

City of Chowchilla

2040 General Plan



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INTRODUCTION

The City of Chowchilla 2040 General Plan serves as the City's constitution and blueprint for community growth, development and redevelopment over the next 30 years. This General Plan, which supersedes the previous General Plan adopted in 1986, is directed at expanding and diversifying the City's economic base. The City recognizes that residential growth is beneficial; however, it is also understood that growth must be balanced with local employment opportunities, City services, and increased sales tax revenues to support continued City services. The General Plan addresses the need for master planning local infrastructure to accommodate growth.

The City is committed to reducing the "carbon footprint" of the City and minimizing new development's contribution to global warming. The City encourages innovative approaches to residential development as a way of providing for a range of housing types, lessening water demand, reducing encroachment on prime agricultural land, and providing more efficient public services. The General Plan is directed at continuing the path set by the City for parks and serviceable infrastructure. As residential densities increase, the amount and accessibility of open space and recreation areas are also expected to increase in the neighborhoods along with an emphasis on alternatives to automobile transportation. New development will pay its fair share of the cost of development and ensure that streets, sidewalks, streetlights, sewer, water, drainage, parks, schools, and public buildings are commensurate with the demands that new development brings to the community.

City redevelopment opportunities, particularly for the community's downtown are addressed in the 2040 General Plan. Revitalizing Chowchilla's downtown and older neighborhoods is the focus of many of the General Plan objectives and policies. In 2001, Chowchilla adopted a Redevelopment Plan and Project Area that encompasses most of the existing City west of Highway 99. Redevelopment will aid the City in providing housing rehabilitation and assisting in the creation of affordable housing. Redevelopment is also intended to address business retention and expansion in the City's downtown and the industrial parks. Fortunately, Chowchilla has not allowed substantial commercial shopping centers to develop outside the commercial core, which tends to draw retail sales and consumer activity away from the core of the City. Chowchilla provides flexibility for downtown redevelopment, and as the opportunity arises, the City will pursue the aggregation of land to potentially provide for commercial uses such as a shopping center in the downtown areas. It is the City's desire to meet future commercial expansion needs using downtown land before considering the

creation of new shopping areas outside the traditional commercial areas in the City.

The continuing availability of an airport serving Chowchilla is an important element to the community identity and the community's ability to provide a full range of services to its residents, employers, and visitors. The Chowchilla Municipal Airport will remain in its present location for the foreseeable future. Operations at the airport are expected to increase over time. The City desires to participate in an update of the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan to meet the current guidelines of the State of California. Airport land use compatibility requirements require the City to take action to ensure public safety. An older residential neighborhood has coexisted with the airport for many years at the north end of the runway. However, increasing airport operations increases the risk of an aircraft accident. Conversion of land use north of the runway to less intense development (i.e. light industrial or low volume commercial) is desirable. The Redevelopment Agency may participate in the acquisition and demolition of housing as housing comes on the market.

Progress toward economic diversification also means an expansion of the number of employment opportunities in the industrial “blue collar” and “white collar” service sectors in the community. Chowchilla will continue to seek and provide incentives to all sizes of new or expanding businesses that can bring a range of employment opportunities to the community. The General Plan supports the annexation of industrial land into the City and the extension of railroad spurs to provide transportation alternatives for existing and new businesses. The planning of business park developments integrated with housing and public services is essential for the northern and southern sides of the City where access to major statewide arterials is available. Agriculture, the City's economic partner, should be preserved within the Sphere of Influence until such time as it is needed for contiguous urban development.

The 2040 General Plan focuses on attracting highway-related commercial enterprises adjacent to Highway 99 near the planned reconstruction of the Highway 233 (Robertson Boulevard) interchange. The aesthetic appearance of this interchange is planned to be improved with trees and landscaping portraying a theme as a “gateway” to Chowchilla. Relocation of Highway 99 in the early 1960s created benefits and problems for the City. The City initiated a program for significant infrastructure investments in new major streets and signalization in this area and for private development to move forward. The City is keenly interested in continuing this cooperative effort with the private sector to expand commercial development in this corridor as a means of generating sales tax revenues and diversifying the City's economic base so close to its existing downtown. Landscape improvements along Highways 99 and 152 will reinforce the visual quality objectives of the City.

An evolving influence on the City's growth patterns and development approach is the planned California High Speed Rail Authority's high-speed train system. Planning for this system has the potential to create growth constraints and opportunities for the City. Both the north-south and east-west routes converge within or near the City's Sphere of Influence. Early route proposals show proposed routes that will effectively “box” Chowchilla in a triangle that could substantially affect the City's growth plan and have significant surface transportation and economic impacts for the City. As the planning

process unfolds over the next several years, refinements to the 2040 General Plan may be warranted when the final determination has been made as for the precise high-speed rail corridor alignments and the location of the high-speed rail system maintenance facility.

VISION

The 2040 General Plan outlines the community's vision for its future and establishes the fundamental framework to guide decision-making about growth, development, redevelopment, resource management, public safety, public services, and the community's general well being and character. The General Plan reflects the planning desires and values of Chowchilla's residents, business community, and elected and appointed officials through text and illustrations. The goals, objectives, policies and implementation measures presented in the 2040 General Plan are a reflection of the community's values and guiding principles listed below.

- ❖ Maintain the "quality of life" of a small city that evokes a pedestrian-friendly, walkable community environment that offers a safe and pleasant place for people to live, work, shop and recreate.
- ❖ The City should encompass broad employment opportunities, retail and support services, recreation opportunities, and a broad range of housing densities and types, with a particular emphasis on affordability and proximity to employment and services, taking agricultural land out of production when necessary for contiguous urban development.
- ❖ Establish a City-wide and regional transportation circulation network that enables convenient access to neighborhoods, shopping, school, recreation, and employment destinations without depending exclusively on thoroughfares.
- ❖ Create a contiguous open space and trail system that embraces existing environmental resources while providing pedestrian and bicycle access throughout the City.

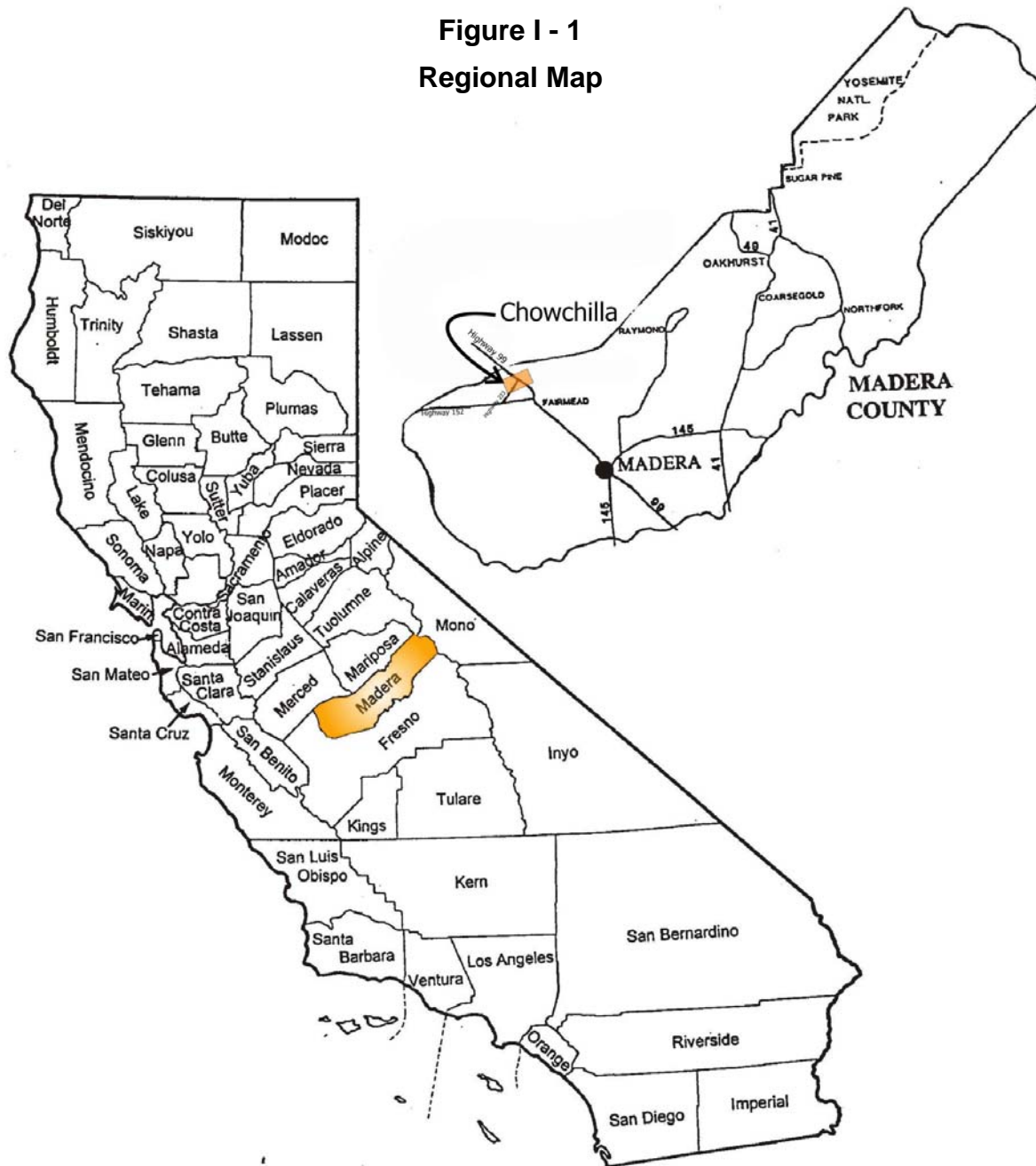
Making the many components of Chowchilla's vision a reality will require commitment and dedication over many years. This General Plan contains action-oriented objectives, policies and programs that will allow gradual changes to become immediately evident and effective, while achieving larger community benefits over the long-term.

PLAN AREA

The City of Chowchilla, the northern gateway to Madera County, is located along Highway 99 and the Union Pacific railroad corridor, north of Highway 152 and south of the Merced – Madera County Line (refer to **Figure I - 2**). Highway 233 (West Robertson Boulevard) traverses the City in a northeast / southwest diagonal direction. Chowchilla, incorporated in 1923, is one of two incorporated cities in Madera County. Chowchilla is approximately 15 miles northwest of the City of Madera, the County Seat of Government and only other incorporated city in the County. Madera County is located in the geographic center of the State of California. The County extends northeast from the center of the San Joaquin Valley to the summit of the Sierra Nevada mountain range.

Chowchilla's 2040 General Plan Planning Area (Planning Area) illustrated in Figure 1-2 encompasses approximately 14,000 acres or roughly 22 square miles. The Planning Area is generally bound by Highway 152 to the south and Ash Slough to the west. The Planning Area's northerly boundary extends north of Ash Slough, generally moving in a northeasterly direction towards the Highway 99 / Minturn Road interchange west of Highway 99. East of Highway 99, the Planning Area extends approximately one-half mile north of Ash Slough. The easterly Planning Area boundary is generally defined by the alignment of Road 19 (North and South Manzanita Roads).

**Figure I - 1
Regional Map**



The Planning Area includes two non-contiguous areas of land. The Planning Area includes the 1,280 acre California Department of Corrections Central Valley Women's Facility and Valley State Prison for Women non-contiguous island annex east of Highway 99, south of Berenda. The Planning Area also includes the 155 acre planned wastewater treatment facility west of the City at the junction of Highway 152 and Ash Slough.

California State Assembly Bill 1997, signed into law by the Governor on July 20, 1996, allowed the City of Chowchilla to annex the 1,280 acre California Department of Corrections Central Valley Women's Facility and the Valley State Prison for Women. The City is not responsible for providing public services to the State Correctional Facilities, but does maintain mutual aide agreements for emergency services within these facilities.

The Planning Area boundaries are established with regard to physical constraints. Key growth assumptions are listed below. It is important to note that the growth assumptions shown are only intended as a means to aid the City in projecting future growth and land use needs — they are not meant as goals, targets or mandates to be met by the City.

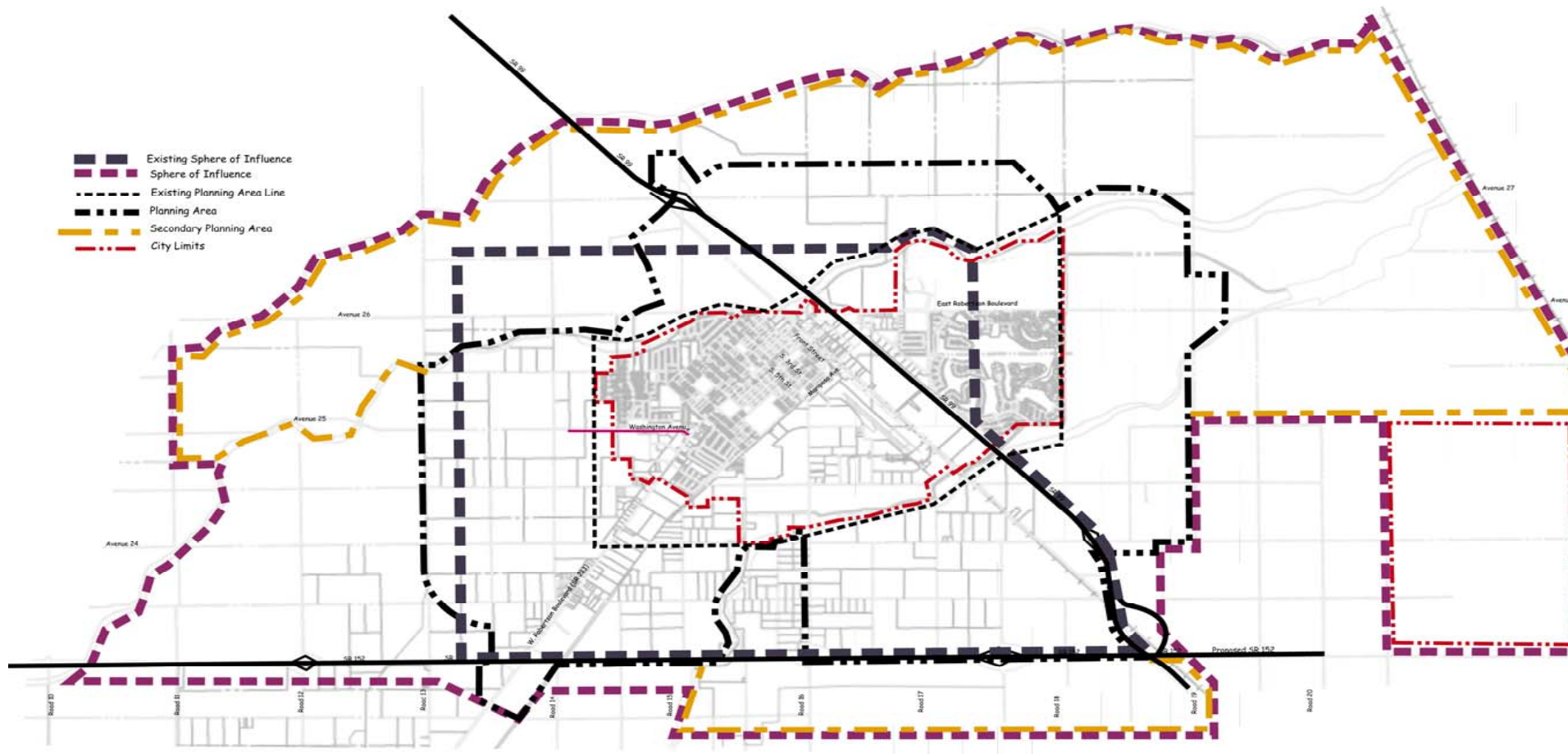
- 5.3 percent annual growth rate through the planning year 2040.
- 3.2 persons per single family unit and 2.3 to 2.8 persons per multi-family unit.
- An average of 5 to 8 single family units per gross acre and an average of 12 to 18 multi-family units per gross acre.
- 70 percent of the City's population will live in single family units, with the remaining 30 percent in multi-family units.
- 35 percent of the City will be comprised of non-residential (industrial/commercial) development.
- 20 percent of the City will be dedicated to public land needs (streets, schools, open space, parks, etc.).

The Planning Area boundaries reflect the City's growth projections and the amount of land needed for growth and development to the year 2040, while retaining 50 percent land vacancy to maintain affordable land prices within the community.¹ Land use designations are defined in the General Plan Land Use Element and are shown in Figure LU - 1, City of Chowchilla Land Use Map (refer to the pocket folder at the end of this document).

¹California Government Code, Section 65300 states a General Plan shall be adopted "for the physical development of a county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning."

Figure I - 2

2040 General Plan Planning Area and Sphere of Influence Boundaries



PLAN HORIZON

The City's General Plan was previously updated in 1986. Since then, the City in the late 1980s and early 1990s annexed lands to the west and east of the City that more than doubled the overall size of the community. In 1996, the City annexed 1,280 acres of non-contiguous land east of the City consisting of the Central Valley Women's Facility and the Valley State Prison for Women built by the California State Department of Corrections. In 2006, additional land to the west and south of the City was annexed. In January 2010, the Chowchilla City Limits extended over approximately 5,170 acres, which includes the lands for the State Women's Correctional Facilities.

The City of Chowchilla has and will continue to face growth pressures. The challenge for the City is to provide essential infrastructure and high quality development in a managed process. This General Plan guides the City's growth and development over the next 30 years to meet the needs of City's projected population growth through the year 2040.

This General Plan also identifies the City's long-term vision and needs beyond the City's projected 2040 population growth. The 2040 General Plan projects land uses that extend beyond the life of this General Plan to address the potential need to house an increased population, provide infrastructure financing, and because Chowchilla is geographically located at the connection of two regional state highways – Highway 99 serving the Central Valley and Highway 152 serving as a vital link between the Central Valley and the San Francisco Bay Area, the City and immediate surroundings are strategically located for urban development interests.

Statewide transportation needs to be served by the California High Speed Rail Authority facilities are recognized by the City of Chowchilla in the overall context of long-range planning. However, the City rejects the notion that growth and development in Chowchilla should be specifically constrained by the California High Speed Rail Authority's conceptual north-south and east-west rail corridor alignment as Chowchilla remains a viable member of the Central Valley community. The City of Chowchilla will participate in the process to determine evaluating the routing of the high-speed rail system to avoid becoming a casualty of the planning process.

Since the Planning Area boundary includes sufficient land to accommodate growth beyond the year 2040, portions of the Planning Area have been designated as "urban reserve". To achieve a pattern of compact residential growth in the community, land designated as "urban reserve" should not be annexed into the City until the amount of available, developable residential land falls below 50 percent of the amount of land needed to accommodate the 30 year growth plan of the City consistent with this document and with infrastructure master plans adopted by the City. Industrial land designated as "urban reserve" may be annexed when it is essential to meet the projected needs for industrial or non-retail commercial development opportunities. This General Plan also considers the long-term planning needs and requirements for transportation routes, groundwater recharge, preservation of farmland, and natural habitat.

POPULATION GROWTH

As of January 2010, Chowchilla’s population reached 18,698 residents.² Which includes the prison population housed at the California State Department of Corrections Central Valley Women’s Facility and at the Valley State Prison for Women. Excluding the prison population housed at both facilities (estimated to be 7,560 prison inmates), an estimated 11,138 residents live in the City of Chowchilla.³

The annual population growth rate projected for the 2040 General Plan is 5.3 percent. The City’s projected average annual population growth rate of 5.3 percent is higher than the City’s overall historical growth rate between 2000 and 2008, but is lower than the annual growth rates of 5.7 to 7.8 the City experienced between 2004 and 2008. The City’s average growth rate between 2000 and 2008 was three percent.

Population growth projections through the year 2040 are shown in Table I - 1. The City’s population growth is estimated to reach 56,256 by 2040. Chowchilla is focused on the future City as an integral urban center in Madera County. That focus of expanding the diversity and number of jobs, increased sales tax base, and model development programs requires Chowchilla’s growth forecast to exceed the average growth rate of the past. Chowchilla intends to “step up” and become a larger player in Madera County and San Joaquin Valley growth and development. An expression of that intent is a 5.3% average growth rate as shown in Table I – 1.

Table I - 1,

2010 - 2040 Estimated Population Forecast

Year	Estimated Population¹	Cumulative Population Growth
2010	11,138	
2015	15,469	4,693
2020	20,026	9,250
2025	25,926	15,150
2030	33,565	22,789
2035	43,453	32,677
2040	56,256	45,480

Notes:

¹Estimated population forecast through the year 2040 is based on a 5.3 percent annual growth rate.

²California Department of Finance, January 1, 2008 E-5 City / County Population Housing Estimates.

² California Department of Finance, E-1 Report: City / County Population Estimates with Annual Percent Change, January 1, 2007 and January 1, 2008.

³ California Department of Finance, E-5 Report: City / County Population and Housing Estimates, January 1, 2008.

The population forecasts shown in Table I -1 exclude the prison populations housed at the California State Department of Corrections Central Valley Women's Facility and the Valley State Prison for Women. The prison populations housed at the Correctional Facilities have been excluded from the City's population growth projections to avoid misleading City-wide land use, housing, infrastructure, or public facility and service requirements

DIRECTION OF GROWTH

Growth in Chowchilla has mainly been influenced by the availability of developable land to the north and west of the City and the availability of City services. With the Eastside Annexation in 1990, the City's urban footprint and City Limits extended east beyond Highway 99 for the first time. With the exception of industrial development, growth reached the City Limits in all directions by 2005. The City's urban footprint and City Limits were further extended to the west and south in 2006.

The 2040 General Plan directs urban growth and expansion of the City along the Highway 233 (West Robertson Boulevard) corridor, between Ash Slough and Berenda Slough, east of Highway 99 towards Berenda Reservoir as well as west of Highway 99 towards Highway 152. The 2040 General Plan also directs urban growth and expansion of the City north of Ash Slough east of Highway 99 and to the south of Berenda Slough between Highways 99 and 152. Figure I - 3, General Plan Year 2040 Growth Area depicts the direction and extent of urban growth by the year 2040.

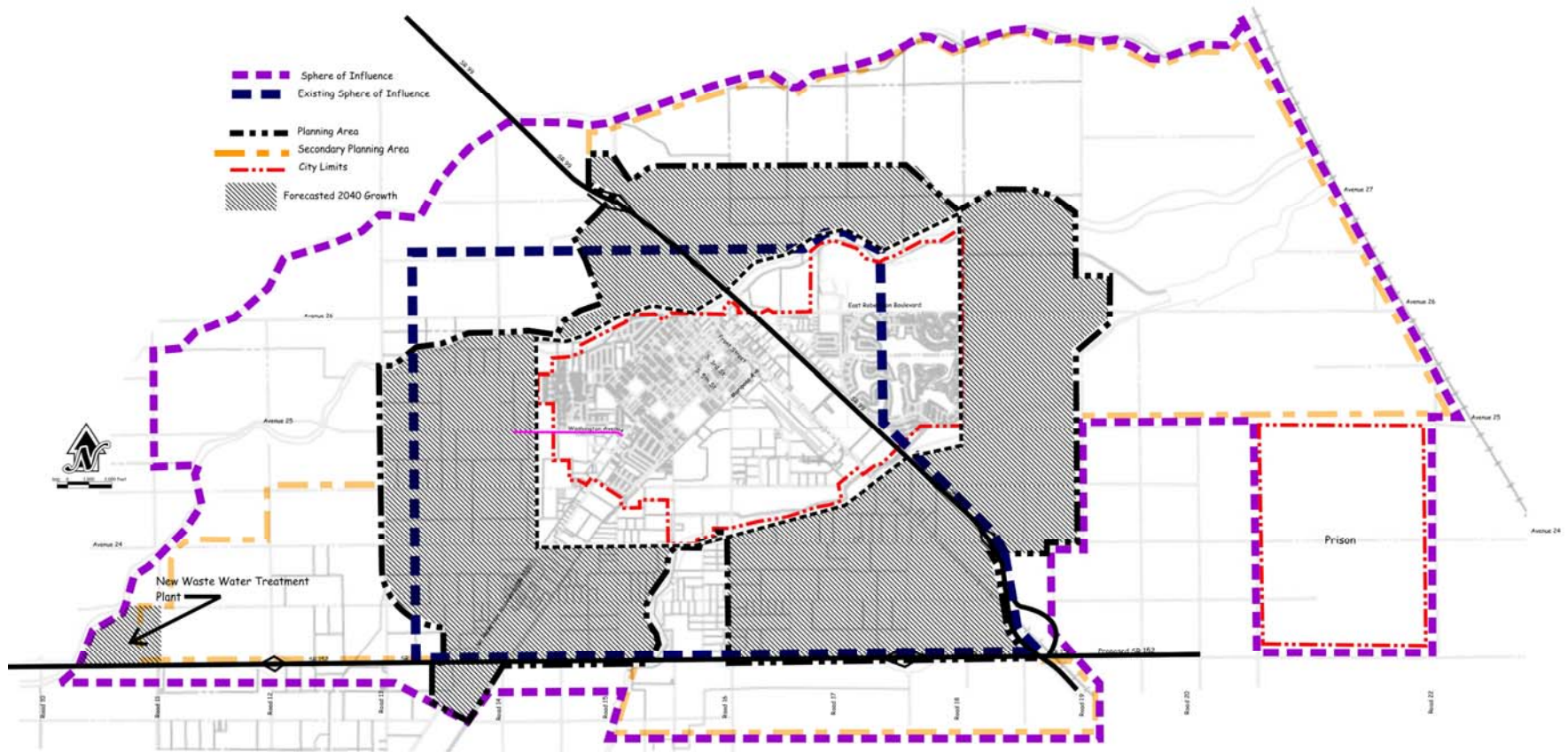
GROWTH CONSTRAINTS

The infrastructure service capacities for existing water, sewer and drainage systems as well as the City's circulation and transportation network are close to their maximum capacities. The City has initiated a revamping of its infrastructure master plan strategy to address wastewater, water, circulation and transportation, drainage, groundwater recharge, parks, and the availability of public services for urban growth. To serve urban growth projected in the 2040 General Plan, City services and infrastructure will need to be expanded, and, in some cases, relocated. The formation of a Community Facilities District by the City and the mandatory participation of all new development in financing the expanded infrastructure are essential to accommodate growth.

The City will need to construct a new wastewater treatment plant and wastewater collection lines, and construct new water wells and extend water service mains. A new wastewater treatment facility is being planned to be on-line after 2015. The new wastewater treatment plant will serve existing as well as new residential, commercial and public land uses, and the existing wastewater treatment plant will remain operational and serve industrial land uses.

The City's Water Master Plan provides for continued reliance on groundwater as the community's water supply. New water wells will be constructed throughout the City and the City's major water transmission lines will be "looped". Water storage facilities are planned at strategic locations in the City to accommodate peak water demand and fire flow reserves.

Figure I - 3
General Plan 2040 Growth Area



Cooperation and commitment in a program to recharge groundwater using surface water supply by both the City and agriculture will be essential for continued growth in the community. Chowchilla is placing increased importance on water conservation and methods of recycling water utilizing modern technology. Reuse of water resources is an important element of long-term growth and survival in the San Joaquin Valley.

As the City grows and expands, there will be stress placed on the circulation network serving the community and limitations of growth may occur where circulation systems are overwhelmed by vehicular traffic. Future urban growth and City expansion will require construction and / or reconstruction of roads and intersections, bridges and interchanges. Highway 99 Interchange improvements at Minturn Road, Highway 233 (West Robertson Boulevard), and at Avenue 24 (East Sierra View Boulevard) will be needed. Reconstruction and widening of Highways 99 / 233 interchange is planned for 2012. Construction of Highway 152 interchanges at Highway 233 (West Robertson Boulevard), Road 16 (South 5th Street) and Road 17½ (Opportunity Road) will also be necessary. The City is committing its available resources to expand the City's circulation network and to cooperate with the State of California in improving and constructing freeway interchanges serving the City.

The provision of essential public facilities and services such as police, fire, street maintenance, schools, and parks, can be a limiting factor in planned growth of a community. The City will require new public facilities and services are in place, at acceptable levels, as future growth occurs. The City intends on seeking practical solutions to the needs for public infrastructure without curtailing reasonable planned growth. To that end, the City has adopted development impact fees to ensure new development pays its fair share of the cost of expanding public services. The City will also continue to work with the Chowchilla Elementary School District and the Chowchilla Union High School District to reinforce the need for adequate educational facilities serving new development to the extent that the law allows.

GENERAL PLAN REQUIREMENTS

California Government Code, Section 65300 et seq. establishes requirements for the content of general plans, as well as for their adoption and subsequent amendments. Seven general plan elements are required by the California Government Code. The California Government Code allows for the required contents of the seven elements to be combined at the discretion of the local government. The seven elements are: land use; circulation; housing; open space; conservation; noise; and safety. This Chapter outlines how these elements are organized and integrated in this General Plan. Although often referenced as a separate document, the housing element is included in this General Plan.

Internal Consistency

All portions of a general plan, whether required by the State or included at the option of local government, have equal weight. No one element or component of a general plan may supersede another. Furthermore, if a single element of a general plan is judged to

be inadequate with respect to legal requirements, the entire general plan may be considered inadequate.

General Plan Review

This General Plan is intended to be a dynamic and fluid document that has the ability to respond to changing conditions and City needs. In accordance with California Government Code, Section 65400, the City is required to annually review the General Plan. Upon City approval, the annual report is forwarded to the Governor's Office of Planning and Research and the State Housing and Community Development office on or before April 1 of each year.⁴ The purpose of the annual review report is to provide information on:

- Any necessary policy adjustments or modifications to be the General Plan needed to improve implementation;
- The correlation between land use decisions that have been made during the past 12 months and existing objectives and implementation measures; and
- The progress made in meeting the City's share of regional housing needs determined pursuant to California Government Code, Section 65584 and the City's efforts to remove constraints to the maintenance, improvement and development of housing pursuant to California Government Code, Section 65584(c)(3).

General Plan Implementation

While this General Plan seeks to guide Chowchilla's growth and decision making, it is not intended to answer every question which will be faced by the City over the lifetime of the Plan. This General Plan is not a step-by-step guidebook for its own implementation; instead, it will rely on the diligence, ingenuity, and hard work of Chowchilla's elected officials, residents, and staff to find ways to apply its policies to situations which will be unpredictable and new.

Zoning Ordinance

The City of Chowchilla Zoning Ordinance is a key implementation tool for the General Plan. Many of the Goals, Policies, and Action Items in this General Plan are achieved through zoning, which regulates public and private development. The City is responsible for ensuring that the Zoning Ordinance and this General Plan are in conformity. In most instances, this will mean that land is designated in the General Plan and zoned for similar uses with similar development standards (i.e. similar densities and minimum parcel sizes). Where zoning and General Plan land use designations are not identical, policies of this General Plan should be consulted carefully for guidance in

⁴ Governor's Office of Planning and Research, General Plan Annual Progress Report Guidance, July 11, 2007.

amending the Zoning Ordinances to be consistent with the General Plan.

General Plan Amendments

The General Plan may be amended from time to time. Applications for amendments to the General Plan may be accepted at any time and each amendment may make an unlimited number of changes to the General Plan. However, the opportunity to amend the General Plan is limited to four times per calendar year. Because the requirement for internal consistency is never relaxed, particular care must be taken to ensure that any amendment to the General Plan maintains consistency with text and diagrams in all General Plan Elements. To assist the City in identifying and evaluating the cumulative impacts of any and all General Plan amendment requests, General Plan amendments are subject to and scheduled for review and hearings on a quarterly basis.

Recognizing the dynamic nature of the General Plan, state law provides for periodic review of the document to ensure it is consistent with the conditions, values, expectations and needs of the community. The following process must be followed in reviewing and approving any proposed General Plan Amendments.

Amendment Applications

Applications to amend the General Plan shall be accompanied by detailed information to document the scope and impact of the amendment request. This information must include revised text, tables, and diagrams for all affected elements. For example, a change to the Land Use Element must include an analysis of impacts to the Housing and Circulation Elements. Pursuant to the requirements of CEQA, all amendment applications shall include an environmental initial study and analysis for consistency with the certified General Plan Environmental Impact Report (GPEIR) and mitigation monitoring program.

Since a significant amount of public resources have been invested in the preparation of the General Plan and EIR, any proposals to amend the General Plan must document the need for such changes. The application shall include a discussion of the environmental, economic, or technical issues that justify the need to amend the General Plan.

Any application to amend the General Plan must be accompanied by studies analyzing the amendment's effects, relative to the adopted General Plan and EIR. At a minimum the following issues must be addressed and supported by studies and/or other factual information in the application:

1. The proposed amendment is in the public interest.
2. The proposed amendment is in conformance with the adopted General Plan goals, policies and implementation measures as well as the overall intent of the General Plan.
3. The proposed amendment is compatible with existing development,

neighborhoods, and the environment.

4. The proposed amendment complies with current CEQA requirements.
5. The proposed amendment is consistent with the adopted EIR and mitigation-monitoring program.

Staff Analysis

City staff will review the materials and provide a staff report to the Planning Commission. Staff may request additional information beyond the studies mentioned above. The staff report will analyze whether the proposed amendment is consistent with the General Plan and whether the need to amend the General Plan can be supported by the conclusions and supplemental studies, if required.

Amendment Cycles

Consistent with California Government Code §65358(b) and Public Resources Code § 30514) no element of the General Plan shall be amended more than four (4) times per calendar year. Two cycles of amendments shall be reserved for City use and the remaining two cycles shall be available for other amendment applications. More than one amendment application may be considered during a cycle provided it is heard on the same public hearing date. As potentially applicable to the Chowchilla General Plan, this amendment limitation does not apply to:

- Amendments requested and necessary for affordable housing (§ 65358(c))
- Any amendment necessary to comply with a court decision in a case involving the legal adequacy of the general plan (§ 65358(d)(1))
- Amendments after January 1, 1984, to bring a general plan into compliance with an airport land use plan (§ 65302.3).
- Amendments needed in connection with the adoption of a comprehensive development plan under the Urban Development Incentive Act (Health and Safety Code §56032(d)).

Exceptions

Minor adjustments to General Plan boundaries and diagrams may be approved with a simplified process that does not require additional studies. Minor adjustments include changes that modify boundaries to follow more logical locations without increasing density or changing entitlements. For example, a minor adjustment might include moving a land use boundary from one side of the street to the other or an interpretation of where a land use boundary bisects a property. The City Council, by resolution, will establish the procedures and rules for this simplified process.

Severability Clause

In the event any goal, policy, or implementation measure or portion of any element of the General Plan is held invalid or unconstitutional by a California or Federal Court of competent jurisdiction, such portions shall be deemed separate, distinct, and independent provisions, and the invalidity of such provisions shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions.

GENERAL PLAN ORGANIZATION

This General Plan includes the 7 state mandated elements and 3 optional elements – air quality, energy, and public facilities – organized into 9 elements listed below. The state mandated open space and conservation elements are combined into a single element – Open Space and Conservation. Each element identified below is further divided into related topic areas.

Land Use	Circulation
Housing	Open Space and Conservation Air Quality
Public Safety	Noise
Public Facilities and Services	

Each element contains goals, objectives, policies and programs that guide the City’s growth, land use, health and welfare. The goals, objectives, policies and programs are found at the end of each element. For referencing purposes an to ensure consistency among the General Plan elements, the goals, objectives, policies and programs in each element are set-up with the same structure. The General Plan goals, objectives, policies and implementation measures are set-up and referenced as follows:

Goal

A goal serves as an overall an overall vision and direction. Each element may have one or more goal statements. A goal is a direction-setter. It is an ideal future end, condition or state.

Objective

An objective is a specific end, condition or state that is an intermediate step toward attaining a goal. An objective should be achievable. An objective’s reference code and number (i.e. “LU 1”) refers to the General Plan element (in this particular case – the Land Use Element) and the number refers to the first objective under in the Land Use Element. Each element may have one or more objectives and an objective may have one or more policies associated with it.

Policy

A policy is a statement that guides a specific course of action to achieve a desired objective. A policy is clear and explicit – it indicates a commitment of the City’s legislative body to a particular course of action. A policy’s reference code and numbering (i.e. “LU 1.1”) refers to the element and objective the policy specifically supports. The number following the decimal point indicates the sequence or order a specific policy follows an objective.

Implementation Measure

An implementation measure is an action to be taken by the City to ensure that the policy is carried out in the approval of projects or intended actions of the City to implement a policy. Implementation measures follow the policy which they relate and contain the policy number followed by an alphabetic marker such as “A”.

The General Plan also includes a list of abbreviations and acronyms, as well as a glossary to define “planning” jargon and technical terms used throughout this General Plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

During the preparation of the Chowchilla 2040 General Plan, environmental studies were undertaken to identify potential environmental effects and allow for plan modifications, which either mitigated or avoided potential environmental effects. The intent of this process was to minimize the General Plan’s environmental effects while providing realistic City growth and development opportunities.

The City of Chowchilla 2040 General Plan and Rancho Calera Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report (SCH #2009022007) analyzed the potential environmental effects of the 2040 General Plan that in part already responds to potential environmental issues. By engaging in multiple phases of environmental analysis during the General Plan process, solutions to environmental issues, in the form of policies and programs have been woven into the fabric of the 2040 General Plan.

The environmental analysis of the Chowchilla 2040 General Plan was prepared pursuant to Section 15168 of the California Quality Act Guidelines (CEQA). For specific details regarding the environmental analysis and findings, please refer to the City of Chowchilla 2040 General Plan and Rancho Calera Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report and subsequent findings that are incorporated herein by reference and hereby made a part of this General Plan. The City of Chowchilla 2040 General Plan and Rancho Calera Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report is available as a separate volume of the 2040 General Plan.