

# Overview of San Joaquin County

This chapter lays out the Vision for San Joaquin County through 2035 and briefly summarizes the existing and future conditions affecting development in the County. It identifies the issues and assumptions to be addressed in managing and developing the County's key resources. The concept of resources as described here is broadly applied. It includes not only natural resources, but also the people and job opportunities available within the County, as well as the governmental and institutional relationships that have emerged. This chapter concludes with the key assumptions of the Plan and with an explanation of how the General Plan can be a valuable instrument in confronting these existing and future challenges.

## General Plan Vision

The overarching Vision of the General Plan is that San Joaquin County will be the agricultural heart of California with sustainable and abundant water resources, desirable and safe communities, a strong and globally-connected economy, and thriving and pristine natural resources.

As the agricultural center of California, San Joaquin County's farmland and agricultural heritage are preserved. Farms continue to produce a diverse array of the highest quality agricultural produce and products. Both traditional and innovative agricultural practices flourish throughout the County. Residents understand, appreciate, and are proud of the role agriculture plays in the history and economy of the County.

The County's economy is diverse and strong in its global role as: a source of food and agricultural commodities; a destination for tourists (The Delta, Agritourism, Wineries); and a supply of high-tech and "green" manufactured products. Expanded educational opportunities and a highly interconnected shipping system provide a broad range of jobs across diverse industries, including those related to small, local businesses and new start-ups. Excellent schools and leadership programs prepare youth as the next generation of the County's workforce.

San Joaquin County is linked to regional, state, and international destinations through an extensive network of roads, railways, waterways, and airports. Residents and businesses throughout the County are connected to the world through high-speed communications infrastructure. Communities are internally connected through an efficient and safe system of roadways, bridges, transit, bikeways, and pedestrian trails and sidewalks. County residents and farm equipment move together safely on well managed and maintained roads.

Natural assets, such as air quality, the Delta, river corridors, and soils, are preserved and residents are aware of their importance. Aggregate resources supply the long-term development needs of the region and state. Energy efficiency and use of alternative modes of transportation conserve energy resources, and new, sustainable energy resources are fully developed, providing clean and inexpensive energy.

The County values and protects its natural and cultural resources with expanded opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy the County's heritage and natural setting. Recreation opportunities, such as the Delta, waterways, and regional parks are available and accessible to all County residents and visitors. Surface and groundwater

resources are of high quality and available and sufficient to meet the County's water needs. Agriculture, residents, and natural habitats receive a continuous, cost effective, and adequate supply of clean water. The groundwater basin is rejuvenated and maintained in a state of equilibrium. Groundwater recharge is in harmony with pumping and saltwater intrusion is an issue of the past.

The Delta is a "Place" of statewide significance and maintains its historical role in the County. Delta channels convey water which supports a thriving agriculture industry, diverse wildlife populations, world-class recreational opportunities, navigable boating routes, and the transportation of commercial goods. Fortified and well-maintained Delta levees provide safety and security to residents, patrons, infrastructure, and crops.

Communities and cities maintain their unique geographic identities, separated by agriculture and open space lands. Growth and development occurs predominantly within and adjacent to existing communities and cities. New development is carefully planned, including the establishment of community services and facilities, in keeping with existing community character. Every community is a desirable place to live because of its range of housing choices, local job opportunities, access to services and shopping, great schools and parks, and sufficient infrastructure. Residents and businesses celebrate the rural heritage and small-town feel of their communities and the ethnic diversity of residents.

Finally, San Joaquin County is celebrated for the health and well-being of its residents. Residents and businesses proactively minimize their impacts on climate change and air quality. The County maintains plans and safeguards against potential hazards, such as flooding and wildland fires.

## Natural Environment

### Landform

San Joaquin County occupies a central location in California's vast agricultural heartland, the San Joaquin Valley. The County encompasses nearly 920,000 acres (or about 1,440 square miles) of relatively level, agriculturally productive lands. The foothills of the Diablo Range define the southwest corner of the County, and the foothills of the Sierra Nevada lie along the County's eastern boundary.

### Agriculture

Created by sediments that have washed out of the major rivers that drain the area, the valley is characterized by rich agricultural soils and farming activities. Fruit and nut crops, field crops, and livestock and poultry are the mainstays of a vibrant and dominant agricultural economy, and contribute to the County's ranking among the State's top ten counties in gross farm receipts.

Level, well-drained soils, however, are also prime areas for urban development. Although urbanized areas comprise a relatively small proportion of the County, the tremendous growth pressures in the San Francisco Bay Area, coupled with the absence of affordable housing there, have made San Joaquin County a highly attractive location. The encroachment of urban uses into farming areas not only means the loss of productive soils but also the greater potential for land use conflicts, since new residents do not want to contend with normal agricultural operations which generate dust, noise, and odors. In addition, large agricultural parcels are divided into smaller lots. Intended to create "ranchettes" or hobby farms or to provide homesites for family members, the parcelization of the land into parcels 10 acres or less in size effectively frustrates efficient use of the land for commercial agriculture. The costs of operations and support services may then increase, which lead to further pressure to sell or subdivide.

### Surface Waters

The County is interlaced with a complex network of creeks, rivers, and canals, which define the character and landscape almost as much as the vast acreages devoted to agriculture. The County's major rivers, the San Joaquin, the Mokelumne, the Calaveras, and the Stanislaus, all lead to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta in the western half of the County. It is in this region, at the confluence of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers, that about one-half of the State's entire runoff water volume passes and

supports the biologically and agriculturally rich Delta. The waterways provide recreation opportunities, scenic beauty, and water for municipal, industrial, and agricultural users.

Both the Delta-Mendota Canal and the California Aqueduct carry tremendous volumes of water from the Delta area to the south. A complex, controversial issue that has raged for years is how much water can be diverted and channelized without adversely affecting water quality in the Delta and the Delta fisheries. As the demand grows to transport water to the south to satisfy agricultural needs and an ever-exploding population, the need to develop and implement environmental safeguards for the County's waterways will become even more critical.

### **Groundwater**

Groundwater in Eastern San Joaquin County supports much of the County's agricultural, rural, and municipal and industrial water needs especially in dry years when surface water sources are depleted. The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), passed by the California Legislature and signed by Governor Brown in 2014, requires local government to manage groundwater sustainably. The County is active in the organization of local districts and cities to meet the requirements of SGMA. Local agencies intend to continue to build upon past groundwater management actions such as improved water use efficiency and water demand reduction as well as the construction of additional facilities to utilize surface water when available thus reducing reliance on groundwater. The County supports these ongoing efforts locally and regionally to sustainably manage its groundwater resources.

### **Plant and Animal Life**

The County has diverse vegetation and wildlife habitats. The species vary with the County's geographic subregions, the Delta, the southwest foothills, the Sierra Nevada foothills, and the Valley floor. Because of the pervasiveness and proximity of the waterways, fisheries and sport fishing areas are common in the county. The Delta is essential as a habitat for catfish and other resident fish, as spawning grounds for striped bass, and as an access from the ocean for salmon and other anadromous fish to the rivers of the Sierra Nevada. The Delta is one of the State's most biologically productive areas because of its unique setting at a point between a freshwater and saline environment. The marshlands serve as a habitat for several rare and endangered species, including the giant garter snake, the black rail, and the greater Sandhill Crane. The vegetative communities along the Delta and rivers provide food

and cover for a large number of birds, fish, and mammals. The Delta waterways and adjacent farmland are also a major wintering area along the Pacific Flyway, one of North America's primary waterfowl migration routes.

The southwest foothills of San Joaquin County contain a desert-like habitat of chaparral, grassland, and woodlands. It is significant because it represents the northernmost range of this type of habitat in the state. The foothills are inhabited by mule deer, the only big game species in the County, the endangered San Joaquin kit fox, and other protected species. In recognition of its biological significance, the State has created the Corral Hollow Ecological Reserve in this area.

The Sierra Nevada foothills at the eastern end of the County contain a mixture of grasslands, scattered woodlands, and riverside riparian habitats, which provide food and cover for the local reptiles, raptors, deer, and fish. Many of the Valley floor's native plant and wildlife species have been disrupted by agricultural activities and urbanization. However, there remain several significant stands of Valley oaks.

The ability of natural resources to sustain and regenerate themselves in the face of commercial agriculture or urbanization is extremely limited. The encroachment of development into sensitive habitat areas for plants and wildlife can eliminate these species or create stresses on the species that make it difficult to survive.

### **Extractive Resources**

The State has identified a number of regionally significant sand and gravel aggregate resource areas in the County. Their importance is borne out in the County's increasingly greater share of the State's production of sand and gravel. The extraction sites are concentrated in three areas, at the northeastern end of the County along the Mokelumne River, along the San Joaquin River west of Manteca, and to the south and southwest of Tracy. The most significant of these lies near Tracy. The County is fortunate to have these deposits rather than having to import them and increase the cost of development. The deposits should be protected until they are excavated. Their excavation, however, is not without potentially significant impacts. These deposits often occur within prime agricultural lands, in sensitive plant and animal habitats, in recreational areas, or in the path of urban development.

It is, therefore, necessary to strike a balance between environmental protection and economic production. The State, the County, and the City of Tracy enforce regulations geared to regulate the operations at these mining sites and to reclaim the site once the resource is exhausted.

San Joaquin County has also long been an active site for natural gas extraction. As early as 1854, when a water well drilled in Stockton yielded water and gas, there has been interest in the County's gas fields. Most of the gas is extracted from fields in the Delta.

### **Climate**

San Joaquin County has a dry climate, marked by very little rain. Its summers are long and dry (with a growing season averaging 290+ days around Stockton), and colder, rainy weather is typical between November and April. Average annual rainfall ranges from 8 inches a year in the southern part of the County to 18 inches in the northern part. The temperature ranges from average daily maximums of 94 degrees to average daily minimums of 59 degrees in June and from average daily maximums of 53 degrees to average daily minimums of 36 degrees in January.

The warm temperatures, the prevailing wind, and the County's location in an enclosed valley are critical factors in the County's ambient air quality. From May to October high ozone levels are common due to the intense sunlight and heat. Between October and January, weather conditions commonly trap air pollutants near the earth's surface. Dust from spring winds and agricultural operations account for most of the area's particulates. The concentrations of ozone, particulates, and carbon monoxide exceed the national standards and consequently require that the County have a program to reduce the pollutants to meet the standards.

### **Built Environment**

San Joaquin County was originally occupied by the Native American tribes of the Northern Valley Yokuts. Arrival of the Europeans was marked by French-Canadian trappers/hunters in the early 1800s. Concurrently, Mexican land grants covered over 100,000 acres, the largest being Campo de los Franceses. These "rancho" grants on which cattle and horses dominated were characteristic of the State's economy during the 1830s and up until the time of the Gold Rush in the late 1840s and 1850s. During the mid-1800's, San Joaquin County was a frequent stop along the main stagecoach roads, which connected Stockton, Lodi, Lockeford, Farmington, Lathrop, Banta, Manteca, and Tracy. It was during this period, in 1850, that the city of Stockton incorporated as the County's first city. Many of the County's communities have developed along these former transportation and trade routes.

Today, the County is a leading agricultural producer, but is undergoing a transformation to a more industrial and service economy. The County's population is

concentrated largely in its seven cities: Stockton, Tracy, Manteca, Lodi, Escalon, Ripon, and Lathrop.

Tracy, Lathrop, Manteca, Ripon, and to a lesser extent Stockton, have experienced the greatest growth as they feel the first wave of out-migration from the Bay Area. A number of unincorporated communities, many of whose origins are traced to serving surrounding agricultural activities, function as important residential and employment centers. Stockton has traditionally been and continues to exist as the financial, governmental, cultural, and commerce center of the County. At the hub of an extensive railroad network and containing the State's largest inland deepwater port, Stockton plays a principal role in the County's economic well-being.

State Route 99 and Interstate 5, two of the State's major north-south roadways, pass through San Joaquin County, offering the County excellent access in both these directions. Interstates 205 and 580 provide direct connections to the San Francisco Bay Area to the west. Combined with three transcontinental railroads, with Amtrak Service, ACE Train service, an intercity bus line, a metropolitan airport, and a port connecting to the Pacific Ocean, the County is strategically located to continue its major role in intra- and interstate trade. This regional transportation network in conjunction with relatively low land costs has attracted nonagriculturally related industrial development. Historically, food processing has been one of the area's largest manufacturing activities. Now, a greater emphasis on durable goods including electronics manufacturing is being witnessed.



The increasingly closer linkages with the San Francisco Bay Area, the Sacramento metropolitan area, and the larger Central Valley are beginning to strain the County's infrastructure, that is, its roads, water supply systems, wastewater treatment facilities, and drainage systems. Several deficiencies in the circulation system have become evident. Moreover, the ability to upgrade and expand water supply systems and wastewater treatment plants to accommodate the new growth has been greatly hampered by their high costs. If the County is to sustain this growth and achieve a more diversified economic base, new financial and regulatory mechanisms must be established to ensure timely and cost-efficient provision of, and improvements to, the County's infrastructure.

## **Institutional Environment**

### **Board of Supervisors**

The Board of Supervisors is the cornerstone of any policy formulation and implementation in the County. It is the Board through its decision-making authority that will affirm the policy direction and priorities contained in the Plan. The Board is ultimately responsible for adoption of the General Plan, as well as the regulations, capital improvement programs, administrative and review procedures, and financing mechanisms that are proposed by the Plan. The Board's authority to establish policy, set funding priorities, and enact ordinances is critical for implementation of the planning program.

### **The Planning Commission**

The Planning Commission is responsible for shaping the Plan and forwarding it to the Board for its approval. More critical is the Commission's role to ensure that all subsequent development applications are consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies expressed in the Plan. Through this authority, it is the Planning Commission and its planning staff that ensures that the Plan is implemented on a day-to-day basis – that the appropriate land uses are proposed in the proper locations, that the appropriate levels of service are provided, that the proposed uses conform to development regulations, and that the environment has been adequately protected.

### The County Staff

The Board and the Commission are assisted by the various County departments, which are responsible for reviewing development applications and advising the Planning Commission on their conformity with County policy. The following descriptions identify those agencies that are of paramount importance in the formulation and implementation of the Plan.

- County Administrator's Office is responsible for ensuring the County maintains a strong fiscal position and can finance public improvements.
- County Community Development Department is responsible for ensuring that development applications comply with development standards and policies, for proposing planning policies and General Plan and ordinance amendments for consideration by the Commission, and for inspecting buildings for conformance with building standards.
- County Public Works is responsible for ensuring that public facilities and utilities, such as roads, water supply, sewerage, and drainage, are properly designed to accommodate the projected development.
- Environmental Health Division is responsible for ensuring that private water supply and waste disposal systems are adequately designed to protect public health and safety.
- The Sheriff's Office and the County Fire Warden are responsible for recommending development standards and for ensuring that there is adequate staffing and equipment to respond to public safety threats.

## **Other Jurisdictions**

A number of special purpose local governments, such as water districts, community services districts, sanitary districts, and municipal advisory councils, indirectly affect land use decisions through their provision of services or recommendations. The following agencies have major importance for countywide development:

- The San Joaquin County Council of Governments, a regional confederation of the County and the seven cities, is responsible for transportation planning, as well as for the Airport Land Use Plan and other regional planning activities.
- The Local Agency Formation Commission is responsible for reviewing and approving boundary changes such as annexations and spheres of influence to ensure orderly urban development and efficient provision of services.
- Each of the seven cities in the County has land use jurisdiction within its own incorporated areas. Because of issues of land use compatibility, service provision, transportation, and environmental management, the cities and County must closely coordinate their planning efforts. In addition, each city defines a "sphere of influence" beyond its city limits. It is within this sphere of influence that the city expects to ultimately grow and provide services. Addition of the unincorporated areas within a city's sphere to the city occurs through annexation. These "fringe" areas around cities require special land use consideration, because they lie within the County's jurisdiction, but are ultimately to be part of the cities.
- The State government operates at two levels in San Joaquin County. One level is the exercise of direct control over lands it owns within the County, such as parks, other recreational facilities, and ecological reserves. On the other, more significant level, it operates through various State agencies concerned with transportation planning, air and water quality, solid waste management, water resources, and wildlife resources.

## **People of the County**

Immigration patterns have resulted in an ethnically diverse population in the County.

In the middle 1800s many first and second generation European immigrants came to California and Stockton for the Gold Rush. In the late 1800s many Chinese moved to the County after the transcontinental railroad was built to build the levees in the Delta. Sikhs came from northwestern India around 1900 to become a prominent labor force in the Delta farmlands. Their principal sanctuary in the United States is located in south

Stockton. During the 1930s Stockton had the largest population of Filipinos outside of the Philippines.

Since the end of the Vietnam war in 1975, approximately 30,000 Southeast Asians have moved to San Joaquin County. The County has large ethnic populations of Hispanics, African-Americans, Asians, and Native Americans.

The latest influx of immigrants is not an ethnic immigration, but is an immigration from the crowded urban Bay Area into the Central Valley. This immigration is generally of persons of higher education and technical skills. These groups usually want to have all the amenities one finds in a large urban area that may not be available in the County at this time.

The County population is concentrated in the urban areas, primarily located in the central one-third of the County, between State Route 99 and Interstate 5. The percentage of people living in the unincorporated areas has decreased, but a substantial percentage still resides there. Most of these people live around the fringes of Stockton, in Mountain House, or in other unincorporated urbanized communities.

San Joaquin County grew rapidly from 1990 to 2010, by 42.6 percent, compared to a 25.2 percent increase statewide. The county grew from a population of 480,628 in 1990 to 685,306 in 2010, an increase of 204,678. Overall, San Joaquin County grew an average of about 1.8 percent annually from 1990 to 2010, compared to California with a rate of 1.1 percent. In the incorporated areas of the County, Stockton experienced the greatest population growth, with an increase of 80,764 between 1990 and 2010. Escalon experienced the lowest amount of growth, with a population of 4,437 in 1990 to 7,132 in 2010, an increase of 2,695.

## Key Assumptions for the Plan

This section identifies some of the key assumptions helping to define the planning framework and provides the context for some of the policies that are proposed in this Plan.

### Population Growth

The County will grow rapidly during the planning period. The County assumes the total population in 2035 will be about 945,300. This equates to an average annual population growth rate of 1.5 percent, which is approximately 25 percent more than the State's projected annual average growth rate of 1.2 percent between 2012 and

2035. Between 1960 and 1980 the County grew at an average annual rate of about 2 percent. Between 1980 and 1990 the average annual growth rate was 3.3 percent.

Between 1990 and 2000 the County grew at an average annual rate of about 1.6 percent. Between 2000 and 2010 the average annual growth rate was 2 percent. It is not believed that this growth rate will continue through the 20-year planning period of this General Plan.

### **Source of Population Growth**

People migrating in from other places will continue to be the primary source of population growth, as opposed to natural increase (births less deaths) of the existing population. A substantial amount of the projected population growth will be attributable to employment opportunities in the Tri-Valley area, west of San Joaquin County. Studies undertaken by the San Francisco Bay Area Association of Governments reveal that more than 187,990 new homes must be built in the nine-county Bay Area by 2022 if the region wants further economic growth. The prospects for accomplishing this target are grim. Significantly, the greatest needs are projected for Alameda, Contra Costa, and Santa Clara Counties—those closest to San Joaquin County. The net effect will be continued pressure on San Joaquin County to supply the housing. A lesser amount of the new population growth will be due to employment in the Sacramento area.

### **Distribution of Population**

The geographical location of each planning area influences the demographic trends within the County. For example, there are six planning areas located along major corridors (Interstate 5 (I-5) and State Route 99 (SR-99)): Lodi, Stockton, Lathrop, Manteca, Tracy, and Mountain House. Population growth is mostly concentrated within these planning areas, while growth within agricultural-based communities, such as Thornton and the Delta, is low and growing at a slower rate. Incorporated cities are growing faster than the unincorporated areas; cities within the County have all experienced significant growth in the past 20 years, with 87 percent of the growth focused in the incorporated cities. A small portion of the growth will occur in the County's existing unincorporated communities, particularly those that are planned to be substantially expanded. The planning area with the greatest growth potential is Mountain House, which is projected to grow rapidly at an annual rate of 8.4 percent through 2025, as the new-town community develops over time, compared to the County's estimated rate of 2.5 percent annually. Growth continues to persist in the southern part of the County reflecting the area's proximity to the San Francisco Bay

Area, and particularly to the burgeoning Tri-Valley Area. As more county residents are locally employed, the County's northern and eastern communities will experience growth.

### **Employment Growth**

The rapid increase in population will be accompanied by subsequent increases in employment, as jobs follow the migration of population into the area. San Joaquin County Council of Governments projects that by 2035 employment by place of work is expected to rise to 312,799, an average annual increase of 1.5 percent from the 2010 base figure of 213,956.

According to the California Employment Development Department, San Joaquin County makes up about 43 percent of employment within the northern San Joaquin Valley; however, the number of jobs in the County grew slower than any other Valley county at 1.7 percent annually during the period from 1990 to 2007. Although employment may not be increasing as quickly as other San Joaquin Valley counties, County unemployment is among the lowest in the region.

### **Business Sector Growth**

The Transportation and Utilities sector and the Services sector are projected to play a stronger role in the County's future economic base, with an average annual growth in jobs of 1.9 percent through 2035. While agriculture will continue to function as a major source of economic output and revenues, it is projected the County will experience significantly more growth in the commercial sectors of retail, service, and office, and in manufacturing. The shift to a more service-oriented economy mirrors the changes projected for the State.

### **Distribution of Employment**

The location of future jobs should closely follow population growth. Projected growth is expected to be absorbed largely by the cities, including Stockton, Lodi, Tracy, and Manteca, as well as those new communities that are able to attract employment with housing. Between 2010 and 2035 SJCOG data show that of the total projected countywide population, about 88 percent of growth will occur in cities. Average annual growth rates of these cities' population will also increase at a slightly faster rate than that of the unincorporated County. More robust growth is expected in Lathrop, Tracy, and Manteca, as those cities have planned capacity for future residential development.

Despite projections of robust population growth, there exists an imbalance between jobs and population growth in San Joaquin County; population growth is occurring without corresponding employment growth. Population growth without corresponding employment growth is an indication of market forces, for example housing affordability or cost of living issues, or policy-related barriers to economic development.

### **Growth Accommodation**

The County will encourage and support new growth provided that the growth is consistent with the County's policies and development requirements. Services must be made available, development must occur in a fiscally responsible manner, and environmental quality should not be impaired. Local growth control measures will affect the distribution of population.

### **Public Services**

Population growth and economic development will continue to impose demands on currently overtaxed public services. It is increasingly difficult for the County to finance and provide new development with public services, and previous sources of State and Federal funding have been eliminated. Moreover, since much of the new population is coming from other highly urbanized areas, the new residents will tend to have higher expectations for levels of service than what the County has traditionally provided. Education is a critical service that must be adequate so that the quality of life can be maximized. Other services, such as infrastructure provision, fire protection, and the criminal justice system, are also critical and must be expanded if growth is to occur. Development will have to pay for services. Land use approvals need to be coordinated with service providers to insure that services are available when needed.

### **Water Supplies**

Water supply will continue to be a critical issue throughout the life of the Plan. Growing concern over the reliability and suitability of the region's groundwater supply are likely to diminish the role of this traditional source of water in the County. Most water supply districts in San Joaquin County have been transitioning away from groundwater sources to surface water to reduce overdraft of groundwater. Consequently, the question of whether there will be adequate supplies is cloudy at this time. It is assumed that water will be available to serve intensified and expanded agricultural, industrial, commercial, and residential use. This issue needs to be monitored carefully. If it

appears that adequate water supplies will not be available, growth and/or water management measures will need to be instituted.

### **Transportation**

The County's road network will continue to be its economic lifeline, but lack of funding for improvements will continue to be a major problem. The majority of the County's businesses rely on motor transport, compared to shipping or the railroads. In addition, more and more commuters continue to pour across the Altamont Pass. Circulation will be a powerful force in shaping the land use pattern. Funding for transportation improvements will be difficult and not all the improvements required will be made. A greater reliance on transportation system management and commuter transit will be needed to relieve the burden on the roads. The County must work closely with its cities and with adjoining counties in providing an adequate circulation system.



## **The General Plan as a Response to Change**

The preceding sections identified key issues confronting the County over the next 20 years:

- accommodating rapid population growth;
- responding to pressures for increased housing while insuring a balancing increase in jobs;
- minimizing growth impacts on agricultural land;
- attracting high quality jobs;
- ensuring adequate water;
- improving air quality;
- protecting the Delta;
- improving the circulation system;
- paying for infrastructure and services;
- developing inter-jurisdictional coordination; and
- maintaining the quality of life.

The General Plan is the County's opportunity to address these issues with forethought and with deliberate programs for action. At the same time the General Plan must be adaptable enough to recognize changing conditions. The issues and assumptions presented here are a reflection of the present setting. Over time, some of these planning factors may become irrelevant and new issues will arise. The Plan must be comprehensively reviewed on a regular basis.

Sight must not be lost of the fact that the General Plan sets direction. Accordingly, many of the recommendations in the Plan should be valid regardless of the amount of growth, because they suggest how growth should occur. Consequently, the growth projections may fall short or exceed those assumed in the Plan, yet the general distribution of land uses, the levels of service desired to accommodate this growth, and the conservation and management of the natural resources should continue to apply.

*This page is intentionally left blank.*