



# **City of Napa General Plan**

## **Policy Document**

*Adopted December 1, 1998*

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# City of Napa General Plan Policy Document

**Adopted  
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# CITY OF NAPA GENERAL PLAN

# POLICY DOCUMENT

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# PREFACE

The City Council of the City of Napa adopted a comprehensive update of the 1982 General Plan on December 1, 1998. The General Plan, called *Envision Napa 2020*, consists of two documents: the Policy Document and the Background Report. The Draft Policy Document features goals, policies and implementation programs for each of the General Plan elements. The Background Report provides a description and detailed information on the existing conditions under each of the element categories and provides a basis for the policies and programs in the Policy Document. In addition to these two documents, a Final Environmental Impact Report (SCH # 95-03-3060) has been completed and certified, as required by CEQA, to examine the potential impacts that could result from the implementation of the General Plan Policies. The Final EIR is a Program level document that will be used for future tiering of environmental analysis as projects are implemented under this General Plan.

A Fiscal Analysis (August 1996) was also prepared to provide information on the economic feasibility of the physical and regulatory consequences of the General Plan policies.

This Policy Document and the Background Report represent the City's General Plan Document, *Envision Napa 2020*.



This General Plan, Envision Napa 2020, formalizes a long-term vision for the physical evolution of Napa and outlines policies, standards, and programs to guide day-to-day decisions concerning Napa's development through the year 2020. Designed to meet state general plan requirements, the General Plan consists of two documents: this *Policy Document* and a *Background Report*. The *Policy Document* presents the City of Napa's formal statements of General Plan policy in the form of goals, policies, standards, and implementation programs expressed in both text and diagrams.

## PURPOSE AND NATURE OF THE GENERAL PLAN

Every city and county in California must adopt a general plan. A general plan is a legal document that serves as a community's "constitution" for land use and development. The plan must be *comprehensive* and *long-term*, outlining proposals for the physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning (*Government Code* § 65300 *et seq.*) The plan must be comprehensive in covering all territory within the adopting jurisdiction, and it must be comprehensive in addressing all physical aspects of the community's development. While state law does not define "long-term", most general plans look 15 to 25 years into the future. Napa's General Plan uses a time frame of 2020.

State law specifically requires that the general plan address seven topics or "elements". These are land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety. The general plan may also address other topics the community feels are relevant to its development. For each topic addressed, the plan must analyze the significance of the issue in the community, set forth policy in text and diagrams, and outline specific programs for implementing these policies. The format and

structure of the general plan are left to local discretion, but regardless of the format or issues addressed, all substantive parts of the plan must be consistent with one another.

Preparing, adopting and maintaining a general plan serves several important purposes:

- Provides citizens with information about their community and with opportunities to participate in setting goals and determining policies and standards for the community's development.
- Provides local decision makers and the community with a forum for resolving conflicts among competing interests and values.
- Expands the capacity of local government to analyze local and regional conditions and needs in order to respond effectively to the problems and opportunities facing the community.
- Defines the community's environmental, social, and economic goals.
- Records the local government's policies and standards for the maintenance and improvement of existing development and the location and characteristics of future development.
- Fosters coordination of community development and environmental protection activities among local, regional, state, and federal agencies.
- Guides and coordinates the many actions and day-to-day decisions of local government that are necessary to developing and protecting the community.

## IMPLEMENTING THE GENERAL PLAN

Carrying out the plan following its adoption requires a multitude of individual actions and ongoing programs involving virtually every City department and many other public agencies and private organizations. The legal authority for these various actions and programs rest on two essential

powers of local government: corporate and police powers. Using their “corporate power”, local governments collect money through bonds, fees, facilities such as police and fire protection, streets, water systems, sewage disposal facilities, drainage facilities, and parks. Using their “police power”, local governments regulate the use of property through zoning, subdivision, and building regulations in order “to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the public”. The general plan provides the formal and legal framework for the exercise of these powers by local officials.

To ensure that the policies and proposals of the general plan are systematically implemented, state law since the early 1970s has increasingly insisted that the actions and decisions of each local government concerning both its own projects and the private projects it approves are consistent with its adopted general plan. The courts have supported and furthered this trend through their interpretations of state law. Zoning, local government approval of subdivisions, and local public works projects must be consistent with the general plan. The same is true for development agreements, redevelopment plans, specific plans, and many other plans and actions of cities and counties.

## REVISING AND AMENDING THE GENERAL PLAN

A general plan is a long-term document with a planning horizon of 15 to 25 years. To achieve its purposes, the plan must be sufficiently flexible to adjust to changing conditions and at the same time specific in guiding day-to-day land use and development decisions. Over the years, conditions and community needs change and new opportunities arise; the plan needs to keep up with these changes. Every year the Planning Commission should review the plan’s implementation programs to assess the City’s progress in carrying out the plan. Periodically, the plan should be thoroughly reviewed and updated as necessary. From time to time, the City will entertain proposals for specific amendments to the plan. The City will initiate some of these proposals itself, but most will be initiated by property owners and developers.

Like the adoption of the general plan itself, general plan amendments are subject to environmental review, public notice, and hearing requirements and must not create inconsistencies with the rest of the plan.

## REGIONAL SETTING

The City of Napa is a community of approximately 66,900 people (1996) located in the north part of the San Francisco Bay Area, a nine-county region of six million people. The city of Napa is the county seat. The city lies approximately four miles north of American Canyon and 20 miles north of Vallejo via Highway 29. The city of Sonoma lies 12 miles west via Highway 121. San Francisco and Oakland are approximately 50 miles south and west via Interstate 80. The Napa River runs through the middle of Napa. Figure 1 depicts Napa’s general location within the region.

## HISTORY OF LAND USE PLANNING IN NAPA

Today, the location, timing, and extent of land uses and supporting facilities are all subject to the public planning process. This has been true only relatively recently in the city’s 150-year history, during most of which little thought was given to the potential community impacts of private land development decisions.

### Early Napa

Nathan Coombs laid out the original townsite at the headwaters of the Napa River in 1848. A racing enthusiast and horse breeder, Coombs envisioned a resort that would provide accommodations for patrons of the racetrack he later constructed south of town. Once completed, the new track was never used for commercial purposes and Coombs’ new town was not to become a tourist destination until over a century later.

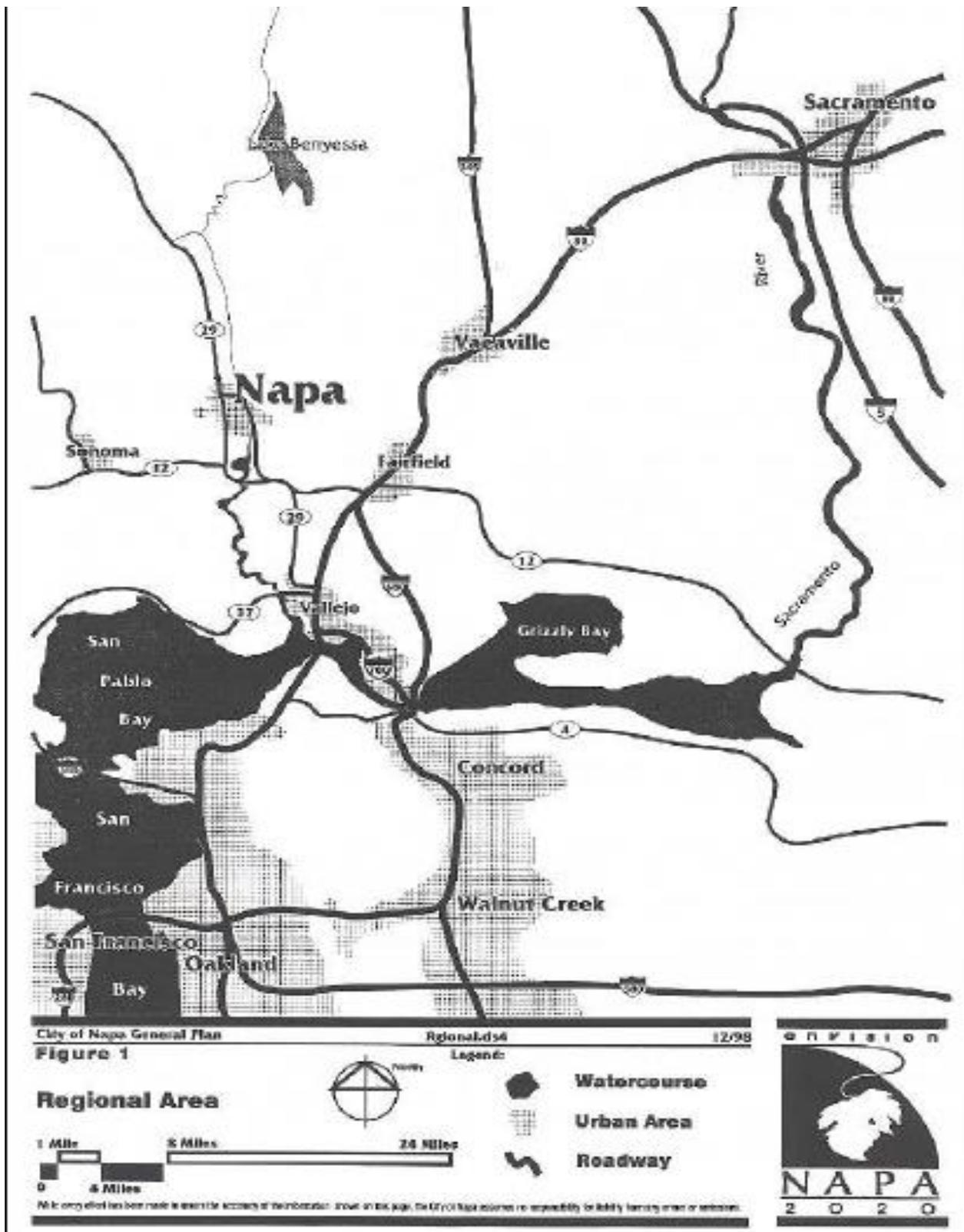
River trade soon helped Napa City become a center of valley commerce. The city’s population swelled from 159 in 1850 to nearly 3,500 in its first 30 years. Consumer goods from San Francisco were

unloaded from river barges at the wharf located at the foot of Third Street. Agricultural products, timber from the valley's hills, and fine tanned leather were loaded for transport downriver.

River trade also turned the city into a "jumping off point" for miners seeking their fortunes in the silver and quicksilver mines to the north.

By the turn of the century, the once rough and ready wharf city was becoming "civilized" through the efforts of families who had become wealthy from tanning, mining, agriculture, and lumber operations. Napa boasted several fine hotels and a beautiful opera house in its bustling downtown. Vineyards and orchards had been planted during the mid-nineteenth century and the area was well known for its fine wines and brandies.

Some of the original wineries are still in operation and have been joined by over 200 more. Today, as the producer of a highly prized consumer product, Napa Valley's agricultural industry is more than simply a source of local employment. The wine industry has virtually become a local *raison d'etre*; reminders of wine production and its most important spinoff industry, tourism, extend south to the city of Napa.



## Napa Takes Control of Its Future

During its early history most Napa residents regarded growth as a desirable index of prosperity and progress, a sentiment that continued through the middle of the 20th Century. One hundred years after the first steamers began docking at the new Napa city wharf, the city's population had reached 13,579.

Following a long period of slow growth, the city grew rapidly between 1940 and 1950 when its population increased 64 percent. Much of the growth was a result of war-industry-related operations in nearby Solano County and created the first signs that Napa was becoming a bedroom community within the San Francisco Bay Area.

During the 1950s, master planning was a fashionable way for progressive cities to demonstrate local officials' commitment to a "better tomorrow." In 1952 Napa County and its cities established themselves as leaders in the region when they undertook a joint master planning effort. Like most "master plans" of the era, Napa's first plan focused on the benefits of growth, expansion being generally regarded as desirable. A 1960 version of the master plan estimated the total future population capacity of Napa County to be "1,100,000 persons at fairly low densities," and envisioned 125,000 to 220,000 people residing in the county by 1990.

By the early 1950's the City of Napa found itself surrounded by County approved subdivisions on all sides: south of Old Sonoma Road, Pueblo Park to the northwest, Sierra Avenue on the north, and Monticello Park, Alta Heights and Shetler on the east. In response, the City began the annexation of the Stanly Ranch to the south. This sparked discussions about planning for orderly growth in Napa by both the Cities and the County.

The *Adopted Master Plan of the County of Napa* was a landmark effort for several reasons. Most notably, the master plan process resulted in adoption of coordinated subdivision and zoning ordinances by the County and Cities of Napa, St. Helena, and Calistoga. Nearly two decades before similar concepts became part of California's Government Code, Napans were beginning to recognize the value of coordinated growth management, especially in fringe areas around the rapidly growing cities. Also in advance of state

requirements, the new master plan was adopted by the cities and county as the "official guide" and basis for all future land development and "precise plans adopted by law."

Early plans envisioned a future in which the city of Napa would become a full-scale urban center. The master plan had predicted an ultimate population between 136,000 and 150,000 for the "Napa Community," which began at Imola Avenue on the south and was expected to urbanize northward as far as the Orchard/ Salvador areas. In the late 1960s, the City of Napa decided it needed a refined level of guidance for land development and facilities planning decisions. Accordingly, the City engaged a planning consultant who prepared both the City's first general plan and a comprehensive downtown redevelopment plan. The new plans were adopted in 1969 and the City Council appointed itself as the governing board of the new Napa Community Redevelopment Agency.

The plans envisioned the city of Napa evolving into a major urban center. A population of 150,000 by 1990 was forecast with the urbanized area expected to extend "from the Napa marshes on the south, the low foothills to the east and west, to Dry Creek on the north." Consistent with the downtown redevelopment plan, the general plan showed high-rise apartments lining the Napa River in the downtown core. Major facility improvements were also called for, including an east-west cross-town freeway linking two north-south freeways, Highway 29 and a new freeway that would replace the Silverado Trail east of the Napa River.

The city began urban renewal efforts in the early 1970s with the expectation that its revitalized downtown would be serving a local market of over 150,000 people within 20 years. The first phase included streetscaping in front of the retail stores along First Street between Main and Seminary. Decorative brick sidewalks were laid, trees were planted, and street furniture was installed.

The redevelopment plan called for creation of a public use/plaza space in the center of the redevelopment area and the redevelopment agency began assembling the land necessary to accomplish the task. Federal Neighborhood Development Program moneys were used to demolish several blocks between First and Pearl streets. A few historic commercial structures were acquired (some through the condemnation process) and

demolished to make way for the clock tower plaza and fountain. East of the new plaza, land was acquired adjacent to the Napa River and Veteran's Park was designed as a secondary focal point for downtown activities.

Creation of a Napa River linear park that would strongly reorient the downtown and other parts of the community to the river was a central concept of the City's 1969 General Plan. During building demolition for the new plaza and mall, the Napa Creek was uncovered. The confluence of the creek and Napa River in the downtown core raised the issue of their significance both as aesthetic elements and as possible hazards affecting the downtown redevelopment effort.

The Army Corps of Engineers had begun a flood control plan for the Napa River during the late 1960s. Community interest in the river during the first phase of downtown redevelopment led to a proposal for a flood control project that would enhance the river's recreational and aesthetic functions by incorporating the linear parkway proposed by the 1969 General Plan with redesigned flood control.

Local financing for the proposal was needed to supplement the bulk of the cost, which was to be split among several federal agencies. A flood control bond measure was placed on the ballot in 1975 but was defeated by the voters. Ultimately, redevelopment funds were used to provide landscaping enhancements along the creek, but the planned improvements to the Napa River were never accomplished.

## 1975 - A Planning Watershed

With the exception of changes prescribed by its accompanying downtown redevelopment plan, the 1969 General Plan was never realized. Portions of the plan, and the rapid growth it seemed to be promoting, alarmed many residents. Citizens began to mobilize as neighborhood groups to oppose the changes that seemed to be looming on the city's horizon.

These groups began calling for a new general plan that would slow the city's growth rate. In 1973, following state legislation to allow advisory ballot measures, the City Council placed questions on population growth (known as the "plebiscite") on the November ballot. Of the choices available, the option with the least population increase (75,000)

was selected by voters as the city's preferred size. The City Council adopted a new general plan in 1975, less than two years after the plebiscite. Consistent with the advisory ballot measure, the plan projected a year 2000 population of up to 75,000 and contained urban development within an urban growth boundary dubbed the Residential Urban Limit Line (RUL).

The State had established local agency formation commissions (LAFCOs) a few years earlier and charged them with coordination of city-county land planning and public utility service delivery. One of LAFCOs' primary tasks was establishment of a "sphere of influence" around existing cities. These spheres of influence were primarily intended to function as long term urban service boundaries and annexation areas for cities.

The 1975 General Plan's RUL expanded the sphere of influence concept into a growth control mechanism. Urban uses, which were principally low density residential development, were planned for the area within the RUL and included both city and unincorporated lands. Napa County cooperated with the City by requiring annexation of lands within the RUL prior to urbanization. The County supported the City's growth control efforts since annexation and subsequent provision of urban services by the City would ensure their maximum use and forestall the need to develop additional agricultural or resource land.

During the 1970s, Napa County was also engaged in public policy discussions focused on the potential impacts of rapid growth. As a result of passage of voter-initiated Measure A, which went into effect in 1980, county lands immediately beyond the RUL were planned for resource use, agriculture, or very low density residential development (e.g., 20 acre minimum lot sizes). The County's cooperative stance regarding land use helped focus population growth into the existing urban area. As a result, the city's population share of the county total, which accounted for barely 30 percent in 1950, reached nearly 60 percent by 1990.

Clearly, earlier attitudes about growth and development had changed. By the time significant growth control actions were taken by the City in the late 1970s the City of Napa saw itself as a self-contained, predominately residential community surrounded by a greenbelt of agricultural lands, and wanted to stay that way.

## 1982 - Growth Control Becomes Growth Management

Since 1975 the City's and County's growth management strategies have focused on limiting population by controlling land supply. A desire to accommodate a year 2000 city population up to 75,000 without expanding the RUL was the major reason for the City Council's decision in 1981 to update the 1975 General Plan.

The 1982 General Plan emphasized a community wide perspective and relied on a series of workshops and subcommittee meetings, in addition to the public hearing process required by law, to obtain community feedback. It envisioned the city of Napa in 2000 as a compact, relatively dense urban area surrounded by a greenbelt of agriculture and open space. The City Council chose this approach because it permitted continued urban growth -- stimulated by job growth in the manufacturing and services sectors -- while it minimized the loss of agricultural lands, environmental impacts, and service costs.

The 1982 plan reasserted the importance of the downtown as the county's primary retail and government center. Renewed commitment to downtown revitalization during the late 1970's had resulted in downtown redevelopment's second phase. The Napa Town Center project was designed and three downtown parking garages were constructed on cleared land.

The building demolitions associated with phase one had helped galvanize the city's budding historic preservation movement and phase two was unmarked by further demolitions of historically significant buildings. In fact, preservation had begun to be considered the preferred alternative in both the downtown and the historic neighborhoods surrounding it. In the mid 1970's the City Council created a Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (later renamed the Cultural Heritage Commission) to provide project oversight and design assistance to landowners involved in historic rehabilitation. A historic district was created adjacent to the downtown and a survey of the city's historic structures was completed. Reflecting the community's growing concern about preserving the structural remnants of its colorful past, the City included a Historic Preservation Element in its 1982 General Plan update.

The City's 1982 General Plan not only incorporated the RUL (renamed the Rural Urban Limit) policies of its 1975 predecessor, it also reinstated a yearly residential building permit limitation. The annual limit of 540 units (later revised to 512), was intended to pace the rate of growth so that the plan's "75,000 by the year 2000" population would not be exceeded. However, since the rate of housing production during the 1980s only averaged between 300 and 400 units per year, the plan's residential permit limit was never needed.

The 1982 General Plan designated the unincorporated areas beyond the RUL as "greenbelt", sending a message to the County that the City viewed the rural areas beyond its borders primarily as open space. As a way to further support the City's commitment to preservation of rural open space, the 1982 update added a "minimum density" provision to the plan's four residential plan map designations. It was felt nearby agricultural lands would be protected from premature development by requiring a minimum amount of use on available residential lands within the RUL.

The 1982 General Plan also raised housing densities in some areas. Higher housing densities were needed to avoid the necessity of expanding the city's RUL in order to accommodate 75,000 people. Densities were also raised to encourage the private sector to supply affordable housing. As a result, a large number of vacant properties were reclassified upward to Medium or High Density Residential (MR at 6-12 units per acre, and HR at 12-25 units per acre). This was expected to increase the supply of affordable housing by lowering per unit land costs.

However, despite the planned increase in future densities, the existing zoning of residential property remained unchanged. More intensive development was to be achieved through rezoning on a case by case basis, either through a single development application that included a zone change or through adopted specific plans.

Because the general plan describes long term objectives for land development, interim development below the minimum was allowed as long as certain conditions were met. Property that was zoned for less intensive use than the minimum prescribed by the General Plan could be developed in conformance with existing zoning as long as the site plan could accommodate additional housing units

at some future date. Theoretically, when an area became "ripe" for more intensive development, additional units could be infilled on the site. It was expected that the plan's infill strategy would ultimately result in higher average densities throughout much of the city. It was also thought that the small scale character of the infill development process would make gradual increases in neighborhood densities almost unnoticeable.

As it turned out, the lot by lot infill process was very noticeable to neighborhood residents. The higher density infill provisions of the 1982 General Plan resulted in persistent neighborhood opposition to developments that proposed densities consistent with the new plan, or that could be infilled later. The potential for higher densities in residential areas near the RUL line was particularly bothersome. Coincidentally, these areas contained the largest tracts of undeveloped land, and were often viewed by residents more as buffers than as lands with significant development potential.

Eventually, the plan was partially updated in 1986 to include, among other changes, provisions for lowering residential densities below the minimum established by the plan. The result was that expected increases over time in average density did not occur. In 1980 the city was developed at a typical suburban density of about four units per acre, and remains at that level today.

## Updating the 1982/86 General Plan

Difficulties implementing the 1982 plan made it clear that although the plan's goals of environmental protection and minimizing the loss of agricultural land through growth management remain valid, the plan's higher density infill strategy to achieve those goals is not acceptable to the community. Proposals to construct attached housing (e.g., townhomes, condominiums) in predominately single family neighborhoods have often generated strong opposition during the decade since the plan's adoption. Consequently, pressure to make fundamental changes in the General Plan began to mount, leading to a decision in late 1988 to undertake a comprehensive update.

Conflicts over the principal strategy of the 1982 plan were not the only reason the City decided a general plan update was in order. Conditions have changed since the plan's adoption and new state

and federal requirements now have a bearing on the City's long-range decisions. The General Plan needed to be amended to address congestion management issues, new air quality standards, and the jobs/housing balance, and other issues. In addition, subsequent specific plans, facility master plans, and redevelopment plans must be consistent with the general plan, both in content and intent. Several of these plans have been prepared since the 1982 General Plan update and often include more recent demographic data, as well as policy refinements that reflect the evolution of community attitudes since the last major general plan update.

Changes in community attitudes can be seen in the studies and plans for downtown and the Napa River that have been prepared during the past decade. Recent plans have focused on the city's cultural heritage and the Napa River as an integral part of the city's identity. The activities of the Cultural Heritage Commission and other groups have fostered a growing awareness of the importance of both historic continuity and attention to urban design.

The Napa River again became a focus for planning efforts after a disastrous flood in 1986. Renewed public interest in flood control provided the impetus for federal recertification of the Army Corps of Engineers' Napa River flood control project. In addition to the flood control project, the City also initiated a Napa Riverfront Restoration Plan, Napa River Trails Plan, and finally a Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The aggregate effects of the policy recommendations of these various plans were assessed during preparation of the new general plan, assisting in refining policies related to both the river and downtown redevelopment.

## HOW THIS GENERAL PLAN WAS PREPARED

This General Plan Update process began in October 1991 with appointment of a 19-member citizen's advisory committee (CAC) to provide informed citizen input to City staff charged with preparation of the new General Plan. Beginning with extensive review of the issues affecting future growth and change, the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) met during an 18-month period to discuss the city's future. The CAC's tasks were divided into two

parts: (1) review of the City's history, planning issues, and opportunities for change; and (2) creation of a vision based on the central planning themes identified by the group.

In July 1993 the CAC issued its draft *Concept Report*, which included the group's consensus goals and three land use alternatives that might implement them. During the summer and fall, a series of neighborhood and community wide meetings were held to obtain resident feedback on the draft report. Between November 1993 and March 1994 the City Council held work sessions to discuss the new plan's growth management strategy and land use alternatives.

The *Concept Report* was then revised to reflect community input. The goals, policies, and land use alternatives described in the report were confirmed by the City Council in March 1994. By defining the city's vision of its future, the *Concept Report* laid the foundation for the new general plan, *Envision Napa 2020*. The *Draft Policy Document* and *Draft Background Report* were then prepared based on the framework contained in the *Concept Report*.

## NAPA GENERAL PLAN CONTEXT

The following discussions describe growth projections, physical constraints, and the issues that provide the context for this General Plan.

### Regional and Countywide Growth Pressures

Napa is heavily influenced by its location adjacent to the San Francisco metropolitan area and its substantial regional economy. While Napa is affected by the region, it has relatively little impact in return. Napa County constitutes less than two percent of the population of the region and the city of Napa's population is only about one percent of the region's. Given Napa's small size in relation to the Bay Area as a whole, regional trends will have a significant impact on its future.

<b>Table 1</b>					
<b>PROJECTED REGIONAL POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT GROWTH</b>					
	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
<i>City of Napa (within RUL)*</i>					
Population	57,829	67,026	72,250	76,670	81,140
Jobs	22,234	28,640	33,620	38,190	42,720
<i>Napa County</i>					
Population	99,199	110,765	129,200	143,300	158,300
Jobs	35,827	47,590	57,610	72,260	83,200
<i>San Francisco Bay Region (Nine-County Total)</i>					
Population	5,179,789	6,021,097	6,875,400	7,533,200	8,381,000
Jobs	2,537,776	3,110,430	3,358,990	3,971,380	4,382,000
*Includes Napa State Hospital group quarters population and related employment in RUL. Source: ABAG <i>Projections '94</i> (1980-2010); City of Napa Planning Dept (2020).					

Despite the dramatic slow down in growth throughout California that occurred in the early 1990s, significant growth is still forecast for the Bay Area in the future. The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) *Projections '94* projected population and employment growth in Bay Area communities through 2010. *Projections '94* estimated that the Bay Area will gain about 900,000 new jobs between 1995 and 2010. A recovering and healthy economy in the Bay Area translates to the need for cities to provide sufficient land for the businesses that generate those jobs, and homes for people who take them. Largely as a result of projected economic growth, ABAG estimated that the region will need to accommodate 430,000 new homes by 2010. The city of Napa will be expected to provide its fair share of these new homes. Table 1 shows projected growth in the region.

In the future, Napa County as a whole is projected by ABAG to grow at a rate of about 1.1 percent per year, a rate similar to the previous 15 years (1980 - 1995) and slightly slower than the San Francisco Bay Area regional average of 1.2 percent.

The city's share of the county's overall growth is expected to shrink slightly as the new city of American Canyon is projected to grow at a more rapid rate than the city of Napa.<sup>1</sup>

While residential development patterns in the county are expected to remain similar to the past, projections of future employment growth reflect a potential significant shift in the location of jobs within the county. Of the 22,000 new jobs projected by ABAG for Napa County as a whole between 1995 and 2010, only about 10,000 new jobs (45 percent of all new jobs) are projected for the city of Napa, whereas the remainder of the south county area (American Canyon and the Airport area) is projected to have a six-fold increase in jobs, from less than 1,500 in 1995 to over 9,000 in 2010, with the most significant increases occurring in the unincorporated Airport Industrial Area.

If this substantial increase in jobs at the airport occurs, it may threaten the City and County's past cooperative efforts to contain sprawl. Job growth at the airport would create a demand for housing to accommodate workers. The pressure to provide more housing could lead to new residential growth on unincorporated land between the cities of American Canyon and Napa, or it could lead to increasing demand on the two cities to increase their residential growth rates (and perhaps expand the RUL) to accommodate the county's excess housing demand.

Recognizing this potential conflict, the County has recently (1995) undertaken an update of its *Airport Industrial Area Specific Plan*.

## Economic Growth

A healthy economy is an essential component in achieving a high quality of life. Positioned at the entry to the world renowned Napa Valley wine grape growing region, the city has strong ties to the county's agricultural economy. Protecting the wine industry, and the tourism it generates, is vital to the

city's economy. Economic development must be balanced with the need to manage overall citywide growth and environmental protection.

Napa has traditionally had a broad-based local economy. In addition to the core industries of agricultural and tourism, a few major employers such as Napa State Hospital, Napa Pipe and Mare Island (prior to its closure), have provided the city with a solid economic foundation. The city of Napa generates its own service economy, with a large retail sector and significant employment in local government and schools.

While Napa likes to think of itself as somewhat isolated and physically separate from the Bay Area, Napa's economy is very much a part of and influenced by the region. Twenty five percent of Napa County residents commute to jobs outside of Napa County and an almost equal number of employees commute into the county to work. Tourism, one of the areas more important industries, is largely dependent on Bay Area residents. Housing costs in Napa reflect the larger Bay Area market, as do the salaries of workers in Napa.

Ironically, despite its close economic ties to the larger Bay Area, much of Napa's appeal relies on the fact that it is perceived to be isolated from the region, a perception that is in large part fostered by the successful effort by the county and its cities to retain the county's agricultural heritage and open space. The open space, perceived isolation, and the unique small towns, have contributed to the economically important tourist industry.

Despite the relative health of the county's economy over many years, the City and County have long recognized that an economy overly dependent on just a few industries is a fragile economy, subject to the whims of the marketplace. Accordingly, beginning in the 1970s, both the City and County set out to diversify their economies by seeking to attract a variety of business types to major "corporate parks". The city's major business park at the south end of the city has begun to attract some "high-tech" businesses as well as medical research, food distributors and other related facilities. The county's business park located near the Napa County Airport just south of the city, has also attracted a wide variety of uses, including warehousing, food processing, and agricultural-related industries.

<sup>1</sup>It should be noted that the regional employment, housing and demographic trends discussed in this element are based on ABAG's *Projections '94*. During completion of the General Plan, ABAG released *Projections '96* which covered the period from 1995 to 2015 and slightly altered the assumed distribution and rate of growth for the Bay Area and showed a shift towards more growth in the North Bay counties; however, the rate and location of growth does not significantly change for Napa due to strong City and County land use policies for city-centered growth. It should also be noted that ABAG's *Projections '96* figures for the City of Napa were based on land use data generated for this plan.

This diversification came none too soon. Beginning in the late 1980s, some of Napa's traditional large employers "downsized" or began shutting down, including the State Hospital and Mare Island. Despite the loss of jobs in these major employers, Napa fared much better through the recession of the 1990s than the rest of the Bay Area. While job growth has been very slow in Napa, the number of jobs in the city and county has not decreased as it has in other counties.

Economic development studies over the past few years point to some key trends with land use implications:

**Tourism and Hotels:** Various studies confirm that the overnight tourist brings more benefit to the city and county than the daily visitor. Overnight guests spend more per person and drive less. The county's tourism business is projected to continue to grow over the next 20 years and there is likely to be a need for at least two additional hotels in the next 25 years.

**Auto Row:** While many residents of Napa dislike the visual character of "auto row" along Soscol Avenue, this small strip of auto sales businesses provides more sales tax revenue for the City than any other retail area of the city. It is therefore critically important to retain and even enhance this auto sales area.

**Downtown:** Downtown should be able to provide for both a growing tourist and local retail market over the next 25 years. In the past few years, the "Old Town" residential areas surrounding downtown have become healthier and more attractive to higher income residents. The number of tourists in Old Town is also increasing as the number of bed-and-breakfast inns increases. Residents with greater disposable income and tourists could provide a continuing base for a healthy downtown retail sector, assuming the connections between downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods can be strengthened.

**Center for Wine, Food and the Arts:** The proposed Center, located on the "Oxbow" of the Napa River just east of downtown, could also profoundly benefit downtown. This unique conference center could attract the critical mass of tourists needed to put downtown Napa on the tourist map and perhaps support a first class hotel in or near downtown.

**Business Parks:** The city and county business parks are likely to continue to grow with a variety of tenants attracted to Napa County's renowned quality of life. Maintaining a diverse economy, and especially attracting businesses with a high proportion of relatively well-paying jobs, will allow a closer fit between jobs and residents.

## Demographic Trends

The age composition of a community and its changes over time are important indicators of the types of public facilities (e.g., schools and facilities for seniors) and housing that may be needed in the future.

Perhaps the most significant demographic trend affecting the future of Napa is that the medium age of Napa residents is rising. The aging of population is a national trend; but, in Napa, the trend is more pronounced as the median age has progressively become older than the median for the state. The exact cause of this more rapid aging of Napa's population is difficult to determine; however, some factors that may contribute include the following:

1. A slow residential growth rate which generally means fewer young families coming to Napa and a higher proportion remaining into retirement.
2. A higher average housing cost for new single family homes and less multi-family housing development, which leads to this city attracting older more affluent families to new development.
3. An attractive community for the elderly. The proportion of those over 65 increased from 12.5 percent of the population in 1980 to 14.8 percent of the population in 1990, a significant shift in only 10 years.

The overall aging of the population and the fact that Napa is aging somewhat faster than elsewhere, implies that Napa will also face, sooner than elsewhere, the need for services suitable for the elderly such as residential developments targeted toward the needs of seniors, new nursing facilities, improved public transit and other support services.

## Housing Costs

Beginning in the 1970s and continuing through the end of the 1980s, the coastal areas of California experienced a growing gap between the cost of buying a home and incomes. This gap was most pronounced in the Bay Area, which became one of the most expensive housing markets in the country. As the cost of buying homes in the core Bay Area communities increased, households searched farther from the core to find affordable homes. Housing construction boomed in peripheral communities around the edges of the region. The lengths of commutes increased and roads became clogged.

Home values in Napa are somewhat lower than in many other communities in the Bay Area. However, in the 1980s, anecdotal evidence indicates that much construction in Napa was oriented toward more costly housing types and sizes. The constrained market allowed developers to focus on building more expensive homes and obtain a premium for homes here.

Beginning in the 1990s, housing values began to slump in many California markets. A recessionary economy and reduced values led to a dramatic decrease in new home construction. Many more expensive homes (over \$250,000) went unsold, and many developers, including some in Napa, went bankrupt or abandoned previously planned projects.

As a result of comparatively low interest rates and stable (if not dropping) home values, housing became generally more affordable in 1994 and 1995; however, housing is still expensive. The Napa-Vallejo-Fairfield area ranked eighth from the bottom of a list of 178 urban areas ranked on the basis of the relationship between median income and prevailing for-sale housing prices.

Rental housing costs have also remained comparatively stable in the past few years. But, with the exception of housing for the elderly, almost no new apartment construction occurred in Napa in the early and mid-1990s.

The expected rebound of the California and Bay Area economies will lead to a new upsurge in demand for housing over the next 25 years. As the little remaining available vacant and underutilized land is depleted, land values in Napa are likely to increase which, in turn, will lead to homes in Napa

obtaining a premium in value. To maintain its diversity and to ensure housing suitable for the types of employment to be expected, the City will continue to encourage and provide for a variety of housing types, especially more affordable multi-family construction sites.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

Much of the remaining developable land within the Rural Urban Limit (RUL) has one or more environmental constraints. These constraints limit the opportunities for development and affect the City's land use planning. These constraints are summarized below.

### Flood Prone Areas

Historically, the city developed along the Napa River, and much of the city was built in the river's floodplain (areas subject to occasional flooding). To reduce property damage and loss of life due to flooding, the City adopted floodplain management regulations in the late 1970s. This ordinance requires structures within the 100-year floodplain to be constructed to minimize the potential for flood damage by elevating the floor of the structure above the 100-year flood level and by incorporating flood proofing in building design. The floodplain management regulations were supplemented in 1986 by a locally-adopted flood evacuation area ordinance aimed at reducing the potential for loss of life. In addition to regulations for the floodplain, regulations were also adopted for the "floodway", the area nearest the river which must be kept free of significant new obstructions to allow floodwaters to pass.

These flood regulations have resulted in making development along the Napa River much more expensive. Because of the high premium that must be paid to develop this land, much of the land near the river remains vacant or underutilized and many of the existing buildings are dilapidated due to lack of investment. The economic impacts of the floodplain regulations are exacerbated by the fact that many of the older sites along the river are former (or current) industrial sites where hazardous materials were used and where residues of hazardous materials are often found. Cleaning up these sites can add significantly to the cost of making them available for new development.

## Hillsides

The city of Napa is situated among a group of hills and ridges that are considered valuable natural features and visual assets for city residents and visitors. Hillsides also pose significant environmental constraints for potential developers in that development on hillsides must address geotechnical concerns, fire hazards, erosion and other factors. Major grading and earthmoving activities which are often required to accommodate any significant amount of hillside development would severely compromise the city's character and the quality of environment. Hillside areas also pose service problems in regards to the provision of adequate water pressure, police and fire protection.

## Wetlands and Important Habitat

Urban development means the conversion of land from its natural state to a developed state. The loss of natural habitat is an unavoidable consequence of urbanization. However, some types of habitat are critically important and deserving of special protection due to the diversity and/or types of plant and animal species they support. Wetlands habitat and surrounding riparian areas are considered the most critical of habitat types (see Chapter 7, Natural Resources, for further discussion of this issue). Preservation of habitat also allows for some connections between the urban and natural environment.

## Agricultural Resources

The irreplaceable agricultural land surrounding the city of Napa is one of its primary environmental resources. Much of the city's and county's identity and economy are based on the premium wine grapes grown in the Napa Valley. Agricultural land is also a critical aesthetic resource, providing open space that surrounds and defines the city, providing community identity and contributing to the quality of life.

Many of the City's land use policies over the past 20 years have been oriented toward preserving the agricultural resources around the city. While most agricultural land within the RUL is slated for some type of development, strong City policies have been adopted to protect agricultural uses outside the RUL. Those policies include "right to farm" notices (informing people who buy or build homes adjacent

to the RUL that they may be subject to the dust, agricultural chemicals and odors of nearby farms), a requirement for 80 foot buffers adjacent to agricultural land outside the RUL, and "feathering development" so that a rural atmosphere is preserved at the fringe of the city.

## MAJOR GENERAL PLAN THEMES

The General Plan sets the framework for future growth and development within which Napa can expand while still maintaining the community character and quality of life that are so important to Napa residents. The major themes of the General Plan are maintaining the physical and social qualities of Napa within an economically healthy and self-sufficient community.

The major objectives reflected with these themes are summarized in this section.

### Containing Growth within the Rural Urban Limit

The city of Napa is by far the largest urban area in Napa County, containing about 60 percent of both the population and jobs in the county. The city is surrounded by lands under the jurisdiction of Napa County.

In some counties in this state, county development policies have led to growth on the edges of cities, promoting sprawl. This has not happened in Napa. Over the past 20 years the City and County of Napa have cooperated to contain urban growth and protect agricultural lands. The City, for its part, established a Rural/Urban Limit line (RUL), an urban growth boundary identifying a limited area subject to urban development. This General Plan maintains the RUL with little change from that adopted in the 1982 General Plan and carries forward the Greenbelt designation for land outside the RUL that bears a relationship to the city's planning policies. The County has also adopted several policies restricting urban development on agricultural land and requiring that unincorporated land within the city's RUL annex to the city prior to further development. With the reciprocal policies of the County, the City's RUL has been largely successful in eliminating Napa's outward expansion and containing growth in a well-defined urban area.

This General Plan's tool for achieving its goal of agricultural preservation and maintenance of community character is to retain the RUL largely unchanged for the next 25 years. To address the issue of employment growth in the unincorporated airport area, the plan encourages the County to maintain its own balance between the number of jobs and the number of homes allowed to be built in county areas -- without compromising the established County policies of slow residential growth, protection of agricultural land, focusing urban development within existing municipal areas, and supporting the City of Napa's RUL.

The maintenance of the RUL limits the amount of land available for development. In combination with policies preserving neighborhood character, the RUL essentially establishes a finite and definable capacity for development based on the policies of this plan. Although that "build-out" capacity already takes into account reductions in development potential due to environmental constraints and other factors, this General Plan is not predicated on the assumption that reaching this theoretical "capacity" is either achievable or desirable. Instead, this plan is based on reasonable expectations regarding the amount of development actually likely to occur under the growth management policies in this plan. The plan is also based on ensuring that adequate infrastructure and services can be made available in a timely manner and on maintaining balanced growth between jobs and housing.

To ensure that growth stays on track, this plan also proposes a growth monitoring program. If excessive growth in either residential or job-generating development occurs during the plan period, the City may adopt additional measures to slow this development.

## Neighborhood Conservation

Perhaps the strongest sentiment to arise from the extensive public outreach program conducted during the general plan update process was the community's desire to conserve the character of existing neighborhoods. "Neighborhood character" was often used as a kind of shorthand for the complex set of physical and social factors that go beyond the mere location of buildings. Accompanying the desire to conserve neighborhood character (and sometimes, seemingly in conflict with it) was the desire to ensure that the

diversity of housing types and people that characterize Napa today would be retained into the future.

Because the RUL establishes a definitive limit on the amount of land available for development, over time the number of large parcels of vacant and underutilized land within the RUL will continue to dwindle as land develops. However, the pressure to accommodate more development is not expected to abate. This pressure has already led to efforts to use the remaining smaller parcels of underutilized and vacant land within existing neighborhoods more intensively, and that pressure too will continue. In short, partially because the City will not allow outward growth, the pressure increases for it to build "up."

The pressure to build up within existing neighborhoods is potentially counter to the City's goal of conserving existing neighborhood character. The General Plan seeks to accomplish this in two ways:

1. A Land Use Diagram which promotes new residential development consistent with the character of an established neighborhood.
2. Redevelopment and efficient use of previously developed and underutilized land in commercial and former industrial areas. Some older properties in town are no longer economically viable and are available for reuse and changes in use. Deterioration and abandonment of some industrial sites have created opportunities for reinvestment and rehabilitation to alternative uses. Many of these older sites are costly to develop due to the need to remove older development and, often, to clean up the residue of previous uses (such as toxic hazards). Many of these sites are near the river and are also limited by flooding concerns. Despite the inherent problems with revitalizing these sites, they offer an opportunity for new development on land with existing urban services; policies are therefore included in the plan to encourage redevelopment of these sites, thereby reducing pressures to expand the RUL.

## Jobs-Housing Balance

Although the city of Napa has never been a bedroom community, it has generally had more workers who live in Napa than incommuters who

find employment here. Between 1980 and 1990 the gap between the number of local jobs and the number of employed residents has decreased. Despite an increase in the number of local jobs, the 1990 Census indicated that the percentage of out-commuters increased slightly from 24 percent to 25 percent between 1980 and 1990. This level of out-commuting indicates a mismatch between the jobs in Napa and its residents. Job growth in the past 15 years has been disproportionately in relatively low paying services and retail employment, while homes built in Napa (especially in the 1980s) were relatively expensive single family homes.

In the next 15 years Napa is expected to rebound from the recession more quickly and strongly than other communities, and is projected to add jobs at a faster rate than it is projected to add new workers who live in Napa County. By 2010 it is estimated that the city will be close to a balance between jobs and employed residents. However, this doesn't mean necessarily that Napa residents will work in Napa. Job projections for the county indicate a continuation of the past trend in job growth, with 62 percent of all new jobs between 1995 and 2010 projected to be in retail and service categories.

To reduce the amount of commuting to and from the city (with its associated environmental and personal costs), these economic projections indicate a need for the City to direct its economic development efforts to attract higher paying technical and professional jobs and also to provide housing which is affordable for the retail and service workers who will make up the majority of future new employees.

## Environmental Protection

The city of Napa, surrounded by a beautiful natural environment, leaves a lasting impression on residents and visitors alike. The Napa Valley is first and foremost an agricultural region of world renown. The outstanding quality of its viticulture products has long made it the best known wine producing region in the United States.

While vineyards and wineries dominate the landscape, Napa's natural environment is much more than a backdrop for the area's agricultural and tourist industries. Wild hillsides and open grasslands are home to a variety of native and imported species of plants and animals. The marshlands along the Napa River and its tributaries

are home to several rare and endangered plant species. Critical estuarine habitat and breeding areas for many species of native birds and fish can also be found here. The city's most significant natural feature, the Napa River, has long been recognized as a tremendous opportunity for a natural amenity through the heart of the city, linking neighborhoods with downtown. However, the opportunity presented by the river has yet to be fulfilled.

The fragility of these precious natural resources, and the ease with which they can be permanently changed by development, has long been recognized by the community. The city of Napa has acted to protect its sensitive riparian corridors and hillsides from over development while the RUL protects the invaluable agricultural lands and open space resources that surround it. Maintaining this tradition, this General Plan includes the following objectives:

- New development and redevelopment that enhance connections between the built and natural environments.
- The Napa River as a natural corridor and recreational spine connecting neighborhoods and providing a focus for downtown.
- An open space frame that includes views of the natural environment, including agriculture, the hills, water courses and wetlands.
- An accessible array of protected natural amenities both within and beyond the confines of the city.

As land becomes more scarce and land values increase, pressure also increases to maximize the development potential on all available land, including environmentally sensitive areas. There will be pressure to modify sensitive lands to make them more easily developed, rather than to plan development so as to avoid an environmental resource.

For example, developers often propose modifying a hillside to maximize development potential rather than molding development to fit the hillside. The tendency to "bulldoze" resources has been visible for several years and has already led to many policies to conserve key environmental resources. This General Plan continues and expands upon past

policies. City policies focus on protection of wetlands, other scarce habitats, hillsides, and agricultural lands inside the RUL and encourage the same level of protection for land outside the RUL.

## A Sustainable Economy

As the land supply dwindles and residential development slows, the City will need to maintain a reasonable balance between jobs and housing; it may also need to consider ways to link employment growth to the rate of residential growth. Policies related to monitoring growth are therefore included in the plan.

A second issue is the fit between jobs and residents. Given a finite supply of land for jobs and housing, it will be important for the City to promote a sustainable economy: a healthy economy with jobs that "fit" the needs of residents.

Finally, as both residential and economic growth slow in the future, the City will need to look at the mix of housing and businesses to ensure that the overall structure of the city's economy can provide the fiscal wherewithal to meet the city's needs for adequate services and infrastructure. For example, Auto Row produces more sales tax revenue than any other business sector. Maintaining and promoting a healthy Auto Row may therefore be very important to the City's future fiscal health. Identifying and encouraging other business sectors with this potential will be an important objective of this plan.

## Healthy Downtown

Downtown continues to be the focus and heart of Napa as a community, and retention of a healthy and vital downtown has long been a critical city concern. A key component of economic development is also to maintain downtown as the cultural and government center of the city and county. Other elements of a healthy economic environment include making Napa an attractive destination for visitors.

The goal of a vital and healthy downtown has been an ongoing theme in general plans and City policy for many years, but it has been an elusive goal. This General Plan continues the long tradition of seeking to foster a healthy downtown. The debate about how to promote a healthy downtown is likely

to continue for some time: a tourist economy or regional/local retail and administrative center? Perhaps the answer is both. The success of the Farmers' and Chefs' Markets indicates a continuing craving on the part of both residents and tourists for a place where people can walk and enjoy the open air in the presence of other people in a fun environment. Downtown Napa is one of only a handful of places in the North Bay that has the continuing potential to be that type of place. There are many opportunities to enhance that environment:

- The Riverfront remains an untapped but potentially powerful aesthetic resource.
- "Old Town" has grown in affluence and tourists. Both can contribute to a healthy downtown if the physical connections between Downtown and Old Town could be improved.
- The Center for Wine Food and the Arts could almost singlehandedly energize downtown Napa, so long as the physical connections to Downtown are enhanced. Even without the Center, Downtown could improve its connections to other nearby tourist resources such as the Wine Train, the Factory Outlet center, and the State Exposition/ Fairgrounds.
- The yet to be completed Opera House and newly completed Jarvis Conservatory can both contribute to Napa's reputation as a cultural center in the next 25 years. Other nighttime activities including the existing downtown movie theaters could help contribute to a more vital evening environment.

The fact that downtown Napa has not met its potential or residents' expectations should not be confused with failure. Many good decisions have been made: City and County government remains downtown, which continues to be the administrative heart of the county; a transit hub has made downtown the most accessible area in the city; the physical improvements to the street environment (especially First Street) remain attractive and inviting; and a mix of retail businesses continues to thrive. While a few historic buildings have been lost, many remain. The walkable and recognizable heart of the city of Napa has been retained and policies in this plan will continue to enhance downtown's role into the future.

## Flood Control

Compliance with the city's flood management regulations has improved the safety of developments constructed in flood prone areas over the past two decades. However, these measures have also significantly increased the cost of developing vacant and underutilized land near the river and thereby discouraged development. Because the river runs through the heart of the city of Napa, the preponderance of underdeveloped land and buildings in deteriorated condition along the river leaves the impression of blight along a major boulevard and entranceway to the city. Moreover, given the dwindling supply of available land, the city can ill afford to leave a large amount of land underdeveloped in the middle of the city. Flooding also has a significant financial and personal cost to those immediately affected and a fiscal cost to the City as a whole.

The Napa River Flood Management Project, prepared by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in partnership with a community coalition, will provide substantial flood protection to the central city.

In December 1997, the Army Corps of Engineers issued a revised design for a "Flood Management Project" based on the Community Coalition's conceptual plan for a "Living River" that would respect and restore the natural environment for the River, provide flood protection, and result in a powerful aesthetic focus for downtown revitalization. In March 1998, a ½-cent sales tax ballot initiative passed by a 68% vote, allowing the Flood Control District to provide the required 50% local share of funding to implement the project.

The project, referred to as the "Napa River/Napa Creek Flood Protection Plan", covers a 6-mile stretch of the Napa River, primarily in the City of Napa. It is comprised of four basic components: the widening of the river channel through the creation of both marsh plain and flood plain terraces; the replacement of a series of bridges; the creation of a "dry-bypass" overflow channel in downtown Napa, and the use of a series of floodwalls and levees where necessary. Construction is scheduled to start in 2000, with completion anticipated by 2006.

The reality of flood protection will remove a major constraint to Downtown revitalization and will be a

catalyst for creative, river oriented urban development.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE GENERAL PLAN

The Napa General Plan: *Envision Napa 2020* consists of two documents: the *Background Report* and the *Policy Document*. The *Background Report*, which inventories and analyzes existing conditions and trends in Napa, provides the formal supporting documentation for general plan policy. It addresses the following eight subject areas:

- Land Use and Demographics
- Housing
- Transportation
- Community Services
- Parks and Recreation
- Historic and Cultural Resources
- Natural Resources
- Safety

This *Policy Document* contains explicit statements of goals, policies, standards, implementation programs, and quantified objectives that constitute the formal policy of the City of Napa for land use, development, and environmental quality. This report is divided into chapters that correspond generally with the organization of issues addressed in the *General Plan Background Report*. These are as follows:

- ♦ Chapter 1: Land Use
- ♦ Chapter 2: Housing
- ♦ Chapter 3: Transportation
- ♦ Chapter 4: Community Services
- ♦ Chapter 5: Parks and Recreation
- ♦ Chapter 6: Historic and Cultural Resources
- ♦ Chapter 7: Natural Resources
- ♦ Chapter 8: Health and Safety
- ♦ Chapter 9: Administration and Implementation

Each section includes 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 that amplify the goal statement. Implementation programs are listed at the end of each section and describe briefly the proposed action, the City agencies or departments with primary responsibility for carrying out the program, and the time frame for accomplishing the program. Chapter 1 (Land Use) also describes the designations appearing on the Land Use Diagram

and outlines the standards of population density and building intensity for these land use designations. Chapter 3 (Transportation) contains a diagram depicting the proposed circulation system and a description of the street classification system. The housing section also includes a statement of quantified housing objectives required by state law as part of the housing element.

The following definitions describe the nature of the statements of goals, policies, standards and implementation programs as they are used in this document:

**Goal:** The ultimate purpose of an effort stated in a way that is general in nature and immeasurable. These are identified by chapter initials (e.g., Land Use = LU) and a number (e.g., LU-3 is the third goal in the Land Use chapter)

**Policy:** A specific statement in text or diagram guiding action and implying clear commitment. These are generally numbered with the chapter initials, goal number, and individual policy numbering (e.g., LU-3.5)

**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 Program:** 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. These time frames are general guidelines and may be adjusted based on City staffing and budgetary issues. These are generally numbered with the chapter initials, goal number, and capital letters (e.g., LU-3.A)

The goals and policies contained in a general plan are not strict, rigid standards, but instead are general guidelines for the City to consider in its overall decision making. Considerable flexibility is retained by the City Council in subsequently determining consistency with the goals and policies.

In determining the meaning, purpose, and consistency of the General Plan, the plan's individual elements, goals, policies, and provisions should not be read in isolation. Rather, the General Plan should be viewed and interpreted in its entirety, with all the plan's various elements, goals, policies, and provisions considered, read together, and harmonized.

The specific implementation measures identified in the plan also are to be viewed in this light. Accordingly, while many of these measures use seemingly inflexible terms, such as "shall", in articulating a proposed action or program, the use of these terms is not intended to be mandatory, to limit the City Council's discretion, or to impose rigid, mathematical standards. Rather, it is intended that the City Council will retain its discretion, and will undertake to adopt the specific implementation measures as it deems appropriate in light of budgetary considerations and the overall feasibility of each such measure.

In addition to the *General Plan Background Report* 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 formally part of the *General Plan*, was prepared to meet the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act.