides a foundation for the updated General Plan and offers guidance to the City Council, City commissions, and staff for future decisions. In order to ensure that we have the best plan possible, the City will consider multiple alternatives for what to preserve, what to conserve, what to enhance, and what to transform. Each alternative will be evaluated for its effects on residents, community appearance, and the natural environment. The end result of this process will be an updated set of maps, goals, policies, and action statements that will guide development and conservation in Elk Grove. Each step of this process requires the active participation of as many people as possible who live and work in the community so that the General Plan ensures future decisions are consistent with the community's shared vision.







**Want to learn  
more or get involved?**

visit:

[elkgrovecity.org/generalplan](http://elkgrovecity.org/generalplan)



**ELK GROVE**

**A BRIGHTER FUTURE**