

URBAN BOUNDARIES ELEMENT  
GOALS AND POLICIES

Adopted by Planning Commission -  
June 8, 1983

Adopted by Board of Supervisors  
July 5, 1983

GOALS

- (1) The retention of community identity and enhancement of efficiencies in the provision of essential services by means of a framework of urban-related programs and policies designed to serve specific urban planning areas.
- (2) The preservation of the agricultural economic base and open space resources of the County through the implementation of resource management programs within authentic agricultural areas and the identification of maximum growth parameters for all urban settlements located within the County.
- (3) The designation of realistic planning areas around cities and unincorporated communities which could be used to help determine boundaries for community service districts and County service areas, in areas where differing levels of service are required, and within which corporate annexations may take place.
- (4) The provision of an orderly framework within which communication may take place between the County and the cities regarding projects of mutual concern.
- (5) The provision of a mechanism for developing appropriate matching physical systems, such as streets, sidewalks, sewer, water, gas, electric, circulation, and appearance factors within urbanizing areas.
- (6) The maintenance of consistency among the goals and policies of the Urban Boundaries Element and those contained in other general plan elements adopted by the County and the cities.

## URBAN BOUNDARIES ELEMENT

### POLICIES

#### I. Urban Development Policies

1. This plan element establishes Urban Development Boundaries which define twenty-year planning areas around incorporated cities in which the County and cities will coordinate plans, policies and standards relating to building construction, subdivision development, land use and zoning regulations, street and highway construction, public utility systems, environmental studies, and other closely related matters affecting the orderly development of urban fringe areas. Within these boundaries, the cities and the County may also establish planning areas representative of shorter time periods in order to assist in more precise implementation of community plans and policies. It is recognized that these boundaries provide an official definition of the interface between future urban and agricultural land uses.
2. This plan element establishes Urban Area Boundaries, which define the area where land uses are presumed to have an impact upon the adjacent incorporated city, and within which the cities' concerns are to be given serious consideration as part of the land use review process. The Urban Area is considered to be the next logical area in which urban development may occur and the area within which Urban Development Boundaries may ultimately be expanded. Modification of Urban Development Boundaries will be considered at such time as the land use plan for a community is revised to reflect changing needs and circumstances or an extended time frame. Preservation of productive agricultural lands shall be of the highest priority when considering such modifications and expansion of Urban Development Boundaries to include additional agricultural land shall only occur as a last resort.
3. The cities shall examine existing Urban Area Boundary and Urban Development Boundary lines and recommend changes to the Board of Supervisors as appropriate in light of amendments to the goals and policies contained in the Urban Boundaries Element. Emphasis shall be placed upon reasonable expectations for the provision of urban services within the next twenty years when determining the location of Urban Development Boundaries.
4. This plan element establishes the policy that Urban Development shall only take place in the following areas:
  - (1) within incorporated cities. As an exception to this policy, the County may consider proposals for urban development within Urban Development Areas adjacent to cities if all of the following criteria are met:

a. One of the following has occurred:

(1) The adjacent city does not consent to annex the property for development purposes (as evidenced through rezoning, development agreements, etc.); or

(2) Annexation is not possible under the provisions of State law, but it is determined by the County that development of the site does not constitute leapfrog or noncontiguous development; and

b. The County finds that the public service impacts of the development are within the service capabilities of the County and affected special districts; and

c. The use and density proposed are determined to be consistent with the adopted general plan of the County and compatible with the adopted general plan of the affected city;

(2) within the urban development boundaries of unincorporated communities;

(3) within Foothill Development Corridors; and

(4) within other areas suited for non-agricultural development, as determined by the procedures set forth in the Rural Valley Lands Plan.

This policy shall become effective for each city at such time as the city and County have reviewed that city's Urban Development Boundary and Urban Area Boundary and reached agreement pursuant to policy VIII-2.

5. Urban Development Boundaries identify areas which are hereby set aside for those types of urban land uses which benefit from urban services. Conversely, those types of permanent uses which do not benefit from such services should be discouraged within those areas. This is not intended to apply to the cultivation of land or other uses accessory to the cultivation of land, provided that such accessory uses are time-limited through conditional use procedure.

6. To the extent possible, any conversion of agricultural or open land to urban development within Urban Development Boundaries should be as an extension of the existing urbanized area of the community. Urban Development Boundaries shall not be used as justification for leapfrog development.

7. The goals and policies contained in this element shall be referred to the respective city councils for adoption.

## II. Policies Regarding Unincorporated Communities

1. Urban Development Boundaries are established around the following unincorporated communities in the County to serve as official urban planning areas for these communities: Cutler-Orosi, Ducor, Earlimart, East Orosi,

Goshen, Ivanhoe, Lemon Cove, London, Pixley, Plainview, Poplar-Cotton Center, Richgrove, Strathmore, Terra Bella, Tipton, Traver, Woodville, Alpaugh and Springville.

2. At some future date, Urban Development Boundaries are to be adopted around the communities of Three Rivers, Sultana and the Allensworth State Historical Park site with the understanding that standards relating to the growth and development of Three Rivers should be related to mountain conditions.
3. A land use plan is to be developed for each community with an Urban Development Boundary, specifying desired densities and land use categories, with particular attention to defining suitable areas for the full range of urban development and rural residential development. Such plans shall include the entire area within the Boundary and shall recognize the short and long term ability of each community to provide necessary urban services within its Urban Development Boundary.

### III. Policies Regarding Communication and Project Review

1. Lines of communication are to be maintained so that each city will keep the County informed of changes in municipal plans, policies and land use regulations.
2. A city shall be afforded the right of review and comment whenever the County Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors considers matters affecting the unincorporated areas within each city's Urban Area Boundary. Opinions and recommendations voiced by the city on such referral matters should be given serious consideration in rendering final decisions.

### IV. Policies Regarding Boundary Consistency

1. City Urban Area Boundaries and the Spheres of Influence as administered by the Local Agency Formation Commission should be consistent at all times insofar as it is administratively feasible to do so.
2. In areas where special districts provide rural as well as urban services, LAFCO should distinguish between "urban" and "rural" service areas for the purpose of establishing Spheres of Influence for such districts. If an unincorporated community is served by a special district, the Urban Development Boundary should be consistent with the district's "urban" Sphere of Influence.
3. County census boundaries should be as consistent as possible with Urban Development Boundaries.

### V. Policies Regarding Agricultural Preserves

1. The County should grant approval of individual applications for agricultural preserves located outside Urban Development Boundaries assuming the area involved is consistent with the intent of the Williamson Act. This policy also carries with it the understanding that applications for preserves within Urban Development Boundaries should not be approved unless it is demonstrated that:

- a. The effective restriction of such land to agricultural use would not detrimentally affect the growth of the community involved for the succeeding 10 years or,
  - b. The property in question has special values for open space or recreation or,
  - c. The contract is consistent with the publicly desirable future use and control of the land in question.
2. A comprehensive review of contracted agricultural preserves located within Urban Development Boundaries of unincorporated communities shall be conducted at five year intervals. The purpose of the review is to determine whether any unincorporated community in the County is unduly constrained or confined by lands contracted under the Williamson Act. It should be the responsibility of the County to initiate nonrenewal procedure for any contracted preserve which is found to inhibit the growth of a community. The Williamson Act review should be closely coordinated with the review of Urban Boundaries.
  3. The Local Agency Formation Commission should continue its present policy that agricultural preserves located outside Urban Area Boundaries shall not be subject to protest by individual cities, and that protests against agricultural preserves within Urban Area Boundaries should be upheld unless it is found that a preserve is consistent with the publicly desirable future use and control of the land in question.

## VI. Policies Regarding Application of Zoning

1. The County and each city shall continue to determine appropriate zoning for unincorporated areas within city Urban Area Boundaries. Such a program shall be consistent with County adopted land use plans for each city. To the extent possible, County zoning should be compatible with, and convertible to, municipal zoning.
2. County zoning consistent with adopted land use plans is to be applied to all unincorporated communities with Urban Development Boundaries.
3. Policies (1) and (2) above do not preclude the use of agricultural zoning as a holding zone until demand and changing conditions warrant application of other zoning categories.
4. The Tulare County Zoning Ordinance shall be amended to make the following uses conditional in agricultural zones within Urban Area Boundaries of cities:
  - a. Agricultural service establishments primarily engaged in performing agricultural animal husbandry services or horticultural services to farmers.
  - b. Services to farmers or farm-related activities in planting, harvesting, storage, hauling and equipment repair and maintenance.

c. The curing, processing, packaging, packing, storage and shipping of agricultural products.

5. Urban Area Boundaries and Urban Development Boundaries shall be delineated on the base of the County Zoning Map for reference purposes.

## VII. Policies Regarding Subdivision and Development Standards

1. A Uniform Improvement Standards Committee, composed of representatives of all cities and the County, shall work to develop mutually agreed upon major development standards to be applied to approved developments within all Urban Development Boundaries.
2. Where the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors find that it is consistent with general plan objectives to approve development within the Urban Development Boundaries of incorporated cities, it shall be the policy of the County to ensure development to full urban standard. The Uniform Improvement Standards Committee shall work to formulate recommendations for:
  - a. development standards for parking, landscaping and sign control for application within city Urban Development Boundaries.
  - b. appropriate standards for mobilehome parks and subdivisions for application within city Urban Development Boundaries.
  - c. appropriate standards for the placement of individual mobilehomes, for application within city Urban Development Boundaries.
3. Where the decision-making body of the County approves development within the Urban Development Boundaries of those unincorporated communities with adopted Urban Development Boundaries it shall be the policy of the County to ensure development to full urban standard. Typical improvements may include curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and community sewer and water systems.
4. Tulare County Subdivision and parcel map regulations (Sections 7000-7125 of Tulare County Ordinance Code) shall require that all subdivision and parcel maps within Urban Development Areas be developed consistent with urban standards and densities.
5. Parcel map requirements shall provide for the full range of improvements as a condition of approval for certain categories of new parcels, as specified by ordinance, located within Urban Development Areas. Typically, the improvements specified should be installed at the time that building permits for development are issued, unless such improvements are deemed necessary for the protection of public health and safety or for the orderly development of the area.
6. All new parcels created under parcel map procedure within Urban Development Areas shall meet the same standards of access as required for subdivisions of five or more parcels.

7. In cases where a subdivision, or parcel map or use permit is not involved, the Tulare County Ordinance Code shall require road improvements, including curbs and gutters, to be installed as a condition of the issuance of a building permit for development, including permits for mobilehomes, on any property located within Urban Development Areas.

#### VIII. Policies Regarding Review and Revision of Boundaries

1. Urban Area Boundaries and Urban Development Boundaries shall be reviewed at least once every 5 years to determine if boundary changes are justified, or if additional boundaries are needed for communities not considered herein. However, a review may be conducted at any time on request of the affected city or agency.
2. In order to officially alter an Urban Development Boundary or Urban Area Boundary, all the agencies which administer policies and programs related to the boundaries shall agree on the change. These agencies include the Tulare County Board of Supervisors, the affected city council, and the Local Agency Formation Commission. In cases where these agencies cannot reach agreement, a committee composed equally of representatives of the affected city and the county shall be formed to make recommendations to resolve the conflict.

BEFORE THE PLANNING COMMISSION

COUNTY OF TULARE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE MATTER OF AN AMENDMENT TO )  
THE TULARE COUNTY AREA GENERAL PLAN: ) RESOLUTION NO. 5934  
GPA 83-04A URBAN BOUNDARIES AMENDMENT )

Resolution of the Planning Commission of the County of Tulare modifying and approving a Board of Supervisors initiated action, to amend the Goals and Policies of the Urban Boundaries Element of the Tulare County Area General Plan, as shown on attached Exhibit "A".

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors, by Resolution No. 83-395, initiated action to amend the Urban Boundaries Element of the Tulare County Area General Plan, more specifically the goals and policies set forth in that plan element, pursuant to Title 7, Chapter 3, Articles 5 and 6 of the Government Code; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has given notice of the proposed amendment to the General Plan as provided in Title 7, Chapter 3, Article 6, of the California Government Code; and

WHEREAS, staff has made such investigations of facts bearing upon the proposed amendment to assure action consistent with the procedures and purposes set forth in the Government Code and other Elements of the General Plan; and

WHEREAS, public hearings were held and public testimony was received by the Planning Commission at a special meeting on May 4, 1983 and at the regular meetings on May 25, 1983 and June 8, 1983; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, after considering all of the evidence presented, found the proposed amendment, as modified, to be consistent with the procedures and purposes set forth in the California Government Code;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as follows:

1. The Planning Commission hereby certifies that it has reviewed and considered the information contained in the Negative Declaration for the proposed amendment in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and the State Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act prior to taking action on the proposed amendment.

2. The Planning Commission hereby adopts the following findings and conclusions with regard to the proposed Amendment:

- (1) Adoption of General Plan Amendment GPA 83-04A as proposed would amend the goals and policies of the Urban Boundaries Element of the Tulare County General Plan. The purpose of the Amendment is the promotion of a Countywide strategy for orderly growth and development through clarification and amplification of the existing goals and policies contained in the Urban Boundaries Element.



The most important provisions of the proposed amendments are as follows:

- (a) The definition of "Urban Area Boundary" is changed from an "ultimate growth area" to an "area where land uses are presumed to have an impact upon the adjacent incorporated city," an area which may or may not be suitable for eventual urban development. Cities' recommendations regarding land use matters within the Urban Area Boundary are to be given serious consideration by the Board of Supervisors (the latter is existing policy). (Ref. Pol. I. 1)
- (b) The term "Urban Improvement Boundary," which refers to "that area which will probably be subject to urbanization within a twenty year period," is changed to "Urban Development Boundary." This area, rather than the Urban Area Boundary, is now the area in which the County and cities will coordinate plans, policies and standards. (Ref. Pol. I. 2)
- (c) Directs the cities to examine their Urban Area Boundaries and Urban Development Boundaries in light of these policy revisions and recommend boundary changes based upon reasonable expectations for the provision of urban services within the next twenty years. (Ref. Pol. I. 3)
- (d) The cities and the County have the option of establishing shorter-term planning areas (e.g. 5 or 10 years) in addition to the Urban Development Boundary. (Ref. Pol. I. 1)
- (e) Policy regarding the appropriate locations for urban development is clarified to state that development should take place in the following areas:
  - (1) incorporated cities, except as specifically provided in the proposed policies
  - (2) within the Urban Development Boundary of unincorporated communities
  - (3) Foothill Development Corridors
  - (4) other suitable areas, as determined through the Rural Valley Lands Plan (Ref. Pol. I. 4)
- (f) As originally proposed, the County and the cities would have been directed to pursue the establishment of area planning commissions to review land use matters within cities' Urban Area Boundaries. (Ref. Goal 4)
- (g) Establishment of a conditional use permit procedure for new agriculturally-related uses in agricultural zones within cities' Urban Area Boundaries. (Ref. Pol. VI. 4)

- (h) Directs the Uniform Improvement Standards Committee (composed of the County and the incorporated cities) to formulate recommendations for development standards for mobilehomes, parking, landscaping and sign control within cities' Urban Development Boundaries. (Ref. Pol. VII. 2)
- (2) The Urban Boundaries Element contains a policy which calls for review of the Plan Element at least every five years. The Plan Element was adopted in 1974 and this is the first time that a comprehensive review of the Element has been undertaken.
- (3) The Amendment has been referred to the incorporated cities and the affected special districts for review and comment. The cities of Visalia, Porterville, Tulare, Dinuba, Lindsay, Exeter and Woodlake have indicated that they generally support the Amendment, although they have indicated concern with some specific policy statements, most notably the area planning commission concept and the issue of requiring "compatibility" of development, rather than "consistency," with the cities' General Plans. The City of Visalia has also expressed concern regarding the processing of agricultural preserves, and the cities of Visalia and Dinuba have expressed concern regarding the Uniform Improvement Standards Committee. The City of Farmersville indicated that its City Council had not had an opportunity to review the Amendment. Those issues have been reviewed and considered by the Planning Commission in the process of formulating their recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.
- (4) With regard to proposed goal statement #4, which directs the County and cities to pursue the establishment of Area Planning Commissions, the Planning Commission finds that formation of such commissions could contribute to growth and development in the unincorporated area adjacent to incorporated cities, and obstruct orderly growth and development in Tulare County. Further, there is concern that the functions of such commissions would conflict with the functions of existing planning commissions and that there would be confusion and unnecessary duplication of effort. Therefore, this commission cannot recommend adoption of the proposal concerning area planning commissions until such time as a proven need exists that would justify consideration of an area planning commission approach.
- (5) Concerns were also raised at the public hearings with regard to proposed policy statement I-4. In general, there was apprehension that policy I-4 would give cities a virtual veto power over development proposals in unincorporated areas because annexation would have to be denied before a project could be submitted for consideration by the County. In addition, there was concern that cities might deny reasonable development proposals after the property had been annexed. In response to their concerns, the Planning Commission determined that revisions would be in order to clarify the policy statement as follows:
- (1) Formal denial of annexation (by LAFCo or the City

Council) is not required to indicate that a city does not consent to annex property;

- (2) Annexation must be for the purpose of allowing urban development to occur (as evidenced through rezoning, development agreements, etc.);
- (3) The policy will become effective for each city at such time as the city and county have reviewed and agreed upon an Urban Development Boundary for that city.
- (6) With regard to proposed policy statement VIII-2, the Planning Commission finds that the proposed revision, which requires that the City and County agree on changes to Urban Development Boundaries and Urban Area Boundaries, will promote the orderly growth and development of Tulare County and its cities. The Planning Commission further finds that the proposed committee which would be formed to make recommendations to resolve conflicts would take the place of the proposed Area Planning Commission referred to in goal statement #4.
- (7) With regard to policy statements VII-3, VII-5 and VII-7, in response to technical concerns raised by the Tulare County Public Works Department, the Planning Commission finds that the proposed revisions will clarify and amplify the draft policy statements.

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

This Commission hereby recommends to the Board of Supervisors that GPA 83-04A, an Amendment to the Urban Boundaries Element of the Tulare County Area General Plan, more specifically the goals and policies set forth in that plan element, be approved with the changes, additions and deletions as shown on attached Exhibit "A."

The foregoing resolution was adopted upon the motion of Commissioner Keeffe, seconded by Commissioner Chute, at a regular meeting of the Planning Commission on the 8th day of June, 1983, by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Keeffe, Chute, Tracy, Shields, Brogan

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Crain, Jensen

TULARE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION


  
Eugene E. Smith, Secretary

EXHIBIT A

PROPOSED GOAL STATEMENTS

Reviewed by Board of Supervisors  
March 28, 1983

Revised by Tulare County Planning Commission  
June 8, 1983

- (1) The retention of community identity and enhancement of efficiencies in the provision of essential services by means of a framework of urban-related programs and policies designed to serve specific urban planning areas.
- (2) The preservation of the agricultural economic base and open space resources of the County through the implementation of resource management programs within authentic agricultural areas and the identification of maximum growth parameters for all urban settlements located within the County.
- (3) The designation of realistic planning areas around cities and unincorporated communities which could be used to help determine boundaries for community service districts and County service areas, in areas where differing levels of service are required, and within which corporate annexations may take place.
- (4) The provision of an orderly framework within which communication may take place between the County and the cities regarding projects of mutual concern. ~~In order to facilitate communication, the cities and the County shall collectively pursue the establishment of area planning commissions which shall make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors and city councils regarding land use matters within cities' Urban Area Boundaries.~~
- (5) The provision of a mechanism for developing appropriate matching physical systems, such as streets, sidewalks, sewer, water, gas, electric, circulation, and appearance factors within urbanizing areas.
- (6) The maintenance of consistency among the goals and policies of the Urban Boundaries Element and those contained in other general plan elements adopted by the County and the cities.

URBAN BOUNDARIES ELEMENT

—Proposed Policy Statements—

Reviewed by Board of Supervisors  
May 13, 1982  
March 28, 1983

Revised by Tulare County Planning Commission  
June 8, 1983

I. Urban Development Policies

1. This plan element establishes Urban Development Boundaries which define twenty-year planning areas around incorporated cities in which the County and cities will coordinate plans, policies and standards relating to building construction, subdivision development, land use and zoning regulations, street and highway construction, public utility systems, environmental studies, and other closely related matters affecting the orderly development of urban fringe areas. Within these boundaries, the cities and the County may also establish planning areas representative of shorter time periods in order to assist in more precise implementation of community plans and policies. It is recognized that these boundaries provide an official definition of the interface between future urban and agricultural land uses.
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- \*\*3. The cities shall examine existing Urban Area Boundary and Urban Development Boundary lines and recommend changes to the Board of Supervisors as appropriate in light of amendments to the goals and policies contained in the Urban Boundaries Element. Emphasis shall be placed upon reasonable expectations for the provision of urban services within the next twenty years when determining the location of Urban Development Boundaries.
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a. One of the following has occurred:

(1) ~~Annexation has been denied; or~~ The adjacent city does not consent to annex the property for development purposes (as evidenced through rezoning, development agreements, etc.);  
or

(2) Annexation is not possible under the provisions of State law, but it is determined by the County that development of the site does not constitute leapfrog or noncontiguous development; and

b. The County finds that the public service impacts of the development are within the service capabilities of the County and affected special districts; and

c. The use and density proposed are determined to be consistent with the adopted general plan of the County and compatible with the adopted general plan of the affected city;

(2) within the urban development boundaries of unincorporated communities;

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This policy shall become effective for each city at such time as the city and County have reviewed that city's Urban Development Boundary and Urban Area Boundary and reached agreement pursuant to policy VIII-2.

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1. Urban Development Boundaries are established around the following unincorporated communities in the County to serve as official urban planning areas for these communities: Cutler-Orosi, Ducor, Earlimart, East Orosi,

Goshen, Ivanhoe, Lemon Cove, London, Pixley, Plainview, Poplar- Cotton Center, Richgrove, Strathmore, Terra Bella, Tipton, Traver, Woodville, Alpaugh and Springville.

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