

B. Prosperity



The Tulare County General Plan prosperity section provides for the economic, agricultural, land use, and housing resources of the County. The plan uses communities and hamlets to accommodate new County growth while encouraging a majority of growth to occur within incorporated cities. Part B, Prosperity, is a long-range framework for public and private investment that will result in an agriculturally-rich and economically-viable County.

Prosperity Concepts

Concept 1: Economics

The County's economy will expand and diversify. Agriculture will remain the mainstay of the County's economy, while agriculturally-related industries and non-agricultural industries will play an increasingly larger role in the local economy. Many of the planning principles and policies in the General Plan protect existing agricultural lands and industries while providing support for advancement and diversification of agriculturally-related enterprises.

Concept 2: Agriculture

One of the most identified assets in Tulare County is the rich agricultural land on the Valley floor and in the foothills. The General Plan identifies agriculture not only as an economic asset to the County, but also as a cultural, scenic, and environmental resource to be protected.

Concept 3: Land Use

Tulare County's communities and hamlets will continue to grow and develop while natural resource lands (agriculture and open space) will be preserved. Projected population growth will require a range of housing choices, neighborhood support services, and employment-producing uses that are centrally located in communities. The County will also limit the conversion of agricultural and natural resource lands to urban uses.

Concept 4: Housing

The purpose of the Housing Element is to identify the County's housing needs, state the counties goals and objectives with regard to housing production, rehabilitation, and conservation to meet those needs, and to define the policies and programs that the County will implement to achieve the stated goals and objectives.



B. Prosperity

Economic Development

Principle 1: Improve Quality of Life

Create and facilitate opportunities to improve the lives of all County residents [*New Principle*]

Principle 2: Private Investment

Create opportunities for private investment that improves the quality of life of County residents [*Board of Supervisors, November 2005*]

Principle 3: Economic Diversification

Diversify economic opportunities in the County's unincorporated communities, hamlets, and incorporated cities [*Board of Supervisors, November 2005*]

Principle 4: Protect Agricultural Economy

Protect, expand, and diversify the County's agricultural economy and diversify employment opportunities [*Board of Supervisors, November 2005*]

Agriculture

Principle 1: Protect Agriculture

Protect valuable agricultural uses from urban encroachment [*New Principle*]

Principle 2: Maintain Separators

Maintain rural landscape separators between Tulare County's towns and cities [*New Principle*]

Land Use

Principle 1: Enhancing Communities and Hamlets

Promote land uses which improve the economic vitality and livability of Tulare County's communities and hamlets [*Board of Supervisors, November 2005*]

Principle 2: Urban-Rural Interface

Protect valuable agricultural and scenic natural lands from urban encroachment [*Board of Supervisors, November 2005*]

Principle 3: Self-Sustaining Communities

Provide a mix of land uses that promote self-sustaining communities and hamlets [*New Principle*]

Principle 4: Rural Separators

Maintain rural landscape separators between Tulare County's hamlets, communities, and cities [*Board of Supervisors, November 2005*]

Housing

[*Not included in this document, previously adopted.*]



3. Economic Development

The Economic Development Element is divided into the following sections:

- General (Section 3.1)
- Business Attraction, Expansion, and Retention (Section 3.2)
- Diversified Economy (Section 3.3)
- Labor Force Development (Section 3.4)
- Tourism (Section 3.5)
- Commercial Development (Section 3.6)
- Acronyms (Section 3.7)
- Implementation Measure (Section 3.8)

Key Terms

The following terms are used throughout this element to describe economic development issues:

Economic Base. The portion of the local economy that primarily sells its goods and services to customers outside the County or local region. These industries draw income into the County that is then re-circulated in local-serving “Non-Basic” businesses such as retail and service establishments.

Economic Development Corporation (EDC). A private, County-wide organization that promotes economic development through informational packages, site tours of the region, and presentations to corporations in support of EDC members. The EDC is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of representatives from local communities, private sector leaders, and other organizations.

Emerging Industries. Industries that currently have low concentration in the County but are growing rapidly.

Industry. A term for the collective activities of a group of firms that produce the same kind of commodity or service, or are engaged in the same type of operations. The auto industry and the steel industry are examples of industries within the manufacturing sector.

Labor Force. Persons that are either employed or are actively seeking work.

Value-Added. The increase in the value of products over the cost of their raw materials. Higher-value-added products support higher wages and generally return greater economic benefits to the locality in which they are produced.

Existing Conditions Overview

Tulare County, like many agricultural areas in the San Joaquin Valley, finds itself facing the first half of the twenty-first century coping with new growth and opportunities. While this may be said of nearly all of California, the challenge in Tulare County is compounded by an economy in transition.

Historically, agriculture drove Tulare County’s economy. For most of the past 100 years, Tulare County has one of the largest agricultural outputs of any County in the United States. Despite a strong agriculturally-based economy, Tulare County’s unemployment rate has remained much higher than the State average because of the seasonal nature of agricultural employment.

Tulare County’s long- and short-term objectives are to work with cities, communities, and hamlets, the private sector, and other organizations to bring the County more in line with State employment and income growth averages. The first step in improving Tulare County’s economy is to build upon the strong agricultural base. Tulare County has an opportunity to expand its agricultural economy through the advent of new technologies and marketing to international markets. It is essential for the County’s agricultural economy to remain at the cutting edge in crop selection and growing practices.

Tulare County has several opportunities to diversify its economy both in existing and emerging industrial sectors. Newer business opportunities in

areas such as ethanol production, value added food processing, and dairy production have established a foothold in the County within the past twenty years and should be nurtured and expanded to serve as the economic base for the County and region.

Tulare County is also the gateway to Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, Sequoia National Monument, Sequoia National Forest, and other Sierra attractions, creating opportunities for recreational and resort development in the foothills, creating jobs and increasing housing demand.

Training and education must also be expanded to build a base of skills that will attract firms locating or seeking to expand in the area. A quality work force is one key requirement for selecting a site, according to site location professionals. Efforts to create a highly skilled workforce must be made to attract industry into the area to ensure a diversified and vibrant economy.

3.1 General

ED-1

To maintain a healthy and diverse local economy that meets the present and future employment, shopping, recreational, and service needs of Tulare County residents. *[New Goal]*

ED-1.1 Economic Leadership

The County shall provide County-wide and regional leadership in economic development and coordination of economic development resources with attention to attraction of clean industries. *[New Policy]*

ED-1.2 Staff Resources

The County shall allocate County staff resources to economic planning and coordinate with cities and regional organizations in related economic development and planning efforts. *[New Policy]*

ED-1.3 Economic Strategy

The County shall maintain, monitor, and periodically update an Economic Development Strategy, which shall be used as an operational guide to implement the economic development goals, policies, and programs of the General Plan, as well as fulfilling federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) requirements for a

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs) to receive grant funding. *[New Policy]*

ED-1.4 Local and Regional Coordination

The County shall work with city, local and regional agencies to develop a resource allocation program that efficiently and equitably distributes the cost and benefits of economic development to local government jurisdictions in the County. The program should include a County-wide capital improvement plan. *[New Policy]* *[BOS/PC Joint Study Session, March 8, 2005]*

ED-1.5 Regional Cooperation

The County will work cooperatively with regional economic development activities to expand and improve the economic base of the County. *[New Policy]*

ED-1.6 Develop Public/Private Partnerships

The County shall pursue partnerships to encourage the development of public facilities and infrastructure improvements that benefit communities. *[New Policy]*

ED-1.7 Grant Funding

The County will research and pursue grant funding that will promote tourism, support community growth, and maintain the quality of life for its residents and businesses. *[New Policy]*

ED-1.8 Adequate Facilities and Services

The County shall encourage new industries to locate within communities that have or can acquire adequate infrastructure capacity to meet the needs of new development. *[New Policy]* *[Board of Supervisors, November 2005]*

3.2 Business Attraction, Expansion and Retention

ED-2

To promote business growth and industry diversification, and maintain a favorable business climate and a supportive economic foundation. *[New Goal]*

ED-2.1 Business Retention

The County shall participate in regional business retention and expansion programs, such as the Rapid Response program, to ensure that County services are accessible to businesses. *[New Policy]*

3. Economic Development

ED-2.2 Land Requirements

The County shall ensure there is capacity for new and expanding businesses by:

- Reserving sufficient locations for industry, recognizing industry's need for greater land requirements;
- Recognizing the need for a variety of locations to avoid creation of a monopoly of the industrial land market and to reflect varying requirements for transportation facilities and utility services; and
- Reserving land for exclusive industrial use to encourage development of like industries that complement each other and to prevent encroachment on industrial areas by incompatible uses. [1964 General Plan; Major Issue 3-Economic Development-Resource Development and Conservation; Policy 3] [1964 General Plan; Pg. 1-7; 1964(Modified)]

ED-2.3 New Industries

The County shall encourage new industries to locate within cities, unincorporated communities, hamlets, regional growth corridors and other unincorporated County areas where appropriately zoned. The County, in cooperation with cities and communities will identify locations for industrial uses in unincorporated areas around cities consistent with the cities' economic development strategies, taking into account opportunities offered by variations in local environmental conditions. [New Policy] [BOS/PC Joint Study Session, March 8, 2005]

ED-2.4 Job Quality – Diversify Jobs

The County shall focus its business expansion and industry attraction efforts on companies and institutions that bring quality jobs to the County and provide benefits and self-sufficiency wages for County residents. [New Policy]

ED-2.5 Small Business

Recognizing the powerful job creation potential of small businesses, the County shall support entrepreneurial development and small business expansion. [New Policy]

ED-2.6 Agency Support for Small Businesses

The County shall coordinate with other agencies to provide well-tailored services and job creation resources for small businesses, such as incubator

zones. [New Policy] [Board of Supervisors, November 2005]

ED-2.7 Home-Based Businesses

The County shall support the formation and operation of home-based businesses that maintain compatibility with surrounding uses. [New Policy]

ED-2.8 Jobs/Housing Ratio

The County shall strive to achieve a jobs-to-housing ratio of greater than one in its communities. [New Policy]

ED-2.9 Regional Processing

The County shall encourage processing facilities that obtain raw materials regionally and locally, including those which have potential to expand into regional processing facilities, to locate in industrial parks within existing unincorporated communities or under city jurisdiction. [New Policy]

ED-2.10 Supporting Agricultural Industry

Recognizing that certain critical requirements of food processing industries, such as wastewater treatment, may require innovative solutions, the County shall support and encourage technology development programs in collaboration with research institutions, such as the College of the Sequoias, for use by industries to support expansion on agricultural processing facilities in Urban Development Boundaries (UDBs). [New Policy] [Board of Supervisors, November 2005]

ED-2.11 Industrial Parks

As part of new or updated community plans, the County shall designate sites for industrial development to meet projected demand. [New Policy]

ED-2.12 Intermodal Freight Connections

The County shall support the creation and enhancement of intermodal connections along major highways and thoroughfares for freight handling that supports existing and future industrial development. [New Policy]

ED-2.13 Airport Capacity

The County shall support the expansion of airport capacity for cargo as well as passengers. [New Policy]

ED-2.14 Railways

The County shall encourage improvements to rail lines and services for cargo and passenger services in support of existing and future industrial and commercial development. *[New Policy]*

3.3 Diversified Economy

ED-3

To diversify the economic base of Tulare County through the expansion of non-agricultural industry clusters and through the development and expansion of recreation and visitor-serving attractions and accommodations. *[New Goal]*

ED-3.1 Diverse Economic Base

The County shall actively promote the development of a diversified economic base by continuing to promote agriculture, recreation services, and commerce, and by expanding its efforts to encourage industrial development including the development of energy resources. *[New Policy]*

ED-3.2 Industry Clusters

The County shall support an approach to economic development that targets the development of industry clusters through strategic partnerships with higher educational institutions, work force training agencies, business associations, financial institutions, and venture capital concerns. *[New Policy]*

ED-3.3 Non Agricultural Industries

The County shall encourage the development and expansion of non-agricultural industry clusters such as information technology and ethanol production within UDBs. *[New Policy]* *[Board of Supervisors, November 2005]*

ED-3.4 Telecommunications

The County shall encourage the development of County-wide telecommunications infrastructure. *[New Policy]*

ED-3.5 High Speed Rail

The County shall support development of high speed rail through the Central Valley with service to Tulare County. *[New Policy]* (See Policy TR-E.6)

ED-3.6 Higher Learning

The County shall help facilitate, where possible, collaboration between institutions of higher learning and local and regional technology firms. *[New Policy]*

ED-3.7 Attractive Economy

The County shall support efforts to enhance the cultural and recreational amenities available in the County to attract business entrepreneurs and employees from other metropolitan areas in California and throughout the nation and the world. *[New Policy]*

ED-3.8 Business Technology

The County shall actively support the efforts of existing and new businesses to access and maintain the highest levels of technology available for their operations. *[New Policy]*

ED-3.9 Non-Agricultural Business Development

The County shall encourage major financial institutions, venture capital firms, and business finance agencies to provide access to capital and financing programs for non-agricultural businesses. *[New Policy]*

ED-3.10 Specialty Business Program

The County shall promote and support programs focused on specialty business and ethnically diverse enterprises. *[New Policy]*

3.4 Labor Force Development

ED-4

To improve labor force preparedness by providing the local workforce with the skills needed to meet the requirements of an increasingly diverse business sector in the 21st century global economy. *[New Goal]*

ED-4.1 Workforce Skills Development

The County shall develop programs and work with other agencies and organizations to support efforts that improve the skills of the County's workforce, which is needed to meet the requirements of new and expanding businesses. *[New Policy]* *[Board of Supervisors November 2005]*

3. Economic Development

ED-4.2 Workforce Education

The County shall work with school districts to prepare students for the 21st century global economy. For example, school districts in the County should be encouraged to adopt the School-to-Work program as a model for K-12 education and focus on the requirements of those industries targeted for future growth. [New Policy]

ED-4.3 Specialized Training

The County shall encourage local colleges and industries to offer technical training and provide specialized training for employees. [New Policy]

ED-4.4 Workforce Programs

The County shall support programs that prepare the hard-to-serve unemployed for job readiness. [New Policy]

ED-4.5 Higher Education

The County shall encourage and support the development and expansion of higher education facilities, including community, State, and private college and university campuses. [New Policy]

ED-4.6 Vocational Training in Secondary Schools

The County shall serve as a catalyst, as well as an active participant, in bringing key organizations together to expand vocational and technical programs in secondary schools. [New Policy]

ED-4.7 Retain Local Graduates

The County shall actively support efforts to keep local graduates in the local workforce. [New Policy]

3.5 Tourism

ED-5

To take full advantage of the natural, cultural, and social opportunities available in the County for the enhancement of tourism. [New Goal]

ED-5.1 Development of a Recreation Industry

The County shall capitalize on the economic potential of recreation as a major industry in all ways consistent with other policies of the General Plan. [1964 General Plan; Major-Issue 3-Economic Development-Resource Development and Conservation; Policy 1] [1964 General Plan; Pg. I-7; 1964(Modified)]

ED-5.2 Agricultural and Ecological Tourism

The County shall support the development of agri-tourism and eco-tourism activities that highlight the agricultural and natural resources of the County. [New Policy] [Board of Supervisors, November 2005]

ED-5.3 Highway Tourism

The County shall support the development of welcome centers that promote agricultural-tourism along State Highway 99 and other State Highways within the County. [New Policy] [Board of Supervisors November 2005]

ED-5.4 Recreational Accommodations

The County shall support the development of visitor-serving attractions and accommodations in unincorporated areas near natural amenities and resources that would not be diminished by tourist activities. [New Policy]

ED-5.5 Rivers

The County shall encourage the development of recreational activities and promote tourism along the Kaweah, Tule, and Kings Rivers. [New Policy]

ED-5.6 Lakes

The County shall promote Lake Kaweah and Lake Success as major recreational areas that include camping, water sports, hiking, golf, conference/hotel facilities, and historic attractions. [New Policy]

ED-5.7 Foothills

The County shall encourage additional recreational and visitor-serving development in the Sierra and foothills in areas such as Three Rivers and Springville. [New Policy]

ED-5.8 Foothill Gateways

The County shall encourage the identification and development of additional recreational opportunities in the foothills and other areas where there are "gateway opportunities." [New Policy]

ED-5.9 Bikeways

The County shall support the enhancement of the County's recreational bikeways and promote the bikeway network a component of the County's tourism program. [New Policy]

ED-5.10 Visitor-Serving Business

The County shall encourage visitor-serving businesses to coordinate their advertising. *[New Policy]*

ED-5.11 Marketing Programs

The County shall regularly evaluate marketing programs and provide assistance to marketing campaigns that attract visitors to the County. *[New Policy]*

ED-5.12 Heritage Tourism

The County shall encourage agricultural, ecological, and heritage tourism by highlighting Tulare County's agricultural, historical, and cultural resources such as Allensworth State Park and Sequoia Field. *[New Policy]*

ED-5.13 National Parks Tourism

The County shall work with Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, Sequoia National Monument, Sequoia National Forest, and others to market these areas of the County as tourist destinations. *[New Policy]* *[Board of Supervisors, November 2005]*

ED-5.14 Interagency Cooperation

The County shall cooperate with federal land management agencies to develop and promote Three Rivers and Springville as gateway communities. *[New Policy]*



See also Chapter 7, *Scenic Landscapes*, Policy SL-2.2, *Gateways to the Sequoias* for further information about gateway communities.

3.6 Commercial Development

ED-6

Address regional and local commercial needs by continuing to support downtowns, town centers, and neighborhood services. *[New Goal]*

ED-6.1 Revitalization of Community Centers

The County, through public and private collaboration, shall strive to strengthen the core areas of communities to serve as the center for public, financial, entertainment, and commercial activities. *[New Policy]* *[BOS/PC Joint Study Session, March 8, 2005]*

ED-6.2 Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan

The County shall promote private sector investment in community core areas through implementation of comprehensive redevelopment plans. *[New Policy]*

ED-6.3 Entertainment Venues

The County shall encourage the establishment of community and regional entertainment venues within community core areas. *[New Policy]*

ED-6.4 Culturally Diverse Businesses

The County shall promote and support the expansion of culturally diverse businesses in community core areas through the use of Small Business Administration (SBA), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and Redevelopment Funds. *[New Policy]*

ED-6.5 Intermodal Hubs for Community and Hamlet Core Areas

The County shall work with communities and transit providers to develop intermodal hubs that focus on both local and regional bus service. *[New Policy]*

ED-6.6 Core Area Beautification

The County shall promote the beautification of community and hamlet core areas. *[New Policy]*

ED-6.7 Existing Commercial Centers

The County shall help protect the viability of community retail centers by promoting a business mix that responds to changing economic conditions and provides needed services to surrounding neighborhoods. *[New Policy]*

3.7 Acronyms

CDBG	Community Development Block Grant
CEDS	Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
EDA	Economic Development Administration
EDC	Economic Development Corporation
EDD	Employment Development Department
SBA	Small Business Administration
UDBs	Urban Development Boundaries

3. Economic Development

3.8 Implementation Measures

The following table documents the implementation measures included with the General Plan to implement the goals and policies included in this element.

	Implementation	Implements What Policy	Who is Responsible	2007- 2010	2010- 2015	2015- 2030	On- Going
1.	The County shall work with the EDC to update and adopt a strategy that supports the economic goals and policies of the General Plan. <i>[New Program]</i>	ED-1.3	RMA		■		
2.	The County shall coordinate a committee of representatives from the County, cities, and other local and regional agencies to develop a resource allocation program. <i>[New Program]</i>	ED-1.4	CAO	■			
3.	The County shall commit staff resources to engage in regional transportation initiatives, such as the Regional Blueprint and San Joaquin Partnership that encourage regional planning and economic development. <i>[New Program]</i>	ED-1.5	RMA, Planning, TCAG				■
4.	The County, working in cooperation with the cities, shall develop criteria for the location of value-added agricultural processing facilities that are compatible with an agricultural setting. Such criteria shall take into account the service requirements of facilities for processing agricultural products and the capability and capacity of the cities to provide the services required. <i>[New Program]</i>	ED-2.3 ED-2.10	RMA, Planning, Agriculture Advisory Committee				■
5.	The County shall work with the Tulare County EDC and agricultural interests to create agricultural enterprise zones with incentives to encourage agricultural support industry. <i>[New Program]</i>	ED-2.10	RMA, EDC				■
6.	The County shall continue to provide seed funding and training through the Micro Enterprise Program, the Small Business Development Center, and similar programs. <i>[New Implementation]</i>	ED-3.10	RMA, Com Dev				■
7.	The County shall continue its collaborative planning and funding efforts with agencies such as the County Office of Education, State Employment Development Department (EDD), local school districts, post secondary educational institutions, training agencies, and the cities. Such efforts may include education management services, employment placement services, relocation and retention programs, youth employment programs, jobs clubs, and neighborhood jobs services. <i>[New Program]</i>	ED-4.1 ED-4.2 ED-4.3 ED-4.4	RMA				■
8.	The County, in conjunction with the Sequoia Valley Visitors Council, EDC, and local chambers of commerce, shall develop visitor and tourism marketing programs and provide funding assistance as appropriate to support effective marketing programs that attract business and recreational travelers to the County. <i>[New Program]</i>	ED-5.1 ED-5.11	RMA, Com Dev				■
9.	The County shall conduct an evaluation of allocating transit occupancy tax revenues to programs that directly support tourism. <i>[New Program]</i>	ED-5.1	CAO	■			

Tulare County General Plan

Implementation	Implements What Policy	Who is Responsible	2007- 2010	2010- 2015	2015- 2030	On- Going
10. The County shall continue to partner with community leaders and organizations to promote beautification of unincorporated communities and hamlets. Such programs could include amnesty days, community clean up days, etc.	ED-6.6	RMA, Com Dev				■



4. Agriculture

The Agriculture Element is divided into the following sections:

- Agriculture Preservation (Section 4.1)
- Agriculture Productivity and Employment (Section 4.2)
- Animal Confinement (Section 4.3)
- Acronyms (Section 4.4)
- Implementation Measures (Section 4.5)

Key Terms

The following terms are used throughout this element to describe agriculture issues:

Agricultural Lands. Collective term for farmlands designated as Prime, Unique, Farmlands of Statewide Importance, Farmlands of Local Importance, or Grazing Land under the California Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program.

- **Prime Farmland.** Farmland with the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long-term agricultural production. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields.
- **Unique Farmland.** Farmland of lesser quality soils used for the production of the State's leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated, but may include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California.
- **Farmland of Statewide Importance.** Farmland similar to Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to store soil moisture.
- **Farmland of Local Importance.** Land of importance to the local agricultural economy as determined by each County's board of supervisors and a local advisory committee.

For Tulare County this is defined as "lands that produce dry-land grains (barley and wheat); lands that have physical characteristics that would qualify for 'Prime' or 'Statewide Import' Farmlands except for the lack of irrigation water; and lands that currently supply confined livestock, poultry and/or aquaculture operations."

- **Grazing Land.** Land on which the existing vegetation is suited for the grazing of livestock. Rangeland used for grazing serves an important function for environmental and habitat protection.

Agricultural Preserve. Designated areas that can be protected for agricultural use by either contract (such as a Williamson Act contract), easement (such as a conservation easement), or other mechanism designed to protect the agricultural use of land for 10 or more years renewed annually.

Agriculturally-Designated Lands. Land designated on the Tulare County General Plan Land Use Diagram for agriculture (Agriculture Intensive, Agriculture Extensive, or Agriculture Foothill).

Agriculturally-Related Uses. Uses that support the production of agricultural commodities (e.g., agricultural supplies, commercial processing facilities, animal husbandry, or horticulture services).

Conservation Easement. A voluntary agreement between a landowner and public agency or non-profit conservation organization. The agreement legally restricts uses of the land, such as building houses on it that would reduce or destroy its potential for agricultural production. The principal objective of an agricultural conservation easement is to safeguard the productivity of farmland and the integrity of the agricultural operation. Easements may be dedicated by the landowner or purchased by the public agency or conservation organization.

Potentially-Productive Agricultural Land. Soils which within the realm of economic possibility can be altered using certain reclamation or modification practices to make them productive for essential food crops such as grain and vegetables. Included are certain Class IV soils and soils with a Storie index of 60-80.

Prime Agricultural Land. In order to be consistent with State statutes, such as California Government Code Sections 51201 and 56064, the following lands shall qualify as prime agricultural lands:

1. All land which qualifies for rating as Class I or Class II in the Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS) land use capability classifications.
2. Land which qualifies for rating 80 through 100 in the Storie Index Rating.
3. Land which supports livestock used for the production of food and fiber and which has an annual carrying capacity equivalent to at least one animal unit per acre as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture.
4. Land planted with fruit- or nut-bearing trees, vines, bushes, or crops which have a non-bearing period of less than five years and which will normally return during the commercial bearing period on an annual basis from the projection of unprocessed agricultural plant production not less than four hundred dollars (\$400) per acre.
5. Land which has returned from the projection of unprocessed agricultural plant production an annual gross value of not less than four hundred dollars (\$400) per acre for three of the previous five years.

Ranchette. Parcel typically 1.5 to 10 acres in size used primarily for residential use with small-scale agricultural activities as a secondary use.

Soil Quality. The capacity of a specific kind of soil to function, within natural or managed ecosystem boundaries, to sustain plant and animal

productivity, maintain or enhance water and air quality, and support human health and habitation.

Urban Development Boundary (UDB).



For a definition of UDBs, see Chapter 2, Planning Framework.

Value-Added Agricultural Uses. Uses or facilities that increase the value of agricultural products over the cost of the raw agricultural inputs, such as canning, drying, freezing, or packaging agricultural produce for ultimate sale to consumers.

Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act). A contract between a landowner and a city or county to restrict land within an Agricultural Preserve or Farmland Security Zone to agricultural or open space uses in return for lower than normal property tax assessments. Contracts may only be executed on lands designated as agriculture preserve by the Board of Supervisors. The minimum term for a regular Williamson Act contract is 10 years and 20 years for a "Super" contract. Since the term automatically renews on each anniversary date of the contract, the actual term can be indefinite.

Contracts may be terminated at the option of the landowner or local government by initiating the process of term non-renewal. Under this process, the contract stops automatic renewal, and the remaining contract term at that point (9 years in the case of an original term of 10 years) is completed, with the contract null and void at the end of the term. Property tax rates increase during the non-renewal period, until they reach normal (i.e., non-restricted) levels upon termination of the contract.

Under a set of specifically defined circumstances, a contract may be cancelled without completing the process of term non-renewal. Contract cancellation, however, involves a comprehensive review and approval process, and the payment of fees by the landowner equal to 12.5 percent of the full market value of the subject property.

Contracts may be terminated at the option of the landowner or local government by initiating the process of term non-renewal. Under this process, the remaining contract term (9 years in the case of an

original term of 10 years) is allowed to lapse, with the contract null and void at the end of the term. Property tax rates increase during the non-renewal period, until they reach normal (i.e., non-restricted) levels upon termination of the contract.

Expired parcels are those parcels that have previously been subject to Williamson Act contract, and have since been removed from the contract through non-renewal, cancellation, or annexation.

Existing Conditions Overview

Agriculture is the most important sector in Tulare County's economy. Agricultural lands (crop and commodity production and grazing) are also the County's most visible source of open space lands. As such, the protection of agricultural lands and continued growth and production of agriculture industries is essential to all County residents.

Tulare County is the one of the two most productive agricultural counties in the United States according to the most recent agriculture report values (\$4.3 billion in 2005). The primary agricultural commodities in the County in 2005, based on total/gross value, were milk, oranges, cattle, grapes, and nut crops (source: 2005 Tulare County Annual Crop and Livestock Report prepared by the office of the Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer). In 2004, over 1.3 million acres of land in Tulare County were classified as "agricultural land," according to the California Department of Conservation. Of this land, more than 384,388 acres were classified as "Prime Farmland." However, due to conversion to other/nonagricultural uses, the amount of the better farmland in Tulare County has been declining since the Department started compiling such information in 1998. Similarly, the amount of land under Williamson Act Contracts has been declining in recent years.

4.1 Agriculture Preservation

AG-1

To promote the long-term preservation of productive and potentially-productive agricultural lands and to accommodate agricultural-support services and agriculturally-related activities that support the viability of agriculture and further the County's economic development goals. [New Goal]

AG-1.1 Primary Land Use

The County shall maintain agriculture as the primary land use in the valley region of the County, not only in recognition of the economic importance of agriculture, but also in terms of agriculture's real contribution to the conservation of open space and natural resources. [ERME; Land; Issue 6; Recommendation 5, ERME; Pg 30, Modified]

AG-1.2 Coordination

The County shall coordinate its agricultural policies and programs with State and federal regulations to preserve agricultural lands. [ERME, specific source unknown]

AG-1.3 Williamson Act

The County should promote the use of the California Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act) on all agricultural lands throughout the County located outside established UDBs. However this policy carries with it a caveat that support for the Williamson Act is premised on continued funding of the State subvention program that offsets the loss of property taxes. [ERME; Land; Issue 6; Recommendation 6] [ERME; Pg 30]

AG-1.4 Williamson Act in UDBs and Hamlet Development Boundaries (HDBs)

The County shall support non-renewal or cancellation processes that meet State law for lands within UDBs and HDBs. [New Policy]

AG-1.5 Substandard Williamson Act Parcels

The County shall work to remove parcels that are less than 10 acres in Prime Farmland and less than 40 Acres in Non-Prime Farmland from Williamson Act Contracts. [New Policy]

AG-1.6 Conservation Easements

The County shall consider the use of conservation easements to preserve agricultural lands. [*New Policy*]

AG-1.7 Preservation of Agricultural Lands

The County shall promote the preservation of its agricultural economic base and open space resources through the implementation of resource management programs and the identification of maximum growth parameters for all urban areas located in the County. [*Urban Boundaries Element; Goal 2*][*Urban Boundaries Element Amendment (88-01); 1988, Modified to be a policy*]

AG-1.8 Agriculture Within Urban Boundaries

The County shall not approve applications for preserves or regular Williamson Act contracts on lands located within a UDB unless it is demonstrated that the restriction of such land will not detrimentally affect the growth of the community involved for the succeeding 10 years, or that the property in question has special public values for open space, conservation, etc., or that the contract is consistent with the publicly desirable future use and control of the land in question. If proposed within a UDB of an incorporated city, the County must receive consent of the affected city. [*Urban Boundaries Element; Chapter IV; C. Current and Advanced Planning; Implementation Program C-5, Urban Boundaries Element; Chapter IV; Pg; 20; 1988, Modified*]

AG-1.9 Agricultural Preserves Outside Urban Boundaries

The County shall grant approval of individual applications for agricultural preserves located outside a UDB provided that the property involved meets the requirements of the Williamson Act and the rules of Tulare County. [*Urban Boundaries Element; Policies Regarding Agricultural Preserves; Goal 2; Policy 2.1*][*Urban Boundaries Element Amendment (88-01); 1988, (Modified)*]

AG-1.10 Extension of Infrastructure Into Agricultural Areas

The County shall oppose extension of urban services, such as sewer lines, water lines, or other urban infrastructure, into areas designated for

agriculture use unless necessary to resolve a public health situation. Where necessary to address a public health issue, services should be located in public rights-of-way in order to prevent interference with agricultural operations and to provide ease of access for operation and maintenance. Service capacity and length of lines should be designed to prevent the conversion of agricultural lands into urban/suburban uses. [*New Policy*]

AG-1.11 Agricultural Buffers

The County shall examine the feasibility of employing agricultural buffers between agricultural and non-agricultural uses, and along the edges of UDBs, HDBs considering factors including the type of operation and chemicals used for spraying, building orientation, planting of trees for screening, location of existing and future rights-of-way (roads, railroads, canals, powerlines, etc.), and unique site conditions. [*New Policy*]

AG-1.12 Ranchettes

The County shall discourage the creation of ranchettes in areas designated Valley Agriculture and Foothill Agriculture. [*New Policy*]



See also Chapter 5, Land Use, Policy LU-3.5, Rural Residential Designations.


AG-1.13 Agricultural Related Uses

The County shall allow agriculturally-related uses, including value-added processing facilities by discretionary approvals in areas designated Valley or Foothill Agriculture, subject to the following criteria:

- a. The use shall provide a needed service to the surrounding agricultural area which cannot be provided more efficiently within urban areas or which requires location in a non-urban area because of unusual site requirements or operational characteristics;
- b. The use should not be sited on productive agricultural lands if less productive land is available in the vicinity;
- c. The operational or physical characteristics of the use shall not have a significant adverse impact on water resources or the use or


management of surrounding agricultural properties within at least one-quarter (1/4) mile radius;

- d. A probable workforce should be located nearby or be readily available; and
- e. For proposed value-added agricultural processing facilities, the evaluation under criteria “a” above, shall consider the service requirements of the use and the capability and capacity of cities and unincorporated communities to provide the required services. [New Policy]

 Also see Chapter 5, Land Use, Policy LU-2.6, Agricultural Support Facilities.

AG-1.14 Right-to-Farm Noticing

The County shall condition discretionary permits for special uses and residential development within or adjacent to agricultural areas upon the recording of a Right-to-Farm Notice (Tulare County Ordinance No. 2931), which is an acknowledgment that residents in the area should be prepared to accept the inconveniences and discomfort associated with normal farming activities and that an established agricultural operation shall not be considered a nuisance due to changes in the surrounding area. [New Policy]

 Tulare County Ordinance No. 2931, commonly known as the Right-to-Farm Ordinance, was adopted to promote a good neighbor policy between agriculturalists and other residents by making clear what rights each has when they live near one another. The ordinance is designed to protect agricultural land uses from conflicts with non-agricultural uses, as well as to help purchasers and residents understand the inconveniences that may occur as the natural result of living in or near agricultural areas.

AG-1.15 Soil Productivity

The County shall encourage landowners to participate in voluntary programs that reduce soil erosion and increase soil productivity. To this end, the County shall promote coordination between the


Natural Resources Conservation Service, Resource Conservation Districts, University of California (UC) Cooperative Extension, and other similar agencies and organizations. [New Policy]

AG-1.15A Schools in Agricultural Zones

The County shall discourage the location of new schools in areas designated for agriculture, unless the School District agrees to the construction and maintenance of all necessary infrastructure impacted by the project. [New Policy]

AG-1.16 Agricultural Water Resources

The County shall seek to protect and enhance surface water and groundwater resources critical to agriculture. [New Policy]

 For further information about water, see Chapter 11, Water Resources.

4.2 Agricultural Productivity and Employment

AG-2 To support increased viability of agriculture production and promote high-value, employment-intensive, and diverse agricultural production and processing in Tulare County. [New Goal]

AG-2.1 Diversified Agriculture

The County shall support and encourage trends in agricultural production that shift suitable land into a variety of crops that can support a more diverse agricultural sector. [New Policy]

AG-2.2 Market Research

The County shall encourage agricultural agencies and marketing cooperatives to research global and domestic markets for high-value crops capable of being produced in Tulare County. [New Policy]

AG-2.3 Technical Assistance

The County shall support efforts of the UC Cooperative Extension, the Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer, and other entities to provide technical assistance to farmers attempting to shift to higher-value crops. [New Policy]

AG-2.4 Crop Care Education

The County shall encourage regional workforce training programs. *[New Policy]*

AG-2.5 High-Value-Added Food Processing

The County shall support accelerated development of high-value-added food processing industries. *[New Policy]*

AG-2.6 Biotechnology and Biofuels

The County shall encourage the location of industrial and research oriented businesses specializing in biotechnologies and biofuels that can enhance agricultural productivity, enhance food processing activities in the County, provide for new agriculturally-related products and markets, or otherwise enhance the agricultural sector in the County. *[New Policy]*

AG-2.7 Tourist-Related Agricultural Uses

The County shall support the expansion of agricultural tourism that helps maintain sites in agricultural production, provided these activities do not negatively impact on-going agricultural operations on adjacent lands. *[New Policy]*

AG-2.8 Agricultural Education Programs

The County shall support and participate in on-going public education programs conducted by organizations such as the County Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer's Office, College of the Sequoias, UC Cooperative Extension, Farm Bureau, and industry organizations to help the public better understand the importance of the agricultural industry. *[New Policy]*



Also see tourism policies included in Chapter 3, Economic Development.

AG-2.9 Global Marketing

The County shall market Tulare County as a premier location for the production of globally-distributed food, fiber, and energy products. *[New Policy]*

AG-2.10 Regional Transportation

The County shall work to improve regional transportation systems to support the movement of agricultural products locally, nationally, and globally. *[New Policy]*



Also see Chapter 12, Transportation and Circulation.

AG-2.11 Energy Production

The County shall encourage and support the development of new agricultural related industries featuring alternative energy (e.g., ethanol), utilization of agricultural waste, and solar or wind farms. *[New Policy]*

4.3 Animal Confinement

AG-3

Support the responsible development and economic viability of animal confinement facilities. *[New Goal]*



The Animal Confinement Facilities Plan (ACFP) – Phase I (adopted by the Tulare County Board of Supervisors on April 11, 2000) contains policies and standards that specifically address the location and development of dairies and other bovine animal confinement operations in Tulare County.

4.4 Acronyms

ACFP	Animal Confinement Facilities Plan
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
GPR	General Plan Referral
HDB	Hamlet Development Boundary(ies)
LAFCO	Local Agency Formation Commission
NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Services
TCAG	Tulare County Association of Governments
UC	University of California
UDB(s)	Urban Development Boundary(ies)

4.5 Implementation Measures

The following table documents the implementation measures included with the General Plan to implement the goals and policies included in this element.

	Implementation	Implements What Policy	Who is Responsible	2007- 2010	2010- 2015	2015- 2030	On- Going
1.	The County shall take the lead to work with cities and Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) to establish a comprehensive agricultural land mitigation program to offset impacts of agricultural land conversion to urban uses.	AG-1.1 AG-1.6 AG-1.7	RMA, Planning				■
2.	The County shall review agricultural land preservation programs and assess their effectiveness in furthering the County's agricultural goals and policies as part of an annual report. <i>[New Program]</i>	AG-1.3 AG-1.4 AG-1.5	RMA, Planning				■
3.	The County shall maintain a comprehensive database of contracted agricultural preserves located within UDBs of unincorporated communities and review these preserves at regular intervals. The purpose of the review is to determine whether any unincorporated community in the County is unduly constrained or confined by land contracted under the Williamson Act. If this has occurred, the County shall encourage the land owner to file a notice of non-renewal so that the contract on the property could be terminated nine years from that date. The Williamson Act review shall be closely coordinated with the review of UDBs. <i>[Urban Boundaries Element; V. Policies Regarding Agricultural Preserves; Goal 2; Policy 2.1][Urban Boundaries Element Amendment (88-01); 1988 (Modified)]</i>	AG-1.3 AG-1.4 AG-1.5 AG-1.8	RMA, Planning				■
4.	The County of Tulare shall serve Notices of Non-Renewal of Land Conservation Contracts in conformance with California Government Code § 51245 through 51246, for properties that do not meet the minimum parcels sizes set forth under § 51222 of the California Government Code, i.e. at least 10 acres in size in the case of prime agricultural land or at least 40 acres in size in the case of non prime agricultural land. <i>[New Program]</i>	AG-1.5	RMA, Planning			■	
5.	The County shall work with TCAG and the cities to establish criteria for the locations for agricultural conservation easements. <i>[New Program]</i>	AG-1.6	RMA, Planning	■			■
6.	The County shall continue to use the Rural Valley Lands Plan Parcel Evaluation Procedure to evaluate changes to agricultural zoning and determine the expansion of UDBs. <i>[New Program]</i>	AG-1.7 AG-1.8 AG-1.9 AG-1.10	RMA, Planning				■
7.	The County shall coordinate with Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCO) and TCAG to closely monitor the amount of agriculture lands converted annually to urban and other non-agricultural uses. This data will be reported as a feature of the Annual Report prepared pursuant to Policy PF-7.1, Annual Review, and shall be a comparative assessment of development efficiency, such as population per acre, for each city, community and hamlet. <i>[New Program]</i>	AG-1.7 PF-7.1	RMA, Planning				■

Tulare County General Plan

	Implementation	Implements What Policy	Who is Responsible	2007- 2010	2010- 2015	2015- 2030	On- Going
8.	The County shall request LAFCO to adopt rules which discourage extension of sewer and water services into agricultural areas.	AG-1.10	RMA, Planning		■		
9.	The County shall consider implementing an Agricultural Buffer Program which will help stabilize edge conditions, protect agricultural operations, and moderate the untimely conversion of farmland to urban development. To do so, the County shall identify interested stakeholder groups, including the Tulare County Farm Bureau, the Building Industry Association, the Department of Pesticide Regulation and others, and conduct workshops to resolve the following types of implementation issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Distance: 330 feet, ▪ Stabilization of edge condition, ▪ Types of operation, ▪ Types of land uses (i.e. schools, etc) ▪ Building orientation, ▪ Planting of trees for screening, ▪ Location of existing and future rights-of-way, ▪ Types of uses allowed inside the buffer-zone, ▪ Unique site conditions, ▪ Responsibility for maintenance, ▪ Scale of development, ▪ Mechanism for exemptions, and ▪ Implementation targeted for 2007-2010. <p>When implemented, all new development shall be required to provide an agricultural buffer transition area. <i>[New Program]</i></p>	AG-1.11	RMA, Planning; Agricultural Commissioner /Sealer	■			■
10.	Whenever new or updated community, hamlet, sub-area or redevelopment plans are contemplated, existing non-conforming uses shall be identified as a part of the planning effort.	AG-1.13	RMA, Planning				■
11.	The County shall compile and provide information to the local real estate industry to help make the public aware of the right-to-farm provisions in the County. <i>[New Program]</i>	AG-1.14	RMA, Planning				■
12.	During the General Plan referral (GPR) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) processes, for new schools in agricultural areas, the County shall indicate to the School district which roadways and other public facilities and services require further analysis and cost considerations. <i>[New Program]</i>	AG-1.15	RMA, Planning				■
13.	The County shall amend the Zoning Ordinance to provide for agriculturally related energy production industries. <i>[New Implementation]</i>	AG-2.11	RMA, Planning				■
14.	The County shall continue to use an Agricultural Advisory Committee as the formal advisory body for issues relating to agricultural zones and agriculture in Tulare County. <i>[Ongoing Program]</i>	Chapter 4	Agricultural Advisory Committee				■



5. Land Use

The Land Use Element is divided into two major sections. The first major section describes the County's Land Use Diagram, the land use designations that are shown on the diagram, and related standards for development. The second major section sets out goals, policies, and implementation programs organized under the following eight headings:

- Growth and Development (Section 5.1)
- Resource Uses (Section 5.2)
- Residential Uses (Section 5.3)
- Commercial Development (Section 5.4)
- Industrial Development (Section 5.5)
- Public/Institutional Development (5.6)
- Community Design (Section 5.7)
- Acronyms (Section 5.8)
- Implementation Measures (Section 5.9)

Existing Conditions Overview

As of 2006, Tulare County encompasses over 4,661 square miles of classified lands (lands with identified uses). Resource conservation areas, which include wilderness, national forests, monuments and parks, along with County parks, make up 52.2 percent of the County, the largest classification found in the County. Agricultural uses, which include row crops, orchards, dairies, and grazing lands on the valley floor and in the foothills total over 2,071 square miles or about 43 percent of the entire County. Urban uses such as incorporated cities, communities, hamlets, other unincorporated urban uses, and infrastructure rights-of-way make up the remaining land in the County.

Key Terms

The following terms are used throughout this element to describe land use issues:

Agricultural Uses. The growing of food and fiber and the raising of livestock and poultry.

Agriculturally-Related Uses. Uses that support agricultural production or processing (e.g., agricultural supply firm, commercial processing facilities that serve the agricultural community, etc.).

Big Box Retail. Any large store format that is larger than a specified threshold of square footage in size. Generally, this threshold ranges from as low as 60,000 square feet to 200,000 square feet. Big box retail stores may include discount department stores, grocery stores, warehouse clubs, outlet stores or niche market stores offering a large selection of items in a particular category.

Employee Housing. Any portion of any housing accommodation, or property upon which a housing accommodation is located, as defined in §17008 Health and Safety Code.

Farmworker Housing. Any housing or living accommodation or camping facilities maintained in connection with any work or place where farm work is being performed, providing for the housing of five or more agricultural employees.

Land Use Designation. An applied policy on the General Plan Land Use Diagram that defines allowable uses and development standards for agricultural, residential, commercial, and industrial development, and other basic categories of land use.

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). LEED certification is the recognized standard for measuring building sustainability, and provides developers with a way to demonstrate that a building project has achieved its environmental goals and the building is performing as designed. The LEED green building rating system, developed and administered by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), is designed to promote design

and construction practices that increase profitability while reducing the negative environmental impacts of buildings and improving occupant health and well-being. Getting certified allows developers to take advantage of a growing number of State and local government incentives.

The LEED rating system offers four certification levels for new construction that correspond to the number of credits accrued in five green design categories: sustainable sites, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources and indoor environmental quality.

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighborhood Development (LEED-ND). The U.S. Green Building Council, the Congress for the New Urbanism, and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) are in the process of developing the LEED-ND. The LEED-ND rating system, to be launched in 2009, will combine smart growth, new urbanism, and green building principles into the first national standard for neighborhood design.

Major Waterway. Any navigable body of water.

Mixed Use. Any combination of retail/commercial, service, office, residential, hotel, or other use in the same building or on the same site typically configured in one (1) of the following ways:

- **Vertical Mixed Use.** A single structure with the above floors used for residential or office use and a portion of the ground floor for retail/commercial or service uses.
- **Horizontal Mixed Use – Attached.** A single structure which provides retail/commercial or service use in the portion fronting the public or private street with attached residential or office uses behind.
- **Horizontal Mixed Use – Detached.** Two (2) or more structures on one (1) site which provide retail/commercial or service uses in the structure(s) fronting the public or private street, and residential or office uses in separate structure(s) behind or to the side.

Parcel (Lot). A lot, or continuous group of lots, in single ownership or under single control, usually considered a unit for purposes of development.

Resource Lands. Lands generally designated and devoted to agriculture, grazing, resource extraction, and other open space uses.

River-bank/River-edge. The lateral confines (channel margins) during all but flood stage of a river.

Shallow Soils. Soils which are 10 to 20 inches in depth, with a limited water holding capacity.

Slope. The rate of rise or fall of the natural terrain, expressed as a percentage, of an area with a single direction of slope. Simple slope is measured by the following formula: $\text{simple slope} = (V/H) \times 100$ where V = vertical distance between the highest elevation and lowest elevation of a straight line drawn perpendicular to the sloping surface; H = horizontal distance of a straight line drawn perpendicular to the sloping surface.

Sprawl. An inefficient pattern of land use conversion in which the growth rate of urbanized land significantly exceeds the rate of population growth over a specified time period. Typically sprawl is an auto-dependent, single use, often discontinuous, low-density development pattern.

Supercenter. Supercenters typically average about 250,000 square feet in size and are considerably larger than big box outlets. Supercenters contain a full sized grocery store and full size discount retail store under the same roof. The average supercenter is approximately six acres with required parking spaces four to seven times larger.

Unstable Soils. Soils which have a greater potential for sediment yield.

Value-Added Agricultural Uses (Processing Facilities). Uses or facilities that increase the value of agricultural produce over the cost of raw produce, such as canning, drying, freezing, or packaging agricultural produce for ultimate sale to consumers.

Land Use Diagram and Standards

The Tulare County Land Use Diagram consists of several diagrams. The diagram that is broadest in scope is the Countywide Land Use Diagram, which depicts designations for resource lands primarily on the San Joaquin Valley floor and in the western foothills and mountains (see Figure 5-1). The remainder of the County is covered by Land Use Diagrams for community plan areas, the Kings River Plan, mountain sub-areas, and city General Plan areas.

The various Land Use Diagrams in the Land Use Element, area plans, and community plans have generally employed a similar set of land use designations although not every Land Use Diagram uses every designation. Since the General Plan was originally adopted (1964), several regional and community plans have been adopted, each with its own set of land use and development standards. The result is that by 2005 Tulare County was using over 60 separate land use designations. It is the intent of this Land Use Element to establish a common set of land use designations that will be utilized in all future County plans. This uniform set of land use and development standards will be used in all updates and new planning efforts including the General Plan, area plans, community plans, and hamlet plans.

State planning law requires General Plans to establish “standards of population density and building intensity” for the various land use designations in the plan (Government Code § 65302(a)). To satisfy this requirement, the General Plan includes such standards for each land use designation appearing on the Land Use Diagram. These standards are stated differently for residential and non-residential development. Table 5.1 provides the land use designations and standards used in Tulare County. Following are explanations of how these standards operate.

Residential Development

Standards of development density for residential uses are stated as the allowable range of dwelling units per acre. The term acre refers to gross acre and includes all land (including streets and rights-of-way) designated for a particular residential use, while net acreage excludes streets and rights-of-way.

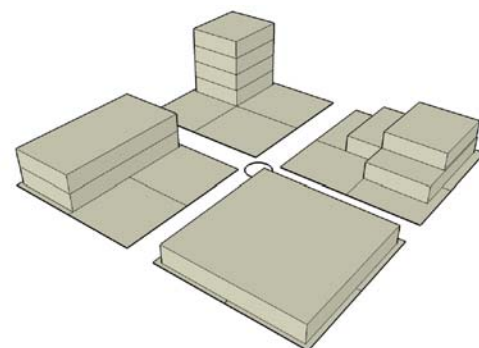
In urban areas, net acreage is normally 20 to 25 percent less for a given area than gross acreage. In rural areas and open space areas, the difference between net and gross can be as low as five percent. Net acreage is the standard typically used in zoning, while gross acreage is more commonly used in General Plan designations.

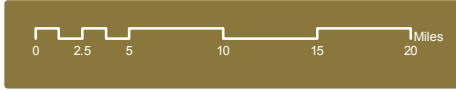
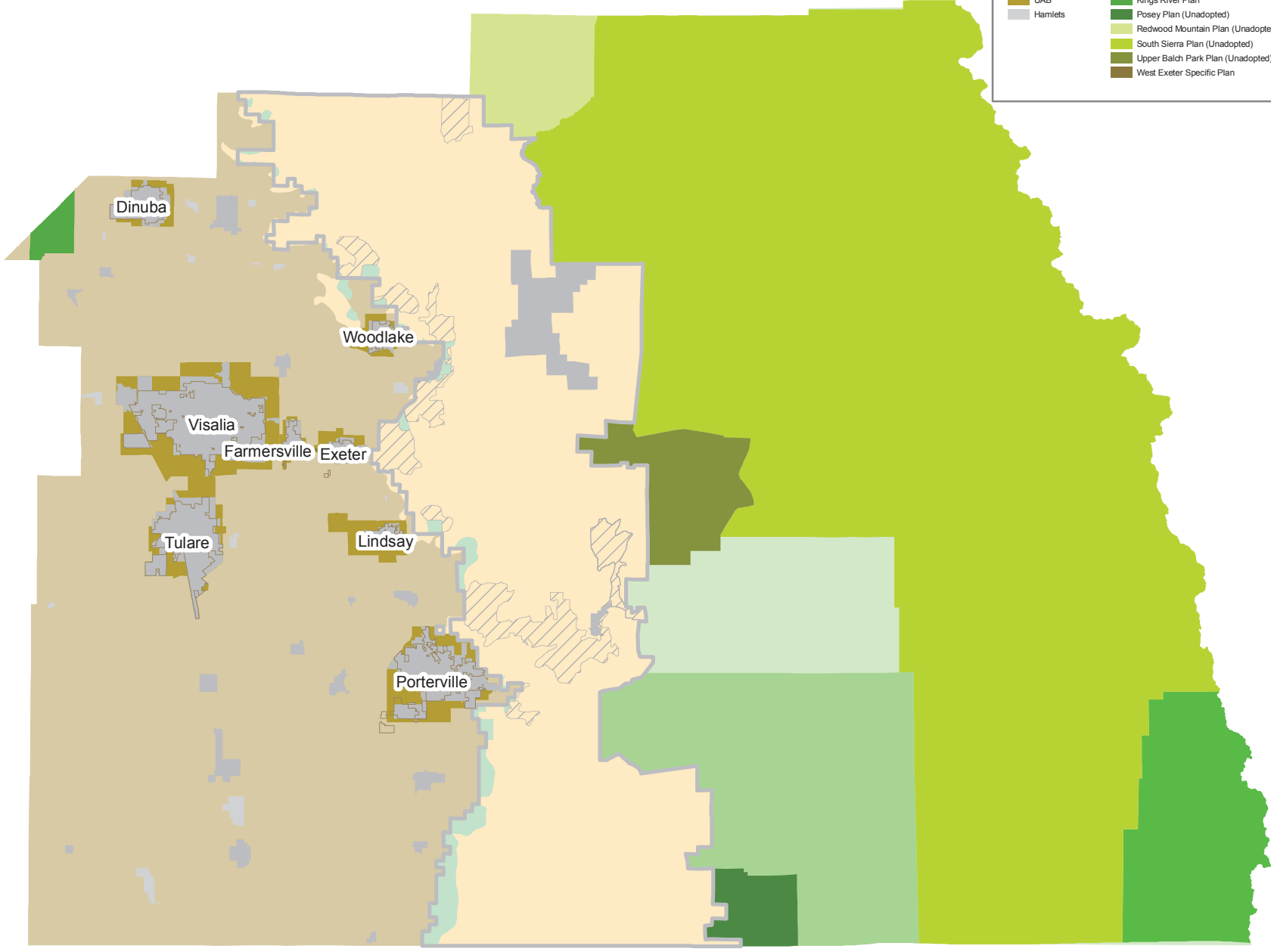
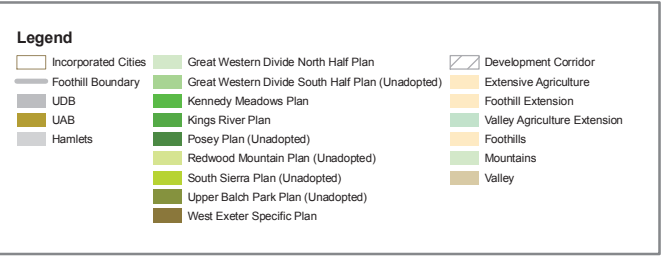
Standards of population density for residential uses can be derived by multiplying the maximum allowable number of dwelling units per acre by the average number of persons per dwelling unit assumed for the applicable residential designation. In 2006, according to the California Department of Finance in unincorporated Tulare County the average household size was 3.27 persons per household.

Non-Residential Development

Standards of building intensity for non-residential uses such as commercial and industrial development are stated as maximum floor-area ratios (FARs). A floor-area ratio is the ratio of the gross building square footage on a lot to the net square footage of the lot (or parcel).

For example, on a lot with 10,000 net square feet of land area, an FAR of 1.00 will allow 10,000 square feet of gross building floor area to be built, regardless of the number of stories in the building (e.g., 5,000 square feet per floor on two floors or 10,000 square feet on one floor). On the same 10,000-square-foot lot, an FAR of 0.50 would allow 5,000 square feet of floor area, and an FAR of 0.25 would allow 2,500 square feet. The diagram below shows graphically how various building configurations representing an FAR of 1.00 could cover a lot.





Tulare County Planning Areas | Figure 5.1

Tulare County General Plan

Table -5.1 Land Use Designations

Land Use Designations	Land Use Label	Minimum Lot Size	Dwelling Units Per Acre (DU/Acre) ⁶	Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) ⁶	Where Allowed			
					City UDB ¹	Community	Hamlet	Other Unincorporated
Resource⁵								
Valley Agricultural	VA	10-80 Acres	1 Unit/10 Acres Max.	0.02				
Foothill Agricultural	FA	160 Acres	1 Unit/80 Acres Max.	0.02 ⁴				■
Resource Conservation	RC	160 Acres	1 Unit/40 Acres Max.	0.02		■		■
Timber Production	TP	160 Acres	--	0.02				■
Native American Reserve	NAR	--	--	--				■
Urban Reserve	UR	--	1 Unit/10 Acres Max.	0.02	■	■		
Residential²								
Rural Residential	RR		1 Unit/5-10 Acres	--	■	■		■
Mountain Residential	MR		1 - 4	--				■
Low-Density Residential	LDR		1 - 3.5	--		■		
Low-Medium-Density Residential	LMDR		3.5 – 8.7	--		■		
Medium-Density Residential	MDR		6.1 – 10.0	--		■		
Medium-High-Density Residential	MHDR		10.1 – 16.0	--		■		
High-Density Residential	HDR	--	16.1 – 30.0	--		■		

Tulare County General Plan

Table -5.1 Land Use Designations Continued

Commercial								
General Commercial	GC		--	0.5		■		
Neighborhood Commercial	NC		--	0.5		■		
Community Commercial	CC		--	0.5		■		
Highway Commercial	HC		--	0.5	■	■		■
Town Center	TC		10.0 – 30.0	2.0		■		
Service Commercial	SC		--	0.5	■	■		■
Office Commercial	OC		--	0.5		■		
Recreation Commercial	REC		--	0.5	■	■		■
Mixed Use								
Hamlet Mixed Use ³	HMU	--	1.0 – 30.0	0.5			■	
Foothill Mixed Use ⁴	FMU	--	1.0 – 15.0	0.25				■
Planned Community Area	PCA	TBD	TBD	TBD		■		
Industrial								
Light Industrial	LI		--	0.5		■	■	
Heavy Industrial	HI		--	0.5	■	■	■	■
Public								
Public/Quasi-Public	P/QP	--	--	--	■	■	■	■
Public Recreation	PR	--	--	--	■	■	■	■
Other								

Table -5.1 Land Use Designations Continued

1) *Urbanized uses under the Urban Reserve (UR), Rural Residential (RR), Highway Commercial (HC), Service Commercial (SC), Recreation Commercial (RC), Heavy Industrial (HI), Public/Quasi-Public (P/QP), and Public Recreation (PR) designations inside city Urban Development Boundary (UDBs) are only allowed as provided for in Chapter 2, Planning Framework, Section 2.8, Implementation Measure #2.*

2) *Minimum lot sizes for residential uses: public water and onsite septic 12,500 square feet; onsite water and septic 1 acre; and well and sewer 8,000 square feet or 20,000 square feet of lot coverage, whichever is greater.*

3) *Hamlet Mixed Use (HMU) developments may include residential uses and commercial services that do not impact the provision of services to existing development.*

4) *Please see Part II, Area Plans, Foothill Growth Management Plan for allowed uses and development standards in the foothill development corridors.*

5) *For Resource designations, FAR is intended to represent the building intensity for the area so designated and not on a per parcel FAR basis. FAR does not apply to facilities necessary for resource production.*

6) *Increased density or intensity above that specified may be permitted pursuant to an adopted community plan or specific plan to achieve planning goals as set forth in this General Plan.*

Resource Land Use Designations

Valley Agriculture (VA)

This designation establishes areas for intensive agricultural activities on prime valley agricultural soils and other productive or potentially productive valley lands where commercial agricultural uses can exist without conflicting with other uses, or where conflicts can be mitigated. Uses typically allowed include irrigated crop production, orchards and vineyards; livestock; resource extraction activities and facilities that directly support agricultural operations, such as processing; and other necessary public utility and safety facilities. Allowable residential development includes one principal and one secondary dwelling unit per parcel, for relative, caretaker/employee, and farmworker housing. This designation is located primarily outside UDBs on the valley floor. The RVLP applies to all lands designated Valley Agriculture.

Minimum Parcel Size: 10-80 Acres

Maximum Density: 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres

- One additional unit may be allowed for every 20 additional acres over the minimum parcel size

Maximum Intensity: 0.02 FAR

Foothill Agriculture (FA)

This designation establishes areas for agricultural activities primarily located in the foothill and mountain regions where extensive commercial agricultural uses can exist without conflicting with other uses, or where conflicts can be mitigated. Uses typically allowed include orchards and vineyards, grazing of cattle, horses, sheep, and goats on grazing lands, resource extraction activities, facilities that directly support agricultural operations, and other necessary public utility and safety facilities. Allowable residential development includes one principal and one secondary dwelling unit per 160 acres, for relative, caretaker/employee, and farmworker housing. This designation is located primarily outside UDBs and within foothill development corridors, in the foothills. The Foothill

Growth Management Plan applies to all lands designated Foothill Agriculture.

Minimum Parcel Size: 160 Acres

Maximum Density: 1 dwelling unit per 80 acres

- One additional unit may be allowed for every 40 additional acres over 160 acres

Maximum Intensity: 0.02 FAR

Resource Conservation (RC)

This designation is intended to identify and protect open space lands including State and national forests and parks, Bureau of Land Management lands, and other public lands specifically preserved for timberland protection (non-TP designated), watershed preservation, outdoor recreation, grazing, and wilderness or wildlife/environmental preserves. Uses typically allowed in this designation are those related to resource utilization and resource conservation activities and could include uses that provide a buffer between incompatible types of land use. Resource operations and other facilities such as grazing, hunting and fishing clubs, guest ranches, campgrounds and summer camps on private lands require a special use permit. Residential uses (1 dwelling unit per 40 acres), may be conditionally allowed. This designation is located primarily outside UDBs in the foothill and mountain regions.

Minimum Parcel Size: 160 Acres

Maximum Density: 1 dwelling unit per 40 acres

Maximum Intensity: 0.02 FAR (special use permit required)

Timber Production (TP)

This designation is intended to identify and protect areas that demonstrate that the "highest and best use" is timber production and accompanying accessory uses. The designation is applied to lands that are zoned Timber Production Zone (TPZ) pursuant to the California Timberland Productivity Act of 1982. Public improvements and urban services are prohibited on TP lands except where necessary and compatible with ongoing timber production.

Minimum Parcel Size: 160 Acres

Maximum Intensity: 0.02 FAR (special use permit required)

Native American Reserve (NAR)

This designation recognizes tribal trust and reservation lands managed by a Native American Tribe under the United States Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Minimum Parcel Size: -- Acres

Maximum Intensity: -- FAR

Urban Reserve (UR)

This designation establishes a holding zone whereby properties shall remain zoned for agriculture or open space use until such a time as conversion to urban uses is deemed appropriate. The UR designation shall be appended by the intended future land use designation, for example, Urban Reserve – Heavy Industrial (UR-HI). When a rezoning occurs without a General Plan amendment, the UR designation shall be removed from the parcel. This designation applies primarily within UDBs.

Minimum Parcel Size: TBD Acres

Maximum Intensity: TBD FAR

Residential Land Use Designations

Rural Residential (RR)

This designation establishes areas for single family dwellings and farmworker housing located away from cities and communities in agricultural or rural areas where dispersed residential development on 1-5 acre parcels is set forth in community or sub-area plans. Typical allowed uses include: detached single-family dwellings and secondary dwellings; agricultural uses such as crop production, orchards and vineyards, grazing, and animal raising; and necessary public utility and safety facilities. This designation is primarily located at the edges of UDBs in the lower foothill and valley regions.

Maximum Density: 1 DU/5 Acres if average slope is less than 30 percent.

- 1 DU/10 Acres if average slope is 30 percent or greater.

Mountain Residential (MR)

This designation establishes areas for single-family dwellings within the foothill and mountain regions where steep slopes and limited services provide for dispersed residential development on larger parcels. Typical uses allowed include: detached single-family homes and secondary dwellings; agricultural uses such as grazing or animal raising; and limited agricultural support businesses such as roadside produce stands, tourist-related lodging and activities; resource extraction; and public support uses such as churches, schools, libraries, medical facilities, parks, and other necessary public utility and safety facilities. This designation is generally found outside UDBs in the upper foothill and mountain regions.

Maximum Density: 4 DU/Acre

- 1 DU/40 Acres if average slope is 30 percent or greater.

Low Density Residential (LDR)

This designation establishes areas for single-family residences with individual homes on lots typically ranging from 12,500 square feet to one acre. Uses typically allowed include: detached single-family homes; secondary dwellings; and residential support uses such as churches, schools, and other necessary public utility and safety facilities. This designation is typically found inside communities or on the outside edge of UDBs.

Maximum Density 1-3.5 DU/Acre

- When areas in this designation are identified as primary recharge areas for a community’s water system, acreage minimums should not be below 2 acres.
- Areas with 30 percent or higher average slopes should have acreage minimums in excess of 3 acres.

Low-Medium-Density Residential (LMDR)

This designation establishes areas suitable for single-family neighborhoods at relatively low densities on lots ranging from 5,000 to 12,500 square feet in

Tulare County General Plan

urbanized areas. Uses typically allowed include detached single-family homes; secondary dwellings; and residential support uses such as churches, schools, parks, medical facilities, and other necessary public utility and safety facilities. This designation is used only within UDBs.

Maximum Density 3.5-8.7 DU/Acre

Medium Density Residential (MDR)

This land designation establishes areas for single-family and low-density multi-family dwellings. Uses typically allowed include single-family dwellings, second units, townhomes, duplexes, triplexes, and mobile home parks. This designation is used only within UDBs.

Maximum Density 6.1-10.0 DU/Acre

Medium-High-Density Residential (MHDR)

This designation establishes areas for compact single family and multi-family dwellings in urbanized areas. Uses typically allowed include a wide range of living accommodations, including single-family dwellings, duplexes, townhouses, and low-rise apartments. This designation is used only within UDBs.

Maximum Density: 10.1-16.0 DU/Acre

High Density Residential (HDR)

This designation established areas for multi-family dwellings in urbanized areas. Uses typically allowed include: duplexes, townhouses, and apartments located near schools, parks, and other public services. This designation is used only within UDBs.

Maximum Density: 16.1-30.0 DU/Acre

Commercial Land Use Designations

General Commercial (GC)

This designation establishes areas for small-scale, general retail, and service businesses that provide goods to the immediate surrounding area. Uses typically allowed include: food and beverage retail sales; limited personal, medical, professional, and repair services; and retail sales. This designation is found primarily within UDBs.

Maximum Intensity: 0.5 FAR

Neighborhood Commercial (NC)

This designation establishes areas for small, localized retail, recreational, and service businesses that provide goods and services to the surrounding community. Uses typically allowed include: eating and drinking establishments; food and beverage retail sales; limited personal, medical, professional services; repair services; and retail sales. Such facilities may range from a single use to a cluster of uses such as a shopping center. This designation is found primarily within UDBs.

Maximum Intensity: 0.5 FAR

Community Commercial (CC)

This designation establishes areas for a full range of commercial retail and service commercial establishments serving multiple neighborhoods or an entire community and surrounding area. Uses typically allowed include: big box retail, eating and drinking establishments; food and beverage sales; hardware stores; gasoline service stations; public buildings; general merchandise stores; and professional and financial offices. Such facilities are typically arranged as a cluster of uses such as a shopping center. This designation is found primarily within UDBs.

Maximum Intensity: 0.5 FAR

Highway Commercial (HC)

This designation establishes areas for retail, recreational, and service-based businesses which provide goods and services to tourists and commuters along major highways. Uses typically allowed include: big box retail; eating and drinking establishments; food and beverage retail sales; limited repair services; lodging (hotels and motels); and retail sales. Such facilities may range from a single use to a cluster of uses located at a freeway off ramp or major highway intersection. This designation is located primarily within UDBs and pursuant to regional growth corridor plans and policies.

Maximum Intensity: 0.5 FAR

Town Center (TC)

This designation establishes the commercial core of the community and provides for a concentration of businesses and a central gathering place for social activity, commonly formed around a pedestrian oriented “main street”. Uses typically allowed include: eating and drinking establishments; retail sales; personal, medical and professional services; entertainment venues; civic uses; medium-high-and high density residential dwellings; and mixed use development. These areas may contain a combination of vacant or infill parcels and parcels with the potential to redevelop over time. This designation is found only within UDBs.

Maximum Intensity: 2.0 FAR

Maximum Density: 10.0-30.0 DU/Acre

Service Commercial (SC)

This designation establishes areas for service commercial uses in urbanizing areas. Uses typically allowed include: automotive-related or heavy equipment sales and services; building maintenance services; construction sales and services; and warehousing. This designation is found primarily within UDBs.

Maximum Intensity: 0.5 FAR

Commercial Office (CO)

This designation establishes areas in communities that provide employment opportunities for medical and professional services and limited support retail sales. Uses typically allowed include: offices and office parks; and secondary support uses such as printing, supply stores; and eating establishments. This designation is found primarily within UDBs.

Maximum Intensity: 0.5 FAR

Commercial Recreation (CR)

This designation establishes areas for a mix of commercial uses oriented toward tourists and other visitors. Uses typically allowed include: recreation activities (e.g., golf courses, archery ranges, theme parks); dining; entertainment services; destination-resort hotels; motels; “dude ranches;” wineries; spas; and on-site employee residential uses. Residential uses would only be allowed in conjunction with

resort uses as onsite caretaker or employee housing. This designation is found primarily within the foothill and mountain regions.

Maximum Intensity: 0.5 FAR

Mixed Use Land Use Designations

Mixed Use (MU)

This designation establishes areas appropriate for the planned integration of some combination of retail; office; single and multi-family residential; hotel; recreation; limited industrial; public facilities or other compatible use. Mixed Use areas allow for higher density and intensity development, redevelopment or a broad spectrum of compatible land uses ranging from a single use on one parcel to a cluster of uses. These areas are intended to provide flexibility in design and use for contiguous parcels having multiple owners, to protect and enhance the character of the area. The consideration of development proposals in Mixed Use areas should focus on compatibility between land uses, and the development potential of a given area compared to the existing and proposed mix of land uses and their development impacts. Specific plans may be required to assist in the consideration of Mixed Use development proposals. This designation is found within UDBs, HDBs and pursuant to regional growth corridor plans and policies.

Maximum Density: 30.0 DU/Acre

Maximum Intensity: 0.5 FAR

Foothill Mixed Use (FMU)

This designation establishes areas within the foothill development corridors for residential, commercial, and industrial uses. Uses typically allowed include: single-family and multi-family residential dwellings, eating and drinking establishments; food and beverage retail sales; limited personal, medical, professional services; repair services; retail sales; and agricultural-related industrial uses. Such facilities may range from a single use to a cluster of uses.

Maximum Density: 15.0 DU/Acre

Maximum Intensity: 0.25 FAR



See Part II, Area Plans, Foothill Growth Management Plan for a description of the foothill development corridors.

Planned Community Area (PCA)

This designation establishes areas suitable for comprehensive planning for long term community development on large tracts of land, typically under unified ownership or development control, and allows for master planning where a community plan does not currently exist. Planned communities have a balance of land uses that support economic growth and promote an exceptional quality of life. Planned communities accommodate mixed use developments that include residential; commercial; administrative; industrial; and other activity. Furthermore, such communities must ensure provision of open space, infrastructure and public services needed to support growth.

Maximum Density: 30.0 DU/Acre

Maximum Intensity: 2.0 FAR

Industrial Land Use Designations

Light Industrial (LI)

This designation establishes areas for a range of non-intensive business park, industrial park, and storage uses that do not have detrimental noise or odor impacts on surrounding urban uses. Uses typically allowed include: warehousing; welding and fabrication shops; manufacturing and processing; and business support uses such as retail or eating establishments that serve adjacent light industrial uses and employees. This designation is found primarily within UDBs and pursuant to regional growth corridor plans and policies.

Maximum Intensity: 0.5 FAR

Heavy Industrial (HI)

This designation establishes areas for the full range of industrial uses, which may cause noise or odor impacts on surrounding urban uses. Uses typically allowed include: manufacturing; processing; fabrication; ethanol plants; warehouses; asphalt batch plants; mills; wood processing yards; aggregate mining operations; and support uses such as retail or eating establishments that support

adjacent heavy industrial uses and employees. This designation is found both primarily within UDBs and pursuant to regional growth corridor plans and policies.

Maximum Intensity: 0.5 FAR

Public Facilities Land Use Designations

Public/Quasi-Public (P/QP)

This designation establishes areas for public and quasi-public services and facilities that are necessary to maintain the welfare of County residents and businesses. Uses typically allowed include: churches; schools; civic centers; hospitals; fire stations; sheriff stations; liquid and solid waste disposal sites; cemeteries; airports; and public utility and safety facilities. This designation is found primarily within UDBs and pursuant to regional growth corridor plans and policies.

Density/Intensity: None Specified

Public Recreation (PR)

This designation establishes areas for public recreational/tourist activities. Uses typically allowed include: large community/regional parks; historic sites; boat ramps/marinas; and other recreation related public utility and safety facilities operated by a County, State, or federal agency.

Density/Intensity: None Specified

5.1 Growth and Development

LU-1

To encourage the overall economic and social growth of the County while maintaining its quality of life standards and highly efficient land use. *[New Goal]*

LU-1.1 Smart Growth and Healthy Communities

The County shall promote the principles of smart growth and healthy communities UDBs and HDBs, including:

- Creating walkable neighborhoods,
- Providing a mix of residential densities,
- Creating a strong sense of place,

- Mixing land uses,
- Directing growth toward existing communities,
- Building compactly,
- Discouraging sprawl,
- Encouraging infill,
- Preserving open space,
- Creating a range of housing opportunities and choices, and
- Encouraging connectivity between new and existing development. [*New Policy*] [*Board of Supervisors, November 2005*]

LU-1.2 Innovative Development

The County shall promote flexibility and innovation through the use of planned unit developments, development agreements, specific plans, mixed-use projects, and other innovative development and planning techniques. [*New Policy*]

LU-1.3 Prevent Incompatible Uses

The County shall discourage the intrusion into existing urban areas of new incompatible land uses that produce significant noise, odors, or fumes. [*New Policy*]

LU-1.4 Compact Development

The County shall actively support the development of compact mixed use projects that reduce travel distances. [*New Policy*]

LU- 1.5 Paper Subdivision Consolidation

The County shall encourage consolidation of paper parcels/subdivisions, especially those lots that are designated Valley Agriculture (VA), Foothill Agriculture (FA) or Resource Conservation (RC), are irregular in shape, inadequate in size for proper use, or lack infrastructure. [*New Policy*]

LU-1.6 Permitting Procedures and Regulations

The County shall continue to ensure that its permitting procedures and regulations are consistent and efficient. [*New Policy*]

LU-1.7 Development on Slopes

The County shall require a preliminary soils report for development projects in areas with shallow or unstable soils or slopes in excess of 15 percent. If the preliminary soil report indicates soil conditions could be unstable, a detailed geologic/hydrologic

report by a registered geologist, civil engineer, or engineering geologist shall be required demonstrating the suitability of any proposed or additional development. [*New Policy*]

LU-1.8 Encourage Infill Development

The County shall encourage and provide incentives for infill development to occur in communities, and hamlets within or adjacent to existing development in order to maximize the use of land within existing urban areas, minimize the conversion of existing agricultural land, and minimize environmental concerns associated with new development. [*New Policy*]

LU-1.10 Specific Plans

The County shall require specific plans or equivalent plans for residential, commercial, or mixed use projects of 80 acres or larger, as described in the side bar below. [*New Policy*]

LU-1.11 Roadway Access

The County shall require access to public roadways for all new development. [*New Policy*]

Specific Plan Content (Policy LU 1.10)

All specific plans prepared for projects in the unincorporated portions of the County shall, at a minimum comprise five planning frameworks. Within each framework, the specific plan must provide the goals and policies that will guide subsequent decisions on projects, permits, and approvals needed within the specific plan area. The frameworks will also include a detailed implementation plan that will identify responsibilities, financing requirements, and phasing/timing.

The **Land Use Framework** will include the proposed land use pattern, proposed development densities/intensities in each area, and development phasing. The framework will also include specifics on development standards.

The specific plan prepared will provide complete guidance on the land use provisions that will guide future development within the specific plan area. At a minimum, these provisions will address the following topics. The County may require that other topics be addressed, depending on site specific needs.

- **Land Use Classification.** A land use classification system that clearly identifies the uses that may be allowed in each area. The specific plan will provide further details on development standards for each area within the plan. This classification system will use clear terminology to define and further describe allowable uses. The classification system will employ up-to-date terminology and an appropriate combination of specific and generic land use types, instead of a lengthy “encyclopedic” list of allowed uses that can quickly become obsolete.
- **General Site Planning and Development Standards.** These standards will specify the requirements that would be applied to all development and land uses regardless of the applicable land use designation. These would address, as appropriate, site access requirements and entry statements; energy efficiency; water efficiency; fences, walls, soundwalls, hedges, buffers, and other screening; noise regulations;

outdoor lighting standards; performance standards (e.g., air quality, glare, vibration, etc.), undergrounding of utilities; and other similar topics.

Development Standards. Development standards for each land use designation (e.g., building forms, design objectives, land use objectives, height limitations, setback requirements, site coverage requirements, etc.) will be organized in tables and graphically illustrated wherever possible. In this portion of the plan, integration of the project with the existing community will be a key.

- **Housing Mix.** The specific plan will discuss the proposed mix of housing types within the community. In keeping with the County’s Housing Element, affordable housing requirements and bonus density provisions and related incentives will be incorporated, as appropriate. A key to the housing component will be incorporation of housing opportunities including a mix of housing types for households having a mix of income ranges, including a phasing strategy that ensures the development of this mix, including prioritizing construction of higher density housing as a part of each phase of the project.

The **Design Framework** will provide detailed design guidelines that will be used as the specific plan is implemented/developed. The purpose of these guidelines will be to establish the expected level of design within the specific plan area while still maintaining project flexibility and innovation. The objective of this framework is not to dictate a specific design, but to establish design expectations.

The design guidelines provided will be illustrated to help explain the intent and expectations. This part of the specific plan will also incorporate detailed landscaping standards, including specific requirements for preliminary and final landscape plan submittal and review.

The Design Framework will also provide guidance on the integration of the streetscape into the overall project design. The framework will define building type requirements of each area and define how buildings address the street and

interact with public improvements and the public rights-of-way to define the overall character of the streetscape (e.g., new urbanism principles and smart growth concepts). The Design Framework shall also set out design concepts for the integration of new development with the existing adjacent community and future growth areas.

The **Circulation Framework** will include the proposed circulation network, system elements, connectivity on all sides of the project, design standards, and system phasing. This framework will address all components of the circulation system, including vehicular traffic, bicycles, pedestrian movement, transit, rail, air and inter-modal connectivity. The design of transportation systems will be included to discourage reliance on vehicular travel and focus increased opportunities for the provision of alternative modes of travel (public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian). This component will also address parking and loading standards if different from the standard County requirements.

The **Infrastructure/Public Facilities Framework** will cover infrastructure requirements (water, sewer, storm drainage, electricity, natural gas, communications, parkland, schools, libraries, law enforcement, fire suppression and other needed public facilities and services). For infrastructure, the framework will address the proposed trunk infrastructure system improvements and system phasing necessary to support implementation of the land use plan.

Areas within specific planned projects will be expected to provide service levels capable of supporting urban population densities as established by the County and implementation measures to maintain these levels.

The **Finance Framework** will provide information on the costs associated with public facilities and services. These costs will address not only initial capital costs, but also operational and maintenance costs. Mechanisms to fund all these costs shall be described in the specific plan.

5.2 Resource Uses

LU-2

To provide for the long-term conservation of productive and natural resource lands including agricultural, foothill, mountain, and riparian areas and to accommodate services and related activities that support the continued viability and conservation of resource lands. [*New Goal*]

LU-2.1 Agricultural Lands

The County shall maintain agriculturally-designated areas for agriculture use and shall direct urban development away from valuable agricultural lands to cities, unincorporated communities, and hamlets where public facilities and infrastructure are available. [*New Policy*] [*Board of Supervisors November 2005*]

LU 2.2 Agricultural Parcel Splits

The County shall deny requests to create parcels less than the minimum allowed size in agricultural designated areas based on concerns that these parcels are less viable economic farming units, and that the resultant increase in residential density increases the potential for conflict with normal agricultural practices on adjacent parcels. Evidence that the affected parcel may be an uneconomic farming unit due to its current size, soil conditions, or other factors shall not alone be considered a sufficient basis to grant an exception. The RVLP shall be the tool to determine the viability of a given agricultural parcel in the valley and its ability to be subdivided. [*New Policy*]

LU-2.4 Open Space Character

The County shall require that all new development requiring a County discretionary permit, including parcel and subdivision maps, be planned and designed to maintain the scenic open space character of rangelands including within the view corridors of highways. New development shall utilize natural landforms and vegetation in the least visually disruptive way possible, and use design, construction and maintenance techniques that minimize the visibility of structures on hilltops,

hillsides, ridgelines, steep slopes, and canyons. [New Policy]

LU-2.5 Residential Agriculture Uses

The County shall limit residential development of lands designated for agricultural use. Only residences needed to support farming operations, agriculture, tourism, and agricultural support services shall be allowed. [New Policy] [Board of Supervisors, November 2005]

LU-2.6 Agricultural Support Facilities

The County shall encourage beneficial reuse of existing or vacant agricultural support facilities for new businesses (including non-agricultural uses) to provide employment. [New Policy] [Board of Supervisors, November 2005 as amended SW 08.28.06]

LU-2.6A Industrial Development

The County shall, and the cities should, through their industrial development policies, approve only those agriculturally-oriented or -related industries and uses that can demonstrate, whether by location and or controlled methods of operation, that they will not adversely affect agricultural production or the County's natural resources. These uses should be located inside UDBs, HDBs, and regional growth corridors unless necessary for the support of agricultural operations. [1964 General Plan; Major Issue 3-Economic Development –Resource Development and Conservation; Policy 2] [1964 General Plan; Pg. I-7; 1964, Modified]

LU-2.7 Timing of Conversion From Urban Reserve

The following three criteria shall be used to determine when conversion of Urban Reserve designated properties to urban uses is appropriate:

- The property is not subject to an agricultural preserve contract
- Full urban services, schools and infrastructure sufficient to serve urban development either are available or can be made available, and
- At least 30 percent of the property boundaries are contiguous to existing urban development. [Existing Policy Community Plans for Tipton, & Terra Bella and Ducor Modified per BOS Worthley 08/22/06]

LU-2.8 Merger of Sub Standard Agricultural Parcels

The County shall provide incentives to encourage the merger of sub-standard parcels of less than 10 acres in size located in agricultural areas, where such parcels are under common ownership. [New Policy]

5.3 Residential Uses

LU-3

To provide adequate land in a range of residential densities to accommodate the housing needs of all income groups expected to reside in the County, and ensure a high quality of development. [New Goal]

LU-3.1 Residential Developments

The County shall encourage major new residential development to locate near existing infrastructure for employment centers, services, and recreation. [New Policy]

LU-3.2 Cluster Development

The County shall encourage proposed residential development to be clustered onto portions of the site that are more suitable to accommodating the development, and shall require access either directly onto a public road or via a privately-maintained road designed to meet County road standards. [New Policy]

LU-3.3 High-Density Residential Locations

The County shall encourage high-density residential development (greater than 16.1 dwelling units per gross acre) to locate along collector roadways and transit routes, and near public facilities (e.g., schools, parks), shopping, recreation, and entertainment. [New Policy]

LU-3.4 Mountain, Rural, and Low-Density Residential

The Mountain, Rural and Low-Density Residential land use designations located outside of a UDB shall be subject to the following requirements:

- Able to meet the Rural Valley Lands Plan policies, Foothill Growth Management Plan policies, or Mountain Framework Plan policies and requirements,

- Areas which qualify for minimum densities greater than 1 unit per 10 acres must meet the following characteristics (unless clustering is used):
 - Average slopes must be below a 30 percent grade,
 - Not identified as a moderate-to-high landslide hazard area, and
 - Access to new development is provided via an existing publicly-maintained road or via a new road improved consistent with adopted County standards. [*New Policy*]

LU-3.5 Rural Residential Designations

The County shall not designate any new areas for rural residential development in the RVLV area, unless it can be shown that other objectives, such as buffers, can be achieved. [*New Policy*]



Also see Chapter 4, Agriculture, Policy AG-1.12, Ranchettes.

LU-3.6 Project Design

The County shall require residential project design to consider natural features, noise exposure of residents, visibility of structures, circulation, access, and the relationship of the project to surrounding uses. Residential densities and lot patterns will be determined by these and other factors. As a result, the maximum density specified by General Plan designations or zoning for a given parcel of land may not be realized. [*New Policy*]

LU-3.7 Second Dwellings

The County shall allow second dwellings by ministerial permit in areas designated to allow single-family residential units. Such dwellings shall not be sold as independent units. Irrespective of the applicable maximum density limitation of the land use category, the second dwelling shall be clearly subordinate in size and similar in design to the primary dwelling. [*New Policy*]

LU-3.8 Rural Residential Interface

The County shall minimize potential land use conflicts at the interface between urban development and existing developed rural-residential areas.

5.4 Commercial Development

LU-4

To maintain economic vitality and promote the development of commercial uses that are compatible with surrounding land uses and meet the present and future needs of County residents, the regional community, and visitors. [*New Goal*]

LU-4.1 Neighborhood Commercial Uses

The County shall encourage the development of small neighborhood convenience and grocery facilities to meet the everyday shopping and personal needs of immediately surrounding residential land uses in communities and hamlets. [*New Policy*]

LU-4.2 Big Box Development

The County shall limit the size of large, “big-box,” retail businesses on a case-by-case basis to be consistent with the character of the area. [*New Policy*]

LU-4.3 Commercial Service Locations

The County shall provide for commercial service businesses such as warehouses, repair services, business support services, furniture sales, and building materials sales where they will not adversely affect surrounding properties, typically in areas serving occasional needs rather than day-to-day needs. Criteria to be used in siting commercial service areas are:

- Provide good access to highways or major collectors,
- Buffer existing or planned residential areas,
- Develop in-depth rather than in a strip fashion along the access road to provide adequate room for parking, buffering, etc, and
- Encourage development as integrated planned areas in conjunction with community commercial areas or with common architectural and site development features. [*New Policy*]

LU-4.4 Travel-Oriented Tourist Commercial Uses

The County shall require travel-oriented tourist commercial uses (e.g., entertainment, commercial

recreation, lodging, fuel) to be used in areas where traffic patterns are oriented to major arterials and highways. Exceptions may be granted for resort or retreat related developments that are sited based on unique natural features. *[New Policy]*

LU-4.5 Commercial Building Design

The County shall encourage that new commercial development is consistent with the existing design of the surrounding community or neighborhood by encouraging similar façades, proportionate scale, parking, landscaping, and lighting. *[New Policy]*

LU-4.6 Commercial Storage Facilities

The County shall require that commercial storage facilities, including “mini” storage; indoor and outdoor storage facilities; and contractors materials storage are screened from view through landscape buffers or other natural landscapes. *[New Policy]*

5.5 Industrial Development

LU-5

To designate adequate land for, and promote development of, industrial uses to meet the present and future needs of County residents for jobs and to maintain economic vitality. *[New Goal]*

LU-5.1 Industrial Developments

The County shall encourage a wide range of industrial development activities in appropriate locations to promote economic development, employment opportunities, and provide a sound tax base. *[New Policy]* *[Board of Supervisors November 2005]*

LU-5.2 Industrial Park Developments

The County shall encourage the development of visually attractive, well-landscaped, and carefully-planned industrial parks in areas with suitable topography and adequate infrastructure. *[New Policy]* *[Board of Supervisors, November 2005]*

LU-5.3 Storage Screening

The County shall require adequate landscaping and screening of industrial storage areas to minimize visual impacts and enhance the quality of the

environment. *[New Policy]* *[Board of Supervisors, November 2005]*

LU-5.4 Compatibility with Surrounding Land Use

The County shall encourage the infill of existing industrial areas and ensure that proposed industrial uses will not result in significant harmful impacts to adjacent land uses. *[New Policy]* *[Board of Supervisors, November 2005]*

LU-5.5 Access

The County shall locate industrial development where there is access from collector or arterial roads, and where industrial/heavy commercial traffic is not routed through residential or other areas with uses not compatible with such traffic. *[New Policy]* *[Board of Supervisors, November 2005]*

LU-5.6 Industrial Use Buffer

The County shall prohibit new heavy industrial uses within 500 feet of schools, hospitals, or populated residential areas (more than 10 dwelling units within a quarter mile diameter area). *[New Policy]* *[Board of Supervisors, November 2005]*

LU-5.7 Industrial Uses Allowed on Resource Land

The County shall allow asphalt batch plants and similar processing facilities that are directly associated with the development of a resource to be located at the site of the resource under the following criteria:

- Any such site shall be developed under the special use permit process, and
- The special use permit shall not permit any commercial or industrial uses that are not related to the processing of the resource. *[New Policy]*

5.6 Public/Institutional Development

LU-6

To provide for the development of public and institutional uses that support surrounding land uses and meet the present and future needs of County residents, the regional community, and visitors. *[New Goal]*

LU-6.1 Public Activity Centers

The County shall encourage the development of centrally located public activity centers that include parks, schools, libraries, and community centers in communities via accessible, multiple modes of travel. *[New Policy]*

LU-6.2 Buffers

The County shall ensure that residential and other non-compatible land uses are separated and buffered from major public facilities such as landfills, airports, and sewage treatment plants. *[New Policy]* *[Board of Supervisors, November 2005]*

LU-6.3 Schools in Neighborhoods

The County shall encourage school districts to locate new schools in areas that allow students to safely walk or bike from their homes. *[New Policy]*

LU-6.4 Schools District Coordination

The County shall work with school districts to coordinate the location of new schools and responsibility for developing and maintaining associated infrastructure. *[New Policy]*

5.7 Community Design

LU-7

To preserve and enhance the character and scale of Tulare County's communities, hamlets, and rural areas, including their design heritage and historic character. *[New Goal]*

LU-7.1 Distinctive Neighborhoods

The County shall encourage development of diverse and distinctive neighborhoods that build on the patterns of the natural landscape and are responsive in their location and context and to the lifecycle needs of the residents. *[New Policy]* *[Board of Supervisors, November 2005]*

LU-7.2 Integrate Natural Features

The County shall emphasize each community's natural features as the visual framework for new development and redevelopment. *[New Policy]*

LU-7.3 Friendly Streets

The County shall encourage new streets within UDBs to be designed and constructed to not only

accommodate traffic, but also serve as comfortable pedestrian and cyclist environments. These should include, but not be limited to:

- Street tree planting adjacent to curbs and between the street and sidewalk to provide a buffer between pedestrians and automobiles, where appropriate,
- Minimize curb cuts along streets,
- Sidewalks on both sides of streets, where feasible,
- Bike lanes and walking paths, where feasible on collectors and arterials, and
- Traffic calming devices such as roundabouts, bulb-outs at intersections, traffic tables, etc. *[New Policy]* *[Board of Supervisors, November 2005]*

LU-7.4 Streetscape Continuity

The County shall ensure that streetscape elements (e.g., street signs, trees, and furniture) maintain visual continuity and follow a common image for each community. *[New Policy]*

LU-7.5 Crime Prevention Through Design

The County shall encourage design of open space areas, bicycle and pedestrian systems, and housing projects so that there is as much informal surveillance by people as possible to deter crime. *[New Policy]*

LU-7.6 Screening

The County shall require landscaping to adequately screen new industrial uses to minimize visual impacts. *[New Policy]*

LU-7.7 Parking Location

The County shall encourage automobile-oriented uses to locate parking in areas less visible from the street (e.g., reverse frontage commercial centers). *[New Policy]*

LU-7.8 Building Abatement

The County shall continue its abatement program of assisting private property owners who are looking to remove unsightly trailers, signage, and trash. The County shall also focus on abatement of dilapidated buildings and structures. *[New Policy]*

Tulare County General Plan

LU-7.9 Visual Access

The County shall require new development to maintain visual access to views of hillsides, creeks, and other distinctive natural areas by regulating building orientation, height, and bulk. *[New Policy]*

LU-7.10 Gateways/Entry-points

The County shall identify key entry points on the edges of the communities and support programs and projects that enhance gateways and transitional zones between communities to make each community more distinctive and inviting for residents and visitors. *[New Policy]* *[Board of Supervisors, November 2005]*

LU-7.11 Adaptive Reuse

The County shall encourage and promote the adaptive reuse of historic structures in order to preserve the historic resources that are a part of Tulare County's heritage. *[New Policy]*

LU-7.12 Historic Buildings and Areas

The County shall encourage preservation of buildings and areas with special and recognized historic, architectural, or aesthetic value. New development should respect architecturally and historically significant buildings and areas. *[New Policy]*

LU-7.13 Preservation of Historical Buildings

The County shall encourage and support efforts by local preservation groups to identify and rehabilitate historically significant buildings. *[New Policy]*

LU-7.14 Contextual and Compatible Design

The County shall ensure that new development respects Tulare County's heritage by requiring that development respond to its context, be compatible with the traditions and character of each community, and develop in an orderly fashion which is compatible with the scale of surrounding structures. *[New Policy]*

LU-7.15 Energy Conservation

The County shall encourage the use of solar power and energy conservation building techniques in all new development. *[New Policy]*

LU-7.16 Shared Parking Facilities

The County shall encourage, where feasible, the use of shared parking facilities. Such areas could

include developments with different day/night uses. *[New Policy]*

5.8 Acronyms

EDC	Economic Development Corporation
CO	Commercial Office
CR	Commercial Recreation
CC	Community Commercial
CPTED	Crime prevention Through Environmental Design
DU/Acre	Dwelling Units Per Acre
FARs	Floor-area Ratios
FA	Foothill Agriculture
FMU	Foothill Mixed Use
GC	General Commercial
GIS	Geographic Information System
HDB	Hamlet Development Boundary
HMU	Hamlet Mixed Use
HI	Heavy Industrial
HDR	High Density Residential
HC	Highway Commercial
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
LEEDND	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Neighborhood Development
LI	Light Industrial
LDR	Low Density Residential
LMDR	Low-Medium-Density Residential
MDR	Medium Density Residential
MHDR	Medium-High-Density Residential
MU	Mixed Use
MR	Mountain Residential
NAR	Native American Reserve
NRDC	Natural Resources Defense Council
NC	Neighborhood Commercial
OC	Office Commercial
PCA	Planned Community Development
PR	Public Recreation
P/QP	Public/Quasi Public
REC	Recreation Commercial
RC	Resource Conservation
RR	Rural Residential
RVLP	Rural Valley Land Plan
SC	Service Commercial
TP	Timber Production
TPZ	Timber Production Zone
TC	Town Center

TCAG	Tulare County Association of Governments
USGBC	U.S. Green Building Council
UDB	Urban Development Boundary
UR	Urban Reserve
UR HI	Urban Reserve – Heavy Industrial
VA	Valley Agriculture

Please see the next page.

Tulare County General Plan

5.9 Implementation Measures

The following table documents the implementation measures included with the General Plan to implement the goals and policies included in this element.

		Implements				
Implementation	What Policy	Who is Responsible	2007-2010	2010-2015	2015-2030	On-Going
1. The County shall update the Zoning Ordinance to be consistent with the land use standards set forth in this Land Use Element. <i>[New Program]</i>	LU-1.3 LU-1.6	RMA	■			
2. The County shall prepare Land Development Regulations addressing lighting, landscaping, signage, fencing, walls, buffers, land use transitions, parking area improvements, streetscaping and other standards applicable to land development. <i>[New Program]</i>	LU-1.1 ERM-4.2	RMA Planning	■			
3. During preparation of the Zoning Ordinance and Land Development Regulations, the County shall consider appropriate incentives to encourage smart growth implementation, including but not limited to such factors as infill, densification, transportation alternatives, provision of public amenities, and commercial standards. <i>[New Implementation]</i>	LU-1.1 LU-1.4 LU-1.8	RMA Planning	■			
4. During the review of all discretionary permit applications, the County shall ensure that smart growth and other urban design principles set forth in this Land Use Element are incorporated as conditions of project approval, as appropriate. <i>[New Program]</i>	LU-1.1	Planning Commission; SPRC; Zoning Administrator				■
5. The County shall develop and maintain a database of paper lot subdivisions and pursue efforts to consolidate them into larger parcels. <i>[New Program]</i>	LU-1.5	RMA		■		
6. The County shall develop and maintain a Geographic Information System (GIS) based database of identified potential unstable soils and slopes to evaluate proposed projects. <i>[New Program]</i>	LU-1.7	RMA		■		
7. The County shall develop a set of criteria to determine whether proposed projects are infill developments and develop a set of incentive programs for infill projects located within UDBs. <i>[New Program]</i>	LU-1.8	RMA		■		
8. The County shall develop and maintain a GIS based database of infill sites and encourage new development to occur on the identified sites. <i>[New Program]</i>	LU-1.8	RMA		□		■
9. The County shall create a program to consolidate infill sites when permits are sought for development and shall require access to public roads be present prior to development. <i>[New Program]</i>	LU-1.8 LU-1.11	RMA	■			
10. The County shall require identification of infill sites in all new community plan updates, hamlet plans and redevelopment project area plans as they are prepared over time. <i>[New Implementation]</i>	LU-1.8	RMA Planning; RDA				■

11.	The County shall amend the Zoning Ordinance to strengthen minimum parcel size standards, with principle attention to increasing the minimum acreage requirement for land division from 5 to 10 acres or more. <i>[New Implementation]</i>	LU-2.2	RMA Planning	■
12.	The County shall amend the Zoning Ordinance to increase the length of time that must elapse before existing homes qualify for divisions of land to create homesites in agricultural areas. <i>[New Implementation]</i>	LU-2.5	RMA Planning	■
13.	The County shall, in cooperation with property owners, reinstitute Open Space and Land Conservation contracts for all parcels on prime agricultural land meeting the minimum land area as required under State law. <i>[New Implementation]</i>	LU-2.8	RMA Planning	■
14.	The County shall work with Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) to explore implementation strategies to promote neighborhood convenience services in unincorporated communities. <i>[New Implementation]</i>	LU-4.1	RMA Planning	■
15.	GIS shall be used in evaluating the impacts of proposed industrial areas when community or hamlet plans are developed or updated. <i>[New Implementation]</i>	LU-5.1	RMA Planning	■
16.	<p>The County shall adopt an ordinance to facilitate reuse of existing abandoned, agricultural support facilities, considering the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The use of site plan review or administrative use permit to change from one agricultural use to another; ▪ A requirement for a special use permit to change from an agricultural use to a non-agricultural use; ▪ Upgrading of the site for consistency with all County standards; ▪ The timing of how long a property owner needs to wait before conversion of an agricultural-oriented business into a new business should be permitted in order to prevent abuse; <p>Consideration of restrictions on re-use such as auto showcases or boat sales; and Provision of reclamation plans and financial assurances for future site restoration. Such a reclamation plan may include removal of the buildings. <i>[New Implementation]</i></p>	LU-2.6 LU-2.6A	RMA Planning	■
17.	The County shall consider preparing an inventory of abandoned warehouses and other such agricultural support facilities to facilitate track conversion. Such survey would indicate infrastructure and services available to the site. <i>[New Program]</i>	LU-2.6	RMA Planning	■
18.	Provision for a graduated transition in density/lot size from higher to lower density between the two respective areas shall generally be required unless significant buffers or other measures are determined adequate to protect established rural residential developments. The County, while recognizing the cities' need to optimize use of land shall encourage cities to require buffering measures when urban development is proposed adjacent to existing developed rural-residential areas. <i>[New Program]</i>	LU-3.8 PF-1.1	RMA, Planning	■

Tulare County General Plan

19.	The County shall prepare a cluster development ordinance, defining the process, incentives and standards”. The means of consultation and contents will be developed later, after further research. <i>[New Implementation]</i>	LU-3.2	RMA, Planning	■
20.	The County shall work with TCAG, EDC and the Redevelopment Agency to explore implementation strategies to promote and attract accessible neighborhood convenience services and jobs in unincorporated communities and hamlets. <i>[New Implementation]</i>	LU-4.1	RMA, Planning	■
21.	The County shall establish a program for consulting annually with school districts regarding growth projections and proposed facility changes and additions. <i>[New Program]</i>	LU-6.3 LU-6.4	RMA	■
22.	The County shall work with the Sheriffs Department to research Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Guidelines and develop crime prevention design standards as an informational tool to developers of residential uses throughout the County. <i>[New Program]</i>	LU-7.5	RMA	■
23.	The County shall cooperate with local preservation groups and community property owners who identify historic buildings that are representative of the historic visual character of an area, in order to encourage perpetuation of identified architectural characteristics in new proposed development that will be within the same viewshed as the historic building. <i>[New Program]</i>	LU-7.12	RMA	■
24.	The County shall review LEED and LEED-ND certification requirements and develop an implementation program. <i>[New Program]</i>	LU-7.15 AQ-3.5	RMA	■

6. Housing

The Housing Element is subject to specific state statutory requirements for periodic updates. To meet mandated State timelines, the Housing Element was prepared on a separate schedule. The County adopted the current version in December 2003. The Housing Element was subsequently certified by the California Housing and Community Development Department on April 27, 2004. The adopted element will be incorporated into this General Plan update document in its final version.

A copy of the adopted element is available from the Tulare County Resources Management Agency and is also available on the Internet at <http://www.co.tulare.ca.us/government/resource/long/housing.asp>.

Please see the next page.