

CITY of PATTERSON
2010 General Plan

Adopted November 30th, 2010

CITY of PATTERSON GENERAL PLAN

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A Vision of the Future

Twenty years from now, Patterson is a vibrant, economically sound and culturally diverse community and the 'capital' of western Stanislaus County. Patterson residents know their neighbors as well as the neighborhood in which they live, and take pride in both. New neighborhoods are distinct and recognizable and possess a uniquely pedestrian character in which schools, parks and shopping are all within easy walking distance. And yet each new neighborhood is integrated with the fabric of the town.

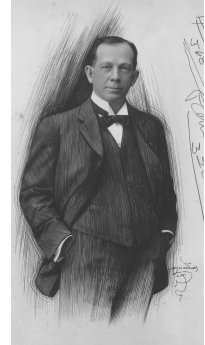
All of the shopping needs of Patterson residents are provided by local businesses, along with stable, well paying jobs. The downtown area attracts locals and visitors alike with its eclectic mix of traditional markets, restaurants and shops, and the numerous festivals held there each year. Residential overcrowding is thing of the past, the result of diverse housing opportunities affordable to all incomes.

City government remains dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of Patterson's small-town character and quality of life. The City continues to provide a high level of public services and to foster a sense of community involvement.

Lastly, Patterson is a City that continues to look to the future while embracing the diversity and character of its past.

I. INTRODUCTION

In 1908 an enterprising young man named T.W. Patterson envisioned a land west of the San Joaquin River filled with irrigated farms that could be settled by families. The town envisioned by Mr. Patterson was modeled after Washington D.C., with streets radiating outward from a central “hub” that served as the center of commerce and local government. The first buildings were the Patterson Ranch Company offices and the Del Puerto Hotel.



TW Patterson

In December 1919, Patterson voted to become an incorporated city, and in the intervening years, much of Mr. Patterson’s vision became a reality. The City supports a number of attractive residential neighborhoods with a variety of housing products, parks and schools. Shopping opportunities have been expanded to serve the day to day needs of Patterson residents. A vibrant and successful business park has been established that provides more and better-paying jobs. And the City boasts a wide range of community amenities that include a community swimming pool, a regional sports park, a senior center and an award-winning City Hall. In many respects, Patterson is the envy of Stanislaus County.



The Hotel Del Puerto

In 2009 the City faces new challenges. Since 2000 the cost of housing has risen alarmingly, while the supply of land for urban development within the City’s General Plan area has diminished. And while the City continues to be well positioned to attract more and better paying jobs, the competition for those jobs from surrounding jurisdictions is growing. More recently, the economy, and in particular the housing market, has seen a serious downturn as a result of problems with the nation’s financial institutions. Home values have plummeted and foreclosures are on the rise. And lastly, meeting the needs of a growing community will necessarily require the balancing of competing interests: the provision of housing and jobs on the one hand, with the protection of the agricultural economy and the conservation of scarce water resources on the other (to name just a few). Meanwhile, land use decisions by other agencies - most notably Stanislaus County - could have a profound effect on the quality of life enjoyed in Patterson.

In preparing and adopting this General Plan, the City of Patterson has chosen its future, rather than allowing it’s future to be chosen by others.

General Plan Context

Patterson lies in the heart of a fertile agricultural region in the western San Joaquin Valley, about 15 miles southwest of the City of Modesto in Stanislaus County. The foothills of the Diablo Range provide a

scenic backdrop to the west, and on clear days, the Sierras are clearly visible to the east. Although the pace of development in Patterson has changed greatly in recent years, residents are mindful of protecting its small-town character and remembering its agricultural heritage: the self-proclaimed “Apricot Capital of the World.”

Figure I-1 - Regional Perspective

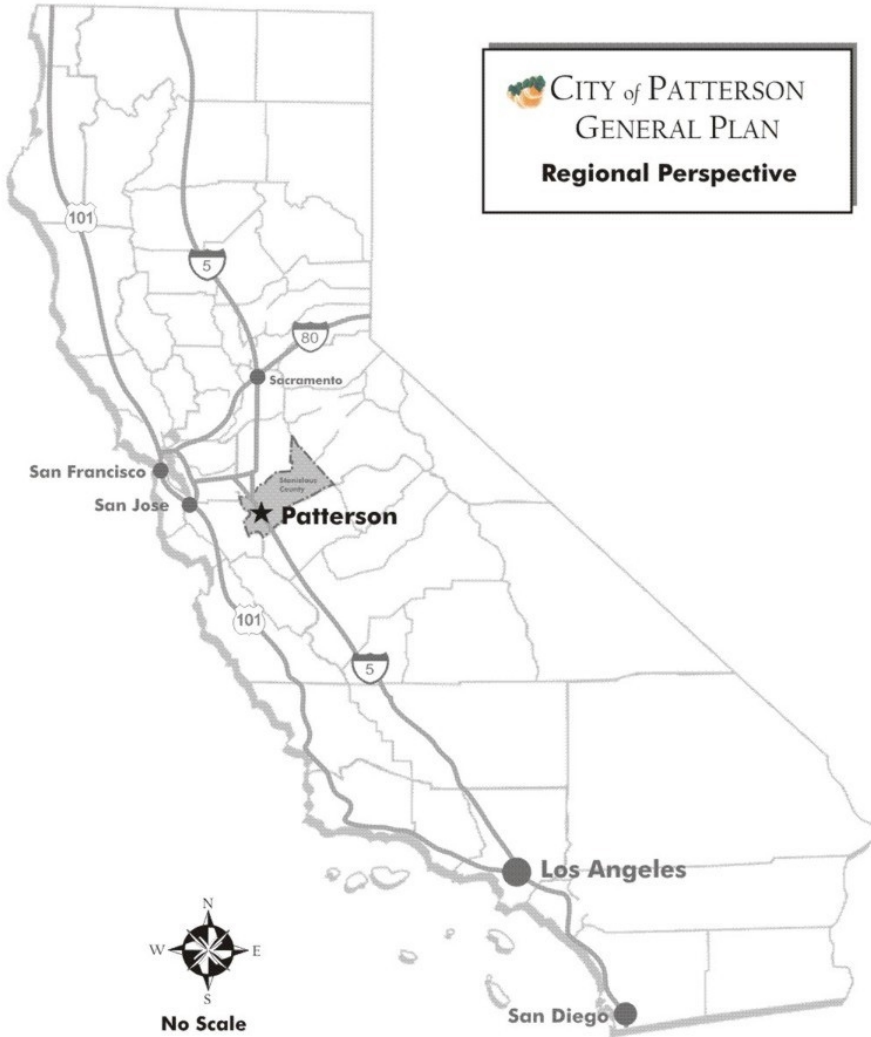


Figure I-2 - Patterson and Vicinity

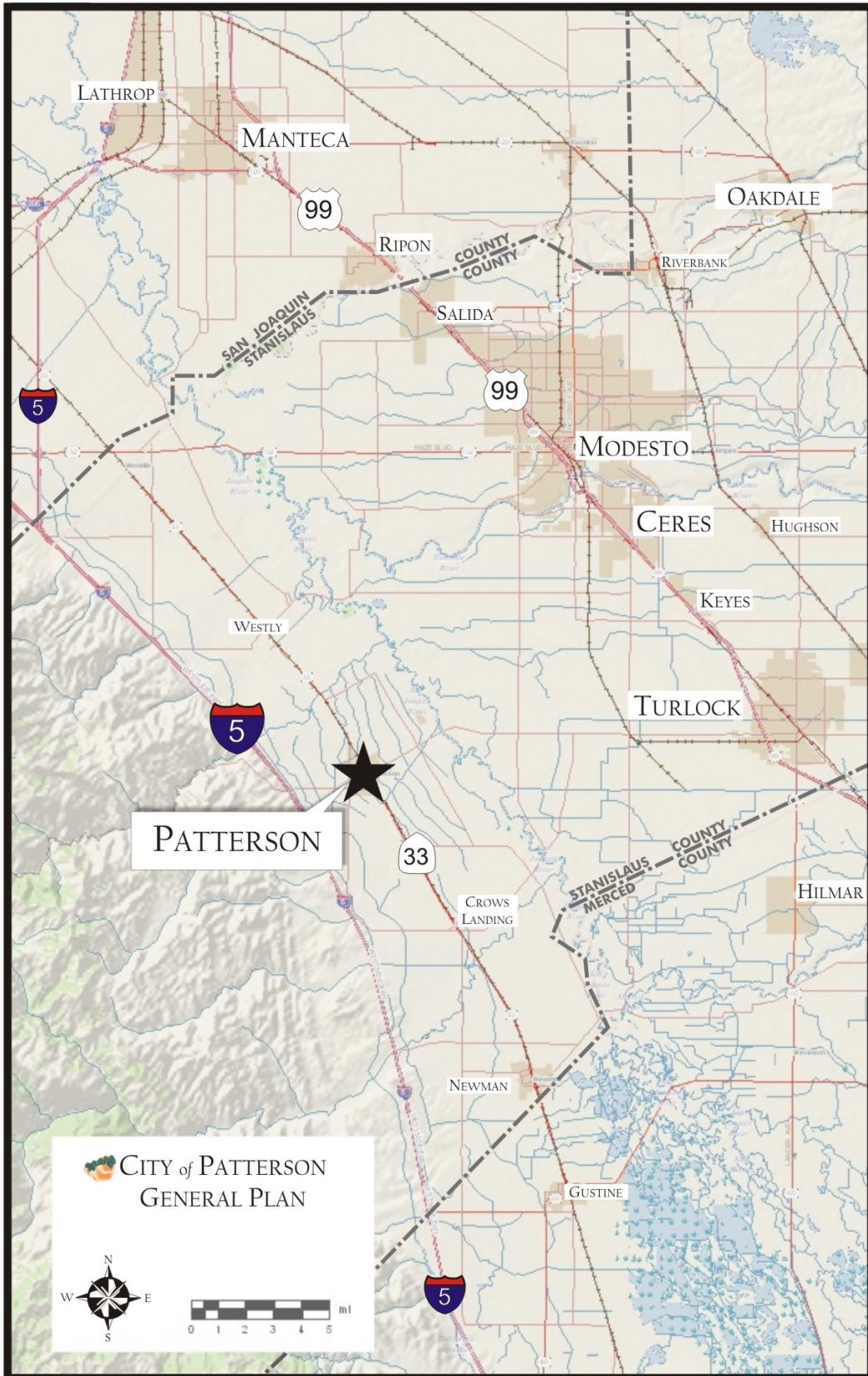
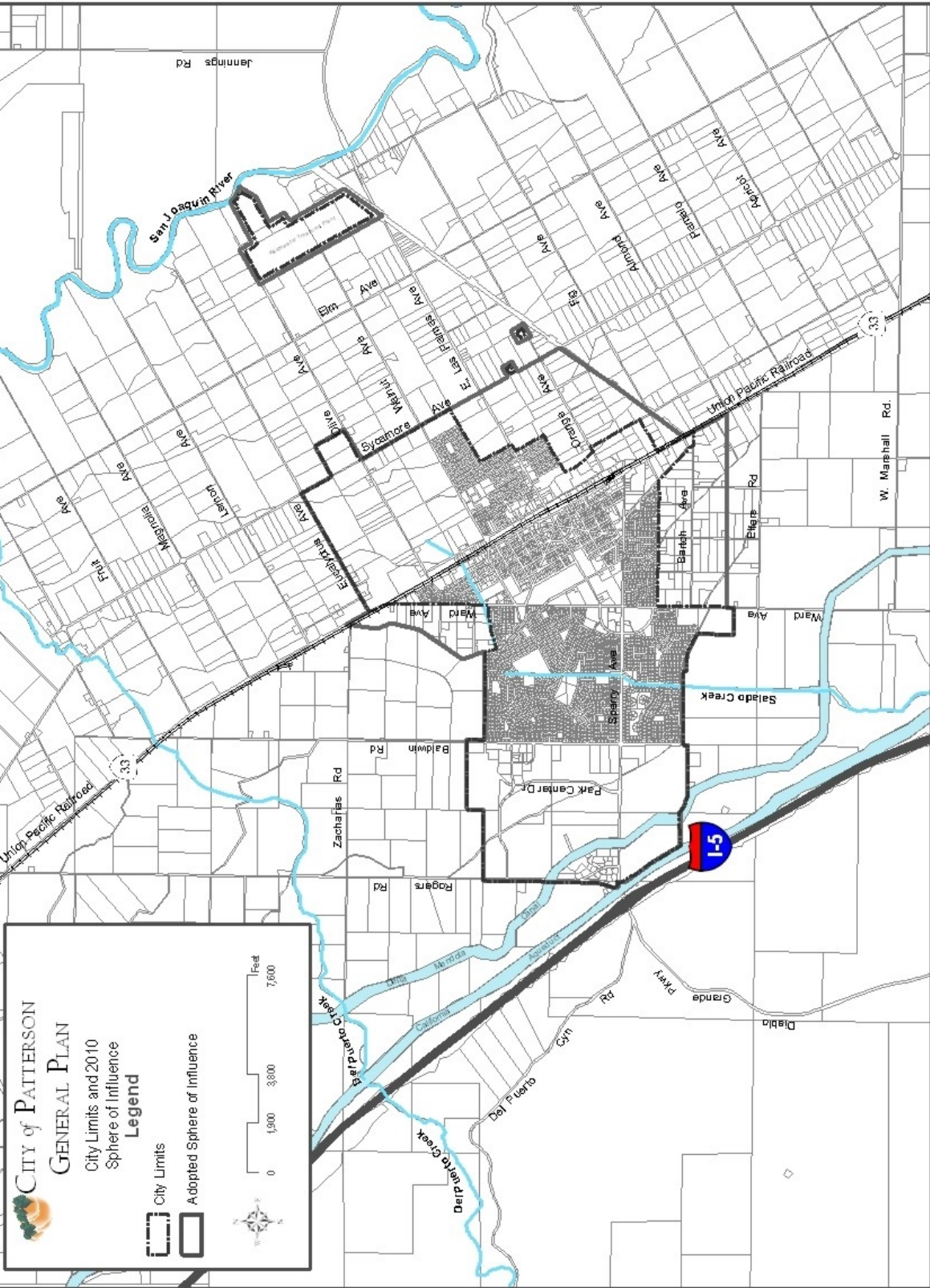


Figure I-3 - 2010 City Limits and Sphere of Influence



I. INTRODUCTION

Patterson, along with the other towns of in western Stanislaus County, has traditionally provided housing and support services for the surrounding agricultural operations that dominate the regional economy. However, that traditional role is changing. According to data published by the California Department of Finance, Patterson ranked third among the fastest growing cities in the State in 2006, based on the percentage of population increase from the previous year. This may be at least partially explained by skyrocketing housing costs in the eastern San Francisco Bay area prompting residents to seek more affordable housing in the outlying communities. Although the additional development has brought much needed housing, expanded opportunities for shopping have not kept pace.

The unprecedented growth in the Central Valley which began in the late-1990s was not foreseen in 1992 when the City's General Plan was adopted. That General Plan anticipated more modest growth similar to preceding years. And while the pace of new development can be partly explained by the "spill over" of demand from the East Bay, it is likely that the coming years will see a similar expansion of the local and regional economies.

In Patterson, evidence of this growing economy was evident in the accelerating pace of residential development between 1998 and 2006, in which an average of about 250 new dwelling units were constructed each year. Although new housing helps satisfy an unmet need, the absence of commensurate growth in the number of jobs and shopping opportunities raised concerns that Patterson was fast becoming a "bedroom" community in which residential development occupies a disproportionately large percentage of the local economy.

More information about the environmental, economic, regulatory and other factors affecting the City is provided in the General Plan Background Report, which is published separately.

Purpose and Nature of the General Plan

A general plan is a requirement of State law and serves as a community's "constitution" for development and the use of land within its planning area. It must be comprehensive and long-term, detailing proposals for the "...physical development of the city, and of any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning." (Government Code §65300 et seq.). Time horizons vary, but the typical general plan looks 10-20 years into the future. The Patterson General Plan covers two planning timeframes - 20 years and 40 years into the future.

Laws governing General Plans in California are contained in Government Code §65000 et seq.
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The law specifically requires that the general plan address seven topics or "elements." These are:

- Land use
- Circulation (transportation)

- Housing
- Conservation
- Open space
- Noise, and
- Safety.

The plan must analyze issues of importance to the community, set forth policies in text and diagrams for conservation and development, and outline specific programs for implementing these policies.

Preparing the general plan can be viewed as an activity which sharpens and focuses the many concerns of citizens within the community and provides a structure by which these often conflicting concerns can be forged into a common vision of the future. By focusing attention on the issues facing the community and placing them in an expanded time frame, the general plan helps citizens see their community as a complex system- a living entity that grows and responds to problems and opportunities - and it helps to guide the community along an agreed-upon course.

On a more concrete level, preparing, adopting, and maintaining a general plan serves the following purposes:

- ❑ To establish within local government the capacity to analyze local and regional conditions and needs in order to respond effectively to the problems and opportunities facing the community;
- ❑ To identify the community's environmental, social, and economic goals;
- ❑ To record the local government's policies and standards for the maintenance and improvement of existing development and the location and characteristics of future development;
- ❑ To provide citizens with information about their community and with opportunities to participate in the local planning and decision-making process;
- ❑ To improve the coordination of community development and environmental protection activities among local, regional, state, and federal agencies; and
- ❑ To establish a basis for subsequent planning efforts, such as preparation of specific plans, redevelopment plans, and special studies, to deal with unique problems or areas in the community.

While the general plan sets out policies and identifies ways to put these policies into action, the actual implementation of the plan is a complex and lengthy process in its own right. As with piecing together

I. INTRODUCTION

a puzzle, local officials must take many separate, but interconnected actions according to the direction set out in the general plan.

These various actions rest on two essential powers of local government: corporate and police powers. Using their “corporate power,” local governments collect money through bonds, fees, assessments, and taxes, and spend it to provide services and facilities such as police and fire protection, streets, water systems, sewage disposal facilities, drainage facilities, and parks. Using their “police power,” local governments regulate citizens’ use of their property through zoning, subdivision, and building regulations in order “to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the public.” The general plan provides the framework for the exercise of these powers by local officials. By virtue of state law and case law, all zoning, subdivision, and public works decisions must be consistent with the general plan.

Corporate Power = Authorizes the financing of local government activities.
Police Power = Empowers local governments to protect the health, safety and welfare of its citizenry.

Organization Of The General Plan

The Patterson General Plan consists of two documents: the General Plan Background Report and the General Plan Policy Document.

General Plan Background Report

The General Plan Background Report inventories and analyzes existing conditions and trends in Patterson, and provides the formal supporting documentation for general plan policy. The Background Report addresses ten subject areas: land use; housing; population; economic conditions and fiscal considerations; transportation and circulation; public facilities and services; cultural and recreational resources; natural resources; health and safety; and scenic resources and urban design.

The General Plan Policy Document

The General Plan Policy Document includes the goals, policies, standards, implementation programs, quantified objectives, draft land use diagram, and draft circulation plan diagram that constitute the formal policy of the City of Patterson for land use, development, and environmental quality. The following definitions describe the nature of the statements of goals, policies, standards, implementation measures, and quantified objectives as they are used in the policy document:

Goal: The ultimate purpose of an effort stated in a way that is general in nature and immeasurable.

Policy: A specific statement in text or diagram guiding action and implying clear commitment.

Standard: A specific, often quantified guideline, incorporated in a policy or implementation program defining the relationship between two or more variables. Standards can often translate

directly into regulatory controls.

Implementation Measure: An action, procedure, program, or technique that carries out general plan policy. Implementation programs also specify primary responsibility for carrying out the action and a time frame for its accomplishment.

Quantified Objective (Housing only): The number of housing units that the City expects to be constructed and the number of households the City expects will be assisted through Housing Element programs and based on general market conditions during the time frame of the Housing Element.

The Policy Document recognizes the importance of managing the use of land and resources in an efficient and sustainable manner. Policies that contribute to sustainability identified with this symbol:



The General Plan Policy Document is divided into three chapters. Chapter I-Introduction provides an introduction to the General Plan Policy Document, how it was prepared and the relation of the Policy Document to other City plans. Chapter II-Land Use Diagrams and Standards describes the designations appearing on the Land Use Diagram and outlines the standards of population density and building intensity for these land use designations as required by State law. This chapter also contains a diagram depicting the proposed circulation system and a description of the Street classification system.

The General Plan elements are provided as individual chapters following the introduction. Each element contains explicit statements of goals, policies, standards, implementation measures, and quantified objectives for each of the following general plan elements:

- Land Use
- Housing
- Community Design
- Economic Development
- Circulation
- Air Resources and Climate Change
- Public Services
- Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources
- Health and Safety (Noise, Safety)
- Natural Resources (Conservation and Open Space)
- Administration and Implementation.

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A general plan must be internally consistent. However, while the general plan elements must comprise an integrated, internally consistent and compatible statement of policies, new laws and policies pertaining to affordable housing require that such projects be approved even where such a development would be inconsistent with the City’s zoning or land use designations for the site.

Land use and development actions must also be consistent with the General Plan. The City’s determination of which projects may be consistent with the General Plan is subject to great deference by the courts because general plans naturally contain a number of competing interests and policies, which the City Council must weigh in light of the plan’s overall purpose. Notable, courts have held that projects are not required to be in perfect conformity with every General Plan policy so long as a particular project is determined to be harmony with the policies stated in the General Plan.

Each section includes several goal statements relating to different sub-issues or different aspects of the issue addressed in the section. For each goal statement there are several policies which amplify the goal statement. Implementation programs are listed at the end of each section. Each program is accompanied by the actions necessary carry out the program, the agencies or departments with primary responsibility for carrying out the program, and the time frame for implementation. The housing section also includes a statement of quantified housing objectives.

In addition to the General Plan Background Report (available at City Hall, 1 Plaza, Patterson, CA) and General Plan Policy Document, an Environmental Impact Report analyzing the impacts and implications of the General Plan was prepared. The EIR, which is not a formal part of the General Plan, was prepared to meet the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

CEQA	=	Public
Resources Code		§22000

Relation of the General Plan Policy Document to Other City Plans and Policies

Redevelopment

The Patterson Redevelopment Agency was established in 1998 in accordance with Health and Safety Code § 33000 to provide a tool for revitalizing a 420 acre portion of the City (the Project Area) which generally includes the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. The fundamental goal of redevelopment is to alleviate social, economic, physical, or visual problems that are preventing the full and beneficial use of public and private properties within the Project Area (see Figure I-4). The Community Redevelopment Law (CRL) characterizes these problems as blight.

Redevelopment can help finance the improvement of blighted areas by allowing a portion of the increase in property tax revenue generated by new development to be spent on activities that promote physical and economic revitalization, increase the supply of affordable housing and expand employment opportunities. These activities must proceed in accordance with a Redevelopment Plan that describes how the constraints and conditions that preclude the effective utilization of public and private properties within the redevelopment area will be addressed.

The primary focus of the Agency's activities has been to revitalize the Downtown and eliminate the blighting conditions that remain. Although considerable progress has been made, as described in Chapter III, much work remains to be done. All of these efforts have helped to improve economic conditions within the City, provide jobs and remove physical and economic blight.

Community Design Guidelines and Downtown Physical Design Plan

In 2002 the City adopted the City of Patterson Community Design Guidelines and Downtown Physical Design Plan. The design guidelines describe the City's expectations and preferences for the quality and character of new development. The Design Guidelines help ensure that new development is designed in a manner that responds to the unique characteristics of an individual site, but also fits into the wider context of Patterson.

In the downtown, attention to the design details of both private property development, and the City's treatment of the public realm, warrant more detailed planning and design direction than the general guidelines provide. The Downtown Physical Design Plan provides a physical design plan to help guide these revitalization efforts and capture the community's vision for a revitalized Downtown that is an attractive place to visit, shop and do business.

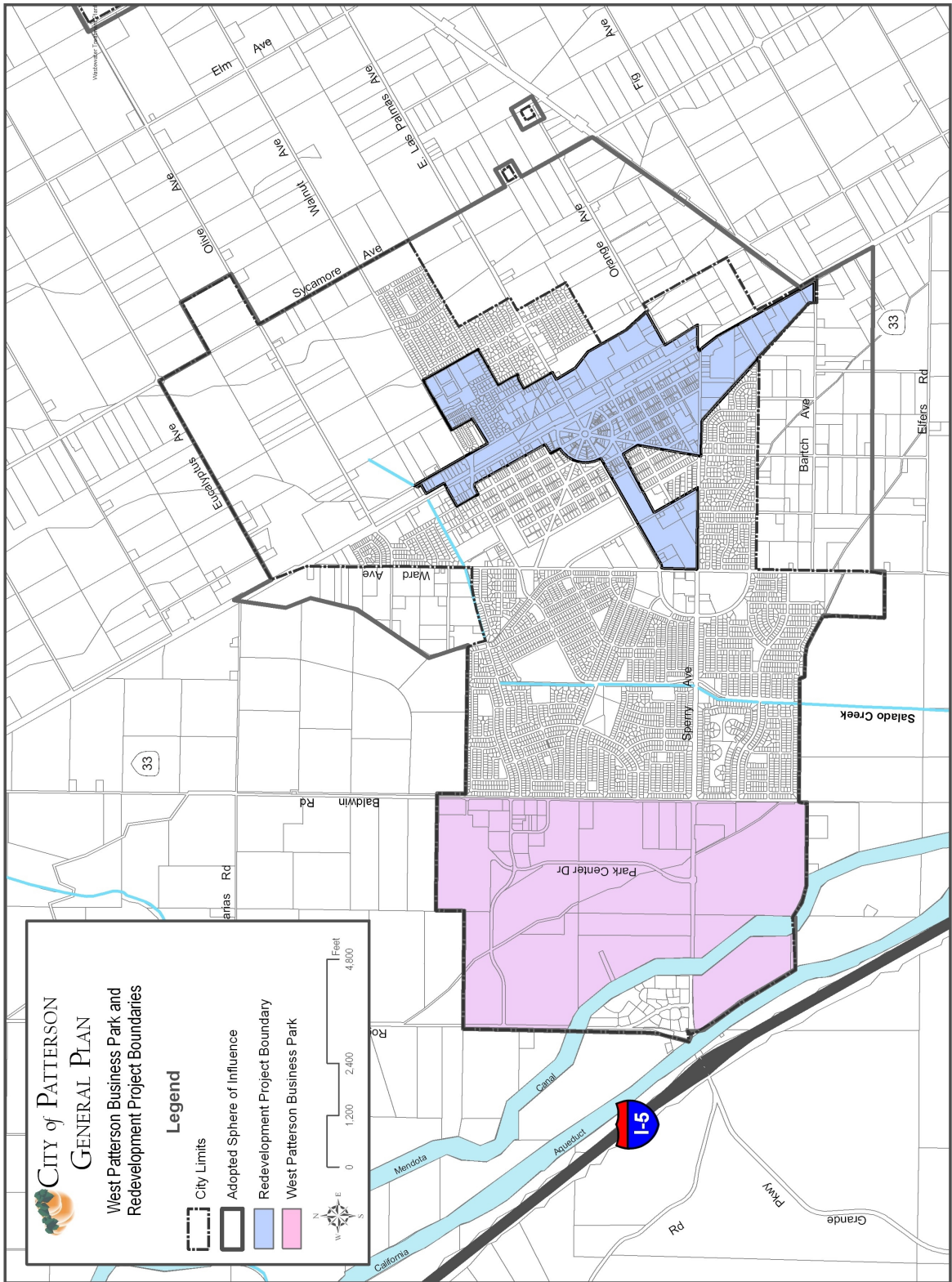
The area covered by the Downtown Plan and Design Guidelines is shown in relation to the City's Redevelopment Project Area on Figure 4 and includes the commercial properties around El Circulo and land to the west along Las Palmas Avenue envisioned as the westward expansion of the Downtown in the Patterson General Plan.

West Patterson Business Park Master Development Plan

The West Patterson Master Development Plan was adopted in 2002 to supplement the City's General Plan by establishing development standards and design guidelines that will apply to all new development within an 820 acre industrial park west of Baldwin Road. All development proposals within the Plan area must be found to be consistent with the Master Development Plan, which in turn must be consistent with the City's General Plan.

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Figure I-4: Redevelopment Project Area/Downtown Physical Design Plan Area and West Patterson Business Park Master Development Plan Area



Preparation of the General Plan

The Patterson General Plan last underwent a comprehensive revision in 1992. The 1992 Plan was intended to provide guidance for the growth and development of the City through the year 2012. Although the Plan was revised and updated in 2004, the area covered by the Plan and its vision for the future remained largely unchanged through 2007.

Against this backdrop, in 2007 the City initiated a comprehensive revision of its 1992 General Plan. The City retained a multi-disciplinary consulting team headed by Crawford Multari & Clark Associates to assist the City in its general plan effort. The first step in the



Workshop participants

process was a public outreach and participation program consisting of two public workshops at which participants were asked to share their vision for the future of the City. A third workshop was conducted exclusively for teens. The input received from these workshops was used to derive a list of planning principles that were used to guide the preparation of a draft general plan.

As the foundation for policy development, the consultants subsequently prepared a detailed Background Report (discussed previously).

To help guide the formulation of a draft general plan, the City Council appointed an 11-member General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) representing the diverse interests of residents, property owners and other stakeholders as well as the Patterson Unified School District and the Del Puerto Health Care District. The Advisory Committee met for over a year from the summer of 2007 to the fall of 2008 to consider a diverse range of issues, and options (in the form of general plan policies and implementation measures) for addressing those issues in the General Plan. Those issues included:

- The timeframe and population holding capacity of the new General Plan;

I. INTRODUCTION

- Residential densities to be assumed for new neighborhoods, and the qualities that should be incorporated into those neighborhoods;
- Appropriate locations for additional urban development beyond the 1992 General Plan;

These issues and options were based largely on the findings of the public workshops and the Background Report. They were, however, also the result of extensive discussions among consulting team members and with City officials, other public agencies, industry groups, property owners, developers, community groups, and individual citizens. For each issue, the Advisory Committee selected one or more options, in some cases combining options and in other cases modifying the options.

Based on the Advisory Committee's direction and in cooperation with City staff, the consultants prepared the draft goals, policies, and implementation programs and land use and circulation diagrams constituting the Policy Document of the Draft General Plan. At the same time, the consulting team prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to meet the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act.

Issues Addressed by the General Plan

Through the public workshops, General Plan Background Report, discussions with members of the community and city staff, and most of all through the extensive meetings with the General Plan Advisory Committee, a wide range of issues were identified to be addressed by the General Plan. These issues include (but are not limited to) the following:

- The appropriate future size (in land area and population) for the City in 20- and 40-years.
- Appropriate locations for future urban development;
- The appropriate distribution of land uses for urban development among residential, shopping and job-generating land uses;
- The provision of affordable housing and expanded opportunities for shopping;
- The provision of more and better jobs, and a better balance between "living wage" jobs and the cost of housing;
- The provision of health care with a hospital/medical center and a variety of health services;
- The location of a new freeway interchange north of the City, perhaps at Zacharias Road to improve connections to the Bay Area and points to the north;
- The preservation of agriculture and agricultural land;
- The provision of a Junior College/University/higher education;
- How to address large-scale urban development in the unincorporated County;