

**City of Saratoga Study Session February 27, 2018**

General Plan Policy Review: Land Use Element Goals and Policies

To focus the Planning Commission discussion during the Study Session, the Goals and Policies in the existing General Plan Land Use Element have been reviewed and prioritized as follows:

- Goals and Policies that are color-coded **Yellow** are recommended for discussion during the Study Session. Suggestions for revisions are provided in the Explanation column of the Table.
- A Goal or Policy that is color-coded **Red** is recommended be removed during the General Plan Update process. This would be recommended where a Goal or Policy is no longer relevant for long range planning purposes.
- A Goal or Policy that is color-coded **Green** would remain in the 2040 General Plan.
- The new Village goals and policies are color-coded **Blue** and were approved by the City Council in 2017. No changes are proposed beyond minor grammatical edits.

In advance of the Study Session, commissioners should review the Land Use Element and these recommendations within the Explanation column. If a commissioner believes that a **Red** or **Green** recommendation should be discussed during the Study Session, those considerations should be communicated at the start of the meeting.

<b>Goal or Policy</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Residential Land Use</b>	
<b>Goal LU 1:</b> Maintain the predominantly small-town residential character of Saratoga which includes semi-rural and open space areas.	Semi-rural may no longer be an accurate descriptor for the community. The Planning Commission may wish to consider the following language:  <i>Maintain the predominantly small-town residential character of Saratoga which includes a vibrant mix of large residential parcels, long established neighborhoods, scenic hillsides and open space areas.</i>
<b>Policy LU 1.1:</b> Affirm that the city shall continue to be predominately a community of single-family detached residences.	
<b>Policy LU 1.2:</b> Continue to review all residential development proposals to ensure consistency with Land Use Element goals and Policies.	The Planning Commission may wish to convert this Policy to an Implementation Action.
<b>Policy LU 1.3:</b> Ensure that existing undeveloped sites zoned single-family detached residential remain so designated.	
<b>Policy LU 1.4:</b> Review and update Area Plans on a periodic basis to ensure that they reflect the desires and needs of each neighborhood.	The areas plans have never been updated and are no longer considered for planning purposes. Through the GPU process any relevant Area Plan policies can be incorporated into the LU element.
<b>Policy LU 1.5:</b> Ensure that all development proposals are consistent with the spirit and requirements established by Measure G.	
<b>Commercial, Office and Public Land Use</b>	
<b>Goal LU 2:</b> Encourage the economic viability of Saratoga’s existing commercial and office areas and their accessibility by residents, taking into account the impact on surrounding residential areas.	
<b>Policy LU 2.1:</b> Non-residential development shall be confined to sites presently designated on the General Plan Map for non- residential uses. Existing non-residential zoning shall not be expanded nor new non- residential zoning districts added.	
<b>Policy LU 2.2:</b> Non-residential uses shall be buffered from other uses by methods such as setbacks, landscaping, berms, and sound walls as determined through the Design Review process.	
<b>Policy LU 2.3:</b> The City shall revise the zoning ordinance to allow bed and breakfast establishments as conditional uses in commercial or residential zoning districts where such uses have not previously been permitted and where such	This policy is no longer relevant.  Bed and Breakfast establishments are specified as a particular use in the zoning ordinance. Bed and Breakfast establishments are also considered hotels

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uses would be appropriate.	<p>in the zoning ordinance.</p> <p>Bed and Breakfast Establishments may be conditionally allowed in the PA zone and Commercial Zones.</p> <p>Hotels may be conditionally allowed in R-M 3000.</p>
<p><b>Policy LU 2.4:</b> The City shall work with commercial property owners and merchants to encourage appropriate modernization and upgrading of retail establishments consistent with the historic character of the community to provide pleasant shopping experiences.</p>	
<p><b>Policy LU 2.5:</b> The City shall monitor Zoning Ordinance standards to ensure that non-residential parking standards are adequate to minimize spill-over of parking into adjacent neighborhoods.</p>	
<p><b>Goal LU 3:</b> Promote the long-term fiscal soundness of the City of Saratoga through careful analysis of land use decisions and fiscal practices.</p>	
<p><b>Policy LU 3.1:</b> The City shall consider the economic impact of all land use decisions on the City budget through the preparation of fiscal impact analyses for major development proposals.</p>	<p>The City has not seen the types of development projects that would trigger the need for fiscal impact analyses. The Planning Commission may wish to remove this Policy.</p>
<p><b>Policy LU 3.2:</b> The City shall adopt regulations authorizing exactions in the form of improvements or fees required from developers to compensate the City for their fair share of direct and indirect economic effects that arise from proposed development and to insure implementation of the General Plan.</p>	<p>This policy should be revised to remove the implementation action. The Planning Commission may wish to consider the following language:</p> <p><i>The City shall continue to collect fees from developers to compensate for their fair share of direct and indirect economic effects that arise from proposed development and to insure implementation of the General Plan.</i></p>
<p><b>Goal LU 4:</b> Provide sufficient land area for public, quasi-public and similar land uses in Saratoga.</p>	
<p><b>Policy LU 4.1:</b> Periodically monitor the amount and type of land needed for City public uses and facilities and report to City Council through the annual City budgetary process and Capital Improvement Program.</p>	
<b>Neighborhood Protection</b>	
<p><b>Goal LU 5:</b> Relate development proposals to existing and planned street capacities to avoid excessive noise, traffic, and other public safety hazards so as to protect neighborhoods. If it is determined that existing streets need to be improved to accommodate a project, such improvements shall be in place or bonded for prior to issuance of building permits.</p>	<p>This policy may require modification to be consistent with new Circulation Element.</p> <p>The Planning Commission may wish to move this policy into the Circulation Element.</p>
<p><b>Policy LU 5.1:</b> Prior to approval, the decision making body shall consider the cumulative traffic impacts of single-family residential projects of 4 or more lots, multi-family residential projects of eight or more units, and commercial projects designed for an occupancy load of more than 30 persons. This may be accomplished through the completion of traffic impact analyses prepared by qualified traffic engineers or transportation planners.</p>	<p>This policy may require modification to be consistent with new Circulation Element. The traffic thresholds will be reviewed appropriateness.</p> <p>The Planning Commission may wish to move this policy into the Circulation Element.</p>
<p><b>Policy LU 5.2:</b> Development proposals shall be evaluated against City standards and guidelines to assure that the related traffic, noise, light, appearance, and intensity of the proposed use</p>	



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<p>have limited adverse impact on the area and can be fully mitigated.</p>	
<p><b>Policy LU 5.3:</b> The capacity of existing streets shall be recognized prior to tentative building site or subdivision approval of any project. New development shall be designed to minimize disruption to the area caused by an increase in through or heavy traffic.</p>	<p>May require modification to be consistent with new Circulation Element.</p> <p>The Planning Commission may wish to move this policy into the Circulation Element.</p> <p>In addition, the Planning Commission may wish to consider the following language:</p> <p>The capacity of existing streets shall be recognized prior to <del>tentative building site</del> or subdivision approval of any project. New development shall be designed to minimize disruption to the area caused by an increase in through or heavy traffic.</p>
<p><b>Policy LU 5.4:</b> Through the development review process, ensure that adjoining neighborhoods are protected from noise, light, glare and other impacts resulting from new or expanded non-residential developments.</p>	
<p><b>Policy LU 5.5:</b> Consistent with the initiative ordinance adopted by the City in 1977, stadium uses in Saratoga shall be limited as follows: Neither a stadium of any size nor any other facility with a similar use but different name shall be permitted in any zoning district. A "stadium" is a track and/or field which has any one or more of the following: permanent or portable seating (other than field-level seating for participating athletes), permanent or portable lighting, permanent or portable sound system, press box, scoreboard, restrooms or concession stands, and on which any inter-school events or other spectator-oriented events of any kind are held. Temporary portable equipment for cultural events (other than sports events or rock concerts) may be utilized on any track or field upon a two-thirds vote of the City Council after a duly noticed public hearing and a finding that the particular event will not be unduly disturbing to the City. This policy shall not apply to facilities at elementary and secondary (junior and senior high) schools or facilities built by private, nonprofit youth-oriented organizations such as Little League or the American Youth Soccer organization.</p>	<p>This language was adopted into Zoning Ordinance Section 15-80.070</p>
<b><i>Environmental and Resource Protection</i></b>	
<p><b>Goal LU 6:</b> Protect natural resources and amenities through appropriate land use and related programs.</p>	
<p><b>Policy LU 6.1:</b> Incorporate specific standards and requirements into the Zoning Ordinance to preserve and protect sensitive watershed areas on hillsides within the community.</p>	
<p><b>Policy LU 6.2:</b> Development proposals shall incorporate stormwater quality features, including but not limited to grassy bioswales, to protect surface and subsurface water quality.</p>	
<p><b>Policy LU 6.3:</b> Continue to implement the City's Construction Materials Recycling Program to reduce the quantity of construction debris in local landfills.</p>	
<p><b>Policy LU 6.4:</b> The General Plan shall continue to enforce and implement existing tree protection</p>	



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policies, especially in regards to native trees.	
<b>Policy 6.5:</b> Encourage the use of renewable resources and energy conservation.	
<b><i>Williamson Act Contracts and Agricultural Protection</i></b>	
<b>Goal LU 7:</b> Protect existing agricultural resources and encourage expansion of this use.	The Planning Commission may wish to consider the following language:  <i>Protect existing agricultural resources and encourage expansion of this use.</i>
<b>Policy LU 7.1:</b> Encourage renewal and discourage cancellation of Williamson Act contracts to preserve agricultural lands.	The Planning Commission may wish to consider the following language:  <i>Encourage renewal and discourage cancellation of Williamson Act contracts to preserve agricultural lands.</i>
<b>Policy LU 7.2:</b> Encourage agricultural and open space landowners to voluntarily protect their land.	
<b>Policy LU 7.3:</b> Encourage agricultural use on suitable land with protection for nearby residences as appropriate.	
<b><i>Hillside Development</i></b>	
<b>Goal LU 8:</b> The natural beauty of the West Valley hillsides area shall be maintained and protected for its contribution to the overall quality of life of current and future generations.	
<b>Policy LU 8.1:</b> Development proposals shall minimize impacts to ridgelines, significant natural hillside features, including but not limited to steep topography, major stands of vegetation, especially native vegetation and oak trees, and watercourses.	
<b>Policy LU 8.2:</b> Adhere to the Hillside Specific Plan (derived from Measure A) which is incorporated herein by this reference.	
<b>Goal LU 9:</b> Preserve the rural nature of the hills by limiting incompatible development.	
<b>Policy LU 9.1:</b> Limit Expansion of Urban Development in the hillside areas.	
<b>Policy LU 9.2:</b> Limit the amount of grading within hillside areas to the minimum amount needed for dwellings and access.	
<b>Goal LU 10:</b> Minimize the visual impacts of hillside development, especially on ridgetops.	
<b>Policy LU 10.1:</b> Require development proposals in hillside areas to undertake visual analyses and mitigate significant visual impacts.	The Planning Commission may wish to consider the following language:  <i>Require development proposals in hillside areas to undertake visual analyses and mitigate significant visual impacts to ridgelines.</i>
<b>Goal LU 11:</b> Foster closer interjurisdictional cooperation and coordination concerning land use and development issues.	
<b>Policy LU 11.1:</b> Adhere to Joint Hillside Land Use Objectives that will assure basic consistency of hillside land use policies among the West Valley jurisdictions. The West Valley Cities and the County should work together to achieve the shared goal of preserving the natural beauty of the West Valley Hillsides.	
<b>Policy LU 11.2:</b> Continue to work within the adopted Joint Planning Objectives and Land Use principles for West Valley Hillsides Areas to	



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reinforce existing policies.	
<b>Historic Character/Cultural Resources</b>	
<b>Goal LU 12:</b> Recognize the heritage of the City by seeking to protect historic and cultural resources, where feasible.	
<b>Policy LU 12.1:</b> Enhance the visual character of the City by encouraging compatibility of architectural styles that reflect established architectural traditions.	
<b>Policy LU 12.2:</b> Develop zoning and other incentives for property owners to preserve historic resources and seek out historic designations for their respective properties.	
<b>Policy LU 12.3:</b> In order to create an incentive for the protection of historic structures, modify the Zoning Ordinance to allow the Planning Commission to have the authority to modify any of the development regulations in the Ordinance, if the subject of the application is a structure which has been designated as an historic landmark.	The Planning Commission may wish to convert this Policy to an Implementation Action. Section 15-19.050 (i) of the C-H District regulations contains this language already. However, it is recommended that the Planning Commission adopt this language for all zoning districts in the City.
<b>Policy LU 12.4:</b> The City shall continue to participate in the Mills Act program which allows property owners of historic residences a reduction of their property tax.	
<b>Policy LU 12.5:</b> Encourage public knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the City's past and foster civic and neighborhood pride and sense of identity based upon the recognition and use of the City's heritage resources.	
<b>Policy LU 12.6:</b> The Heritage Preservation Commission shall regularly update the City's Historic Resources Inventory.	
<b>Policy LU 12.7:</b> Development proposals impacting any of the City's heritage land and/or any historic resources listed on any local or state inventory shall be reviewed by Heritage Preservation Commission and the Planning Commission, as required.	The Planning Commission may wish to consider the following language:  <i>Development proposals impacting any of the City's heritage land and/or any historic resources listed on any local or state inventory shall be reviewed by Heritage Preservation Commission and the Planning Commission, as required by the Zoning Ordinance.</i>
<b>Policy LU 12.8:</b> For any project development affecting structures that are 50 years of age or older, conduct an historic review.	The Planning Commission may wish to consider the following language:  <i>For any project development affecting structures that are 50 years of age or older, conduct appropriate analysis as required by CEQA.</i>
<b>Policy LU 12.9:</b> Conduct reconnaissance- level analyses of new development projects to ensure that no significant archeological, prehistoric, paleontological Native American resources would be disturbed. If such resources are found, appropriate steps shall be taken, consistent with CEQA requirements to protect these resources.	If such resources are found, state mandated protocols shall be followed, consistent with CEQA requirements to protect these resources.  The Planning Commission may wish to consider the following language:  <i>Protect significant archeological, prehistoric, and paleontological Native American resources.</i>
<b>Design Review</b>	
<b>Goal LU 13:</b> The City shall use the design review process to assure that new construction and major additions thereto are compatible with the site and the adjacent surroundings.	
<b>Policy LU 13.1:</b> Utilize the design review process and the California Environmental Quality	



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<p>Act in the review of proposed residential and non-residential projects to promote high quality design, to ensure compliance with applicable regulations, to ensure compatibility with surrounding properties and use, and to minimize environmental impacts. Special attention shall be given to ensuring compatibility between residential and non-residential uses (e.g., land use buffering).</p>	
<p><b>Policy LU 13.2:</b> When considering development proposals, including new construction, remodeling and/or additions to existing buildings, the city shall adhere to applicable adopted design guidelines, such as, but not limited to, the Residential Design Handbook, the Village Plan Design Guidelines and the Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road Gateway Guidelines, as may be adopted and revised by City Council from time to time.</p>	<p>As part of the General Plan Update, references in this policy may need to be updated.</p>
<b>Annexations</b>	
<p><b>Goal LU 14:</b> Seek to achieve appropriate and contiguous City boundaries to provide for the efficient delivery of public services and to create a greater sense of community.</p>	
<p><b>Policy LU 14.1:</b> Land shall not be annexed to Saratoga unless it is contiguous to the existing city limits, within the Sphere of Influence, and it is determined by the city that public services can be provided without unreasonable cost to the City and dilution of services to existing residents.</p>	
<p><b>Policy LU 14.2:</b> The City shall evaluate its designated unincorporated Urban Service Areas to determine if the areas are compatible with the County’s Local Agency Formation Commission Policies and are appropriate for annexation and urban development.</p>	
<p><b>Policy LU 14.3:</b> The City shall periodically review annexation policies and procedures to ensure compliance with most current land use changes.</p>	
<b>Air Quality</b>	
<p><i>(Note: Air Quality Goals and Policies are presently located in multiple GP Elements; the GPU process can consolidate them.)</i></p>	
<p><b>Goal LU 15:</b> Improve local and regional air quality by ensuring all development projects incorporate all feasible measures to reduce air pollutants.</p>	<p>The Planning Commission may wish to consider the following language:</p> <p><i>Support regional efforts to improve air quality by reducing emissions from both stationary and non-stationary sources.</i></p>
<p><b>Policy LU 15.1:</b> Require development projects to comply with Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) measures to reduce fugitive dust emissions due to grading and construction activities.</p>	
<p><b>Policy LU 15.2:</b> Encourage use of trip demand measures as part of major commercial and office development projects to reduce dependence on auto use.</p>	
<p><b>Policy LU 15.3:</b> Discourage the use of wood burning fireplaces by limiting to one per residence, including outdoor/patio fireplaces.</p>	<p>This policy will be reviewed as part of the Environmental Analysis process.</p>
<b>Zoning Ordinance Review and Amendment</b>	
<p><b>Goal LU 16:</b> Review and amend (as needed) the</p>	



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Zoning Ordinance to provide consistency with the General Plan updates, new state legislation and court decisions.	
<b>Policy LU 16.1:</b> Consider Zoning Ordinance amendments that implement the use and development of goals, policies, and plan objectives identified in the adopted 2006 Land Use Element and Land Use Map of the General Plan.	The Planning Commission may wish to modify to reflect 2040 General Plan document.
<b><i>New Village Policies (adopted by the City Council in April 2017 and August 2017)</i></b>	
<b>Goal LU 17:</b> Value and protect the human scale and historic context of downtown Saratoga.	
<b>Policy LU 17.1:</b> The physical form and scale of the Village is connected with its rural origin capturing the charm of its 19 <sup>th</sup> century roots. The City shall ensure that the integrity and character of Saratoga Village continues to reflect this familiar identity and retain the quaint qualities that have characterized its architectural form over the years.	
<b>Policy LU 17.2:</b> Property development and building improvements shall fully utilize and respect the natural hillside and creek setting of the Village.	
<b>Goal LU 18:</b> To encourage and support the tenant of a vibrant and commercially successful downtown.	
<b>Policy LU 18.1:</b> The City supports and encourages an interesting and diverse mix of ground floor businesses that appeal to the community and the broader marketplace and that enhance the shopping and dining experience and makes the area more inviting to shoppers and diners while ensuring the success and sustainability of the Village as a viable commercial center.	
<b>Policy LU 18.2:</b> The City shall explore expanding the Village boundaries to include certain adjacent properties that naturally relate to the Village’s commercial and historical presence.	The Planning Commission may wish to consider this policy, as an expanded Village Boundary has been outlined for adoption.
<b>Goal LU 19:</b> The Village shall serve as a center of community and civic activity.	
<b>Policy LU 19.1:</b> The City shall consider the Village an important venue for civic events and community activities and will pursue opportunities to create and utilize public plazas and gathering places.	
<b>Policy LU 19.2:</b> The City shall cultivate opportunities for incorporating public art and music in the Village as a means of enhancing the Village experience and emphasizing its place as a primary focal point in the community.	
<b>Goal LU 20:</b> Improve the effective and efficient use of public and private parking, and implement available circulation alternatives.	The Planning Commission may wish to move this policy into the Circulation Element.
<b>Policy LU 20.1:</b> The City shall develop and implement a Parking Management Plan that outlines a strategy for the efficient and effective use of parking resources necessary to the commercial success of the Village.	The Planning Commission may wish to move this policy into the Circulation Element.
<b>Policy LU 20.2:</b> The City shall review and expedite the implementation of the planned “turnaround” at the western end of Big Basin Way to more effectively navigate automobile circulation	The Planning Commission may wish to move this policy into the Circulation Element.



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<b>Goal or Policy</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
through the Village.	

