



CHAPTER 6

CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE

(2006)

THE GENERAL PLAN

CHAPTER 6 - CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE

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Dedicated in fond memory of Bill Roalman, City Council member from 1989 to 1998, environmental advocate, musician, husband and friend.

*Bill Roalman
1952-2002*

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CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE**Introduction****1.0 Background.**

In the early 1970s, the California Legislature made the open space element and conservation element mandatory parts of a general plan. San Luis Obispo adopted its first conservation element and its first open space element separately in 1973. Both elements guide the use and protection of various resources to meet community needs and purposes. They reflect consensus and compromise among a wide range of citizens' preferences, within a framework set by State law.

The Open Space Element was extensively revised and expanded in 1994, mainly to address protection of creeks, plants and wildlife. The City adopted its optional Energy Conservation Element in 1981 and its optional Water and Wastewater Management Element in 1987. The 1994 update of the Land Use Element contained detailed policies on protection of archaeological and historical resources. The 1994 update of the Circulation Element established many policies on alternatives to single-occupant vehicle trips, which affect air quality and energy use. The Circulation Element also contained a section on roads and scenic resources. The 2004 Housing Element update also contains policies on energy, water and materials conservation.

This Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE) combines and revises material from the previous Conservation, Open Space and Energy conservation elements, as well as from parts of the land use and housing elements, and the Scenic Roadways section of the Circulation Element. Why combine general plan elements? For several reasons: ease of use, to eliminate redundancy and maintain consistency, to group like policies for emphasis, and to address related community issues more comprehensively in one element. Combining and integrating related general plan policies in this manner is allowed for and encouraged by State law. All general plan elements carry equal weight, and policy repetition or redundancy conveys no added legitimacy or legal standing.

While inevitably some overlap remains among the General Plan elements, the Conservation and Open Space Element emphasizes protection of natural resources associated with land that is not developed with urban uses: open space for farming, wildlife habitat, scenery, water supply and separation between cities. It also addresses air and water quality, energy sources and conservation, materials recycling, minerals and cultural resources. Other General Plan elements will be amended for consistency with the Conservation and Open Space Element and may still contain policies which address open space or conservation topics as part of other City objectives. For example, the Land Use Element focuses on the types and intensities of development on land designated for urban uses. The Safety Element is concerned mainly with avoiding hazards from fire, flood, unstable land and aircraft flights, in areas where agriculture and natural landscape are often the most appropriate uses. The Parks and Recreation Element consists of plans for indoor and outdoor recreational facilities primarily for active recreational uses, such as parks, playfields and community centers.



Hikers enjoying one of the City's many open spaces and trails

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1.1 Use of Terms

In the General Plan, a goal is a desired end state or condition that the community wants to achieve. A policy describes an approach to achieving a goal. A program is a specific action the City intends to take to implement policy. Numbering of goals, policies and programs is for ease of reference and does not imply relative importance unless so stated. As used here, the terms “shall” or “will” are mandatory and mean that an action shall be taken or procedure followed without exception. “Should” means that such an action or procedure will be followed unless there are significant, countermanding reasons or factors that prevent or discourage implementation. The terms “encourage”, “promote” and “support” are permissive and indicate a desirable, but not a mandatory action. They indicate intent to take action but are not linked to a specific time frame or work program.

1.2 Purpose

San Luis Obispo residents are justly proud of their rich and diverse environmental setting. Creeks, hills, morros, valleys and farmland create a striking landscape which is home to a wide variety of plants and animals. These natural gifts form a distinctive city backdrop and help maintain the overall quality of life for all to enjoy. And unlike many other heavily urbanized areas, San Luis Obispo’s environmental character and diversity remains. However, the City and region’s special character is threatened by development pressure that incrementally degrades special geographical, biological, geological and other natural resources.

The Conservation and Open Space Element is a tool to protect and preserve these unique community resources. Its overarching goal is to protect resources (such as air and water, wildlife habitat, scenic and agricultural lands, watershed and historic features) with a secondary goal of accommodating passive recreation where it will not harm the environment or interfere with agricultural operations. San Luis Obispo’s environmental quality is a precious gift. When surveyed, City residents have repeatedly placed open space and environmental conservation high on the list of community goals, values and priorities. Thus, conservation and open space acquisition are values that strongly influence City decision-making and operations. This Element reaffirms and clarifies the Community’s on-going commitment to these values.



Reservoir Canyon waterfall

1.3 How This Element is Organized

The Conservation and Open Space Element encompasses a broad range of relatively complex issues and policies. Preparing a document which is both comprehensive and enjoyable to read has been a key objective in this effort. To maintain brevity without sacrificing content, policies and programs have been condensed and combined where possible without changing their meaning or effect. Narratives and detailed discussions of issue areas have been minimized, with maps, tables and other graphics used in lieu of text where possible. Lastly, expanded Glossary and References sections have been included for those wishing to delve into greater detail. Each chapter begins with an introduction, including a brief discussion of topics covered, how it pertains to San Luis Obispo, and why it’s important. This is followed by goals and policies for that resource, and finally, a list of programs which the City will undertake. Goals, policies and programs are grouped for easy

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reference and all carry equal “weight.” They are not listed in order of priority unless so stated.

1.4 Public Participation

The COSE update has involved extensive public outreach and public hearings. Work on updating the Conservation, Energy Conservation and Open Space Elements began in 1998. In 2003, after several years of work and at least 10 public hearings, the August 2002 Draft Conservation and Open Space Element was put on hold due to Planning Commission and citizen concerns with the draft element and the public participation process. At the City Council’s direction, work on the draft began anew in fall 2004 with a series of public “visioning” workshops to identify key issues to be addressed.

After restarting the update process in September 2004, the Commission held three public workshops and 11 televised public hearings. In addition, community input was solicited through direct mailings to stakeholder individuals, groups and agencies, newspaper ads, individual interviews with stakeholders, and the City’s website. Project goals, workshop results, staff reports, revised drafts and other information were posted on the City’s website to help reach a wider audience. During the update process, staff met with various individual and group stakeholders, including ECOSLO, Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club, San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce, San Luis Obispo County Land Conservancy and SLO Green Build. Community Development Department staff worked closely with the Natural Resources Manager, Dr. Neil Havlik, in preparing the COSE and in meeting and working with stakeholders.

Through three draft elements, Planning Commissioners, citizens and staff spent hundreds of hours reviewing and revising three successive drafts and related background information. During 14 public meetings, the Commission took public testimony, reviewed the revised drafts in detail, and refined the draft goals developed at the earlier workshops. At its February 8, 2006 meeting, the Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend that the City Council: 1) approve a negative declaration of environmental impact on the new Element and related General Plan amendments, 2) adopt the March 2006 “City Council Hearing Draft”, and 3) amend the General Plan for consistency. Throughout the eight-year process, many citizens’ comments have shaped and improved the final document. Their important contributions are acknowledged and are sincerely appreciated.

This final Element includes many changes from the August 2002 draft. It includes new goals, policies and programs in response to citizen and Planning Commission comments, plus significant changes and additions primarily in the sections on energy, materials, natural communities and open space. It also includes new and updated graphics and maps based on the most current information available. Besides content changes, this draft also has a new format, organization and style to make it easier to use and find information on specific topics. New maps and graphics were added to highlight key issues and add visual interest. In summary, the Conservation and Open Space Element represents a significantly broader and bolder statement of the City’s role in conservation and open space combined into a single, primary policy document.

1.5 What’s New in this Element

This new Element is intended to:

Update and combine relevant conservation and open space policies from several General Plan elements into one document so they are easier to find and use.

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Add to or expand policies and programs in response to changing community needs and issues.

Establish the City of San Luis Obispo as a leader in the fields of conservation, environmental sustainability and open space preservation.

New conservation and open space policies and programs have been included to address comments expressed by Planning Commissioners, the public and community specialists.

These include:

- Increased protection of archaeological sites, historically and architecturally significant buildings and other cultural features that contribute to “sense of place”
- Monitoring programs for air and water quality, and for natural populations
- Requirements for wildlife corridors to be incorporated into the design of major roadways
- Preparation of a Strategic Energy Resource Plan to promote sustainability in City services and facilities
- “Green Building” standards to encourage energy efficiency in new private and public buildings
- Incentives for private development projects that incorporate sustainable “green building” technologies
- Passive recreational uses of open space where compatible with other open space and ecological objectives
- Exterior lighting design standards to prevent light pollution and preserve nighttime sky views, while enhancing public safety and lighting efficiency
- Streetscape corridor design standards to enhance the visual quality, function and safety of major streets
- Increased emphasis on preservation of the Morros
- Revised greenbelt boundary to expand open space buffers around the City and more closely reflect natural viewsheds, watersheds and geographic features like valleys, ridgelines and peaks
- The Ahwahnee Principles

1.6 The Ahwahnee Principles

In 2005, the Council adopted Resolution No. 9689, dedicating the City to the Ahwahnee Principles and the Ahwahnee Water Principles, Chapter 10.22.2. The City believes these principles are the foundation of a safe, environmentally healthy and life-sustaining community, and intends to incorporate these principles into its General Plan and all future updates of the General Plan. These principles are hereby incorporated into and shall guide the interpretation of this Element:



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1. *All planning should be in the form of complete and integrated communities containing housing, shops, workplaces, schools, parks and civic facilities essential to the daily life of the residents.*
2. *Community size should be designed so that housing, jobs, daily needs and other activities are within easy walking distance of each other.*
3. *As many activities as possible should be located within easy walking distance of transit stops.*
4. *A community should contain a diversity of housing types to enable citizens from a wide range of economic levels and age groups to live within its boundaries*
5. *Businesses within the community should provide a range of job types for the community's residents.*
6. *The location and character of the community should be consistent with a larger transit network.*
7. *The community should have a center focus that combines commercial, civic, cultural and recreational uses.*
8. *The community should contain an ample supply of specialized open spaces in the form of squares, greens and parks whose frequent use is encouraged through placement and design.*
9. *Public spaces should be designed to encourage the attention and presence of people at all hours of the day and night.*
10. *Each community or cluster of communities should have a well-defined edge, such as agricultural greenbelts or wildlife corridors, permanently protected from development.*
11. *Streets, pedestrian paths and bike paths should contribute to a system of fully connected and interesting routes to all destinations. Their design should encourage pedestrian and bicycle use by being small and spatially defined by buildings, trees and lighting, and by discouraging high-speed traffic.*
12. *Wherever possible, the natural terrain, drainage and vegetation of the community should be preserved with superior examples contained within parks or greenbelts.*
13. *The community design should help conserve resources and minimize waste.*
14. *Communities should provide for the efficient use of water through the use of natural drainage, drought tolerant landscaping and recycling.*
15. *The street orientation, placement of buildings and use of shading should contribute to the energy efficiency of the community.*

* * *

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AIR

Air

2.0 Background

We live at the bottom of a relatively shallow “ocean of air” that sustains and protects us. While progress has been made in reducing toxic emissions from individual sources, growth in the number of sources and the accumulation of gasses that produce climate change are growing concerns. The City is located in an air basin that continues to be designated as a State non-attainment area for PM10 (fine particulate matter) air pollution.



An “inversion layer” is formed by stable air masses with different temperatures trapping pollutants. San Luis Obispo has one of the lowest inversion layers in the state

2.1 Goals and Policies

2.1.1 Goal Air Quality.

Achieve and maintain air quality that supports health and enjoyment for those who live or work in the City and for visitors.

2.2 Policies

2.2.1 Atmospheric change.

City actions shall seek to minimize undesirable climate changes and deterioration of the atmosphere’s protective functions that result from the release of carbon dioxide and other substances.

2.2.2 Health standards.

Air quality should meet State and Federal standards, whichever are more protective, for human health.

2.2.3 No decline.

Air quality should not decline from levels experienced during the early 1990s, when the community’s growth capacity was last re-examined.

2.2.4 Promote walking, biking and use of public transit use to reduce dependency on motor vehicles.

City actions shall seek to reduce dependency on gasoline- or diesel powered motor vehicles and to encourage walking, biking and public transit use.

2.2.5 Model City.

The City will be a model of pollution control efforts. It will manage its own operations to be as pollution free as possible. The City will work with other agencies and organizations to help educate citizens in ways to prevent air pollution.

THE GENERAL PLAN**2.3 Programs**

The City will do the following in support of air quality, and will encourage individuals, organizations and other agencies to do likewise:

2.3.1 Employ best available practices in City operations.

“Best available practices” means behavior and technologies that produce the least air pollutants for a desired outcome, considering available equipment, life-cycle costs, social and environmental side effects and the regulations of other agencies. If the level of air pollution continues to exceed State or Federal standards, the City will consider modifying its General Plan to comply with the standards.

2.3.2 Air quality monitoring.

Along with other agencies and organizations, the City will help the Air Pollution Control District implement the County Clean Air Plan. The City, working with involved agencies and organizations, will help implement programs to reduce the number of single occupant trips in gasoline and diesel-fueled vehicles, including restrictions on and alternatives to car access for California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo (Cal Poly) and Cuesta College. In addition, the City will monitor air quality as one measure of achieving environmental sustainability.

2.3.3 Alternative transportation/land use strategies.

Implement public transit-, bicycle- and pedestrian-oriented land use and design strategies in new development, as described in the Land Use and Circulation Elements of the General Plan to reduce the number of single-occupant trips in fossil-fueled vehicles.

2.3.4 Alternative transportation incentives.

Encourage Cal Poly students, faculty and staff, Cuesta College students, faculty and staff and San Luis Obispo County government employees to provide incentives for students and employees to use alternative transportation such as walking, public transit and bicycles, and disincentives to discourage single-occupant motor vehicle use. Examples of possible incentives may include flexible employee schedules, financial incentives for carpooling or use of public transit, preferential carpool parking and other similar measures.

2.3.5 General Plan amendment.

If General Plan policies and programs, environmental mitigation measures required as conditions of development approvals, or other programs or incentives intended to offset significant air-quality impacts of growth prove to be ineffective, the City: 1) will consider amending its General Plan to reduce its development capacity and 2) will encourage other jurisdictions to reduce theirs so that air quality will not deteriorate to unacceptable levels due to growth.

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CULTURAL HERITAGE**Cultural Background****3.0 Background**

San Luis Obispo is blessed with a rich heritage, as evidenced by many noteworthy archaeological sites and historical buildings. These cultural resources constitute a precious, yet fragile, legacy which contributes to San Luis Obispo's unique "sense of place."

Before Europeans arrived on the central coast, native Chumash and Salinan people had lived in the area for centuries. While most reminders of these peoples are now gone, evidence of their presence remains in



San Luis Obispo, circa 1890

various archaeological, historical and spiritual sites throughout the City. These sites should be respectfully protected, preserved and studied. The Town of San Luis Obispo began with the founding of Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa in 1772. Since then, the community has experienced many changes. The older buildings, historic sites and landscape features that remain help us understand the changes and maintain a sense of continuity. The City wants to preserve these cultural resources -- tangible reminders of earlier days in San Luis Obispo.

Starting in the early 1980s, the City of San Luis Obispo inaugurated a program formalizing and adopting policies to address historic and prehistoric cultural resources. The first of the City's historic districts was formed, and the City Council created the Cultural Heritage Committee (CHC). The City subsequently adopted numerous policies in its General Plan that addressed the preservation and protection of historic and prehistoric resources. About 700 historic residential and commercial buildings continue to give the community its "historic" character and charm, while adapting to owners' changing uses and needs.

After two decades, the City has made important strides with its historic preservation efforts. It has purchased and rehabilitated several historic structures, including the Jack House, the Southern Pacific Railroad Water Tower and the Southern Pacific Railroad Depot, and begun rehabilitation of several other historic railroad or adobe structures. Through the Mills Act program, the City and County of San Luis Obispo have helped owners of historic buildings maintain and improve their properties through property tax benefits.

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Nevertheless, many cultural resources are under increasing threats due to development pressures, benign neglect and lack of funding for maintenance or rehabilitation. Throughout California, older established neighborhoods are feeling the effects of growth and intensification due to contemporary development which often dwarfs or lacks the grace of older homes it replaces. Commercial areas are also feeling the impact of a changing economy with new uses, development patterns and economic realities. Underutilized sites with historic resources are often prime targets for redevelopment projects, with the resulting loss of those resources. Moreover, some cultural resources have been lost due to unclear or conflicting public policies, incomplete information and the lack of funding. The loss of significant historic, cultural and archaeological resources can reduce the community's uniqueness and make it a less desirable place in which to live, work or visit.



The historic Carnegie Library in Mission Plaza was rehabilitated in 2001

As San Luis Obispo enters the 21st century, it is prudent to look into the future to anticipate problems which may lie ahead. We have already experienced some of these same pressures, and it is reasonable to expect that we will continue to face similar challenges in the near future. Through its General Plan policies and related implementation measures, the City intends to help balance cultural resource preservation with other community goals.

3.1 Goals and Policies

3.2 Historical and architectural resources

The City will expand community understanding, appreciation and support for historic and architectural resource preservation to ensure long-term protection of cultural resources.

3.3 Policies

3.3.1 Historic preservation.

Significant historic and architectural resources should be identified, preserved and rehabilitated.

3.3.2 Demolitions.

Historically or architecturally significant buildings should not be demolished or substantially changed in outward appearance, unless doing so is necessary to remove a threat to health and safety and other means to eliminate or reduce the threat to acceptable levels are infeasible.

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3.3.3 Historical documentation.

Buildings and other cultural features that are not historically significant but which have historical or architectural value should be preserved or relocated where feasible. Where preservation or relocation is not feasible, the resource shall be documented and the information retained in a secure but publicly accessible location. An acknowledgment of the resource should be incorporated within the site through historic signage and the reuse or display of historic materials and artifacts.

3.3.4 Changes to historic buildings.

Changes or additions to historically or architecturally significant buildings should be consistent with the original structure and follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Buildings. New buildings in historical districts, or on historically significant sites, should reflect the form, spacing and materials of nearby historic structures. The street appearance of buildings which contribute to a neighborhood's architectural character should be maintained.

3.3.5 Historic districts and neighborhoods.

In evaluating new public or private development, the City should identify and protect neighborhoods or districts having historical character due to the collective effect of Contributing or Master List historic properties.

3.4 Archeological resources.

The City will expand community understanding, appreciation and support for archaeological resource preservation.

3.5 Policies**3.5.1 Archaeological resource protection.**

The City shall provide for the protection of both known and potential archaeological resources. To avoid significant damage to important archaeological sites, all available measures, including purchase of the property in fee or easement, shall be explored at the time of a development proposal. Where such measures are not feasible and development would adversely affect identified archaeological or paleontological resources, mitigation shall be required pursuant to the Archaeological Resource Preservation Program Guidelines.

3.5.2 Native American sites.

All Native American cultural and archaeological sites shall be protected as open space wherever possible.

3.5.3 Non-development activities.

Activities other than development which could damage or destroy archaeological sites, including off-road vehicle use on or adjacent to known sites, or unauthorized collection of artifacts, shall be prohibited.



Rehabilitation of the historic Michael Righetti House

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3.5.4 Archaeologically sensitive areas.

Development within an archaeologically sensitive area shall require a preliminary site survey by a qualified archaeologist knowledgeable in Native American cultures, prior to a determination of the potential environmental impacts of the project.

3.5.5 Archaeological resources present.

Where a preliminary site survey finds substantial archaeological resources, before permitting construction, the City shall require a mitigation plan to protect the resources. Possible mitigation measures include: presence of a qualified professional during initial grading or trenching; project redesign; covering with a layer of fill; excavation, removal and curation in an appropriate facility under the direction of a qualified professional.

3.5.6 Qualified archaeologist present.

Where substantial archaeological resources are discovered during construction or grading activities, all such activities in the immediate area of the find shall cease until a qualified archaeologist knowledgeable in Native American cultures can determine the significance of the resource and recommend alternative mitigation measures.

3.5.7 Native American participation.

Native American participation shall be included in the City's guidelines for resource assessment and impact mitigation. Native American representatives should be present during archaeological excavation and during construction in an area likely to contain cultural resources. The Native American community shall be consulted as knowledge of cultural resources expands and as the City considers updates or significant changes to its General Plan.

3.5.8 Protection of Native American cultural sites.

The City will ensure the protection of archaeological sites that may be culturally significant to Native Americans, even if they have lost their scientific or archaeological integrity through previous disturbance; sites that may have religious value, even though no artifacts are present; and sites that contain artifacts which may have intrinsic value, even though their archaeological context has been disturbed.

3.5.9 Archaeological site records.

The City shall establish and maintain archaeological site records about known sites. Specific archaeological site information will be kept confidential to protect the resources. The City will maintain, for public use, generalized maps showing known areas of archaeological sensitivity.

3.5.10 Sunny Acres.

Sufficient acreage should be provided around Sunny Acres to enable use of the property for a community center, urban garden, natural history museum and adjoining botanical garden, or similar uses.

3.5.11 Southern Pacific Water Tower.

The historic Southern Pacific Water Tower and adjoining City-owned land should be maintained as open space or parkland.



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3.5.12 Cultural resources and open space.

Within the city limits the City should require, and outside the city limits should encourage the County to require, public or private development to do the following where archaeological or historical resources are protected as open space or parkland:

1. Preserve such resources through easements or dedications. Subdivision parcel lines or easements shall be located to optimize resource protection. Easements as a condition of development approval shall be required only for structural additions or new structures, not for accessory structures or tree removal permits. If a historic or archaeological resource is located within an open space parcel or easement, allowed uses and maintenance responsibilities within that parcel or easement shall be clearly defined and conditioned prior to map or project approval.
2. Designate such easements or dedication areas as open space or parkland as appropriate.
3. Maintain such resources by prohibiting activities that may significantly degrade the resource.

3.6 Programs.

The City will do the following to protect cultural resources, and will encourage others to do so, as appropriate.

3.6.1 Cultural Heritage Committee.

- A. The City's Cultural Heritage Committee will:
4. Help identify, and advise on suitable treatment for archaeological and historical resources.
 5. Develop information on historic resources.
 6. Foster public awareness and appreciation of cultural resources through means such as tours, a web site, identification plaques and awards.
 7. Provide recognition for preservation and restoration efforts.
 8. Communicate with other City bodies and staff concerning cultural resource issues.
 9. Provide guidance to owners to help preservation and restoration efforts.
 10. Review new development to determine consistency with cultural resource preservation guidelines or standards.

3.6.2 Financial assistance and incentives.

The City will participate in financial assistance programs, such as low-interest loans and property tax reduction programs that encourage maintenance and restoration of historic properties.

3.6.3 Construction within historic districts.

The Cultural Heritage Committee and Architectural Review Commission will provide specific guidance on the construction of new buildings within historic districts.

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3.6.4 Post-disaster Historic Preservation.

The City will be prepared to assess the condition of historic buildings that may be damaged by disasters and to foster their restoration whenever feasible.

3.6.5 Archaeological resource preservation standards.

The City will maintain standards concerning when and how to conduct archaeological surveys, and the preferred methods of preserving artifacts.

3.6.6 Educational programs.

The City will foster public awareness and appreciation of cultural resources by sponsoring educational programs, by helping to display artifacts that illuminate past cultures and by encouraging private development to include historical and archaeological displays where feasible and appropriate.

3.6.7 Partnering for preservation.

The City will partner with agencies, non-profit organizations and citizens groups to help identify, preserve, rehabilitate and maintain cultural resources.

3.6.8 Promote adaptive reuse of historic buildings.

The City will, consistent with health, safety and basic land-use policies, apply building and zoning standards within allowed ranges of flexibility, to foster continued use and adaptive reuse of historic buildings.

3.6.9 City-owned adobes and historic structures.

The City will preserve and, as resources permit, rehabilitate City-owned historic adobes and other historic structures by aggressively seeking grants, donations, private-sector participation or other techniques that help fund rehabilitation and adaptive reuse.

3.6.10 Cultural Heritage Committee Whitepaper.

The City will implement the recommendations of the Cultural Heritage Committee's "Whitepaper", including the adoption of a historic preservation ordinance.



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FIGURE 1: CULTURAL RESOURCES

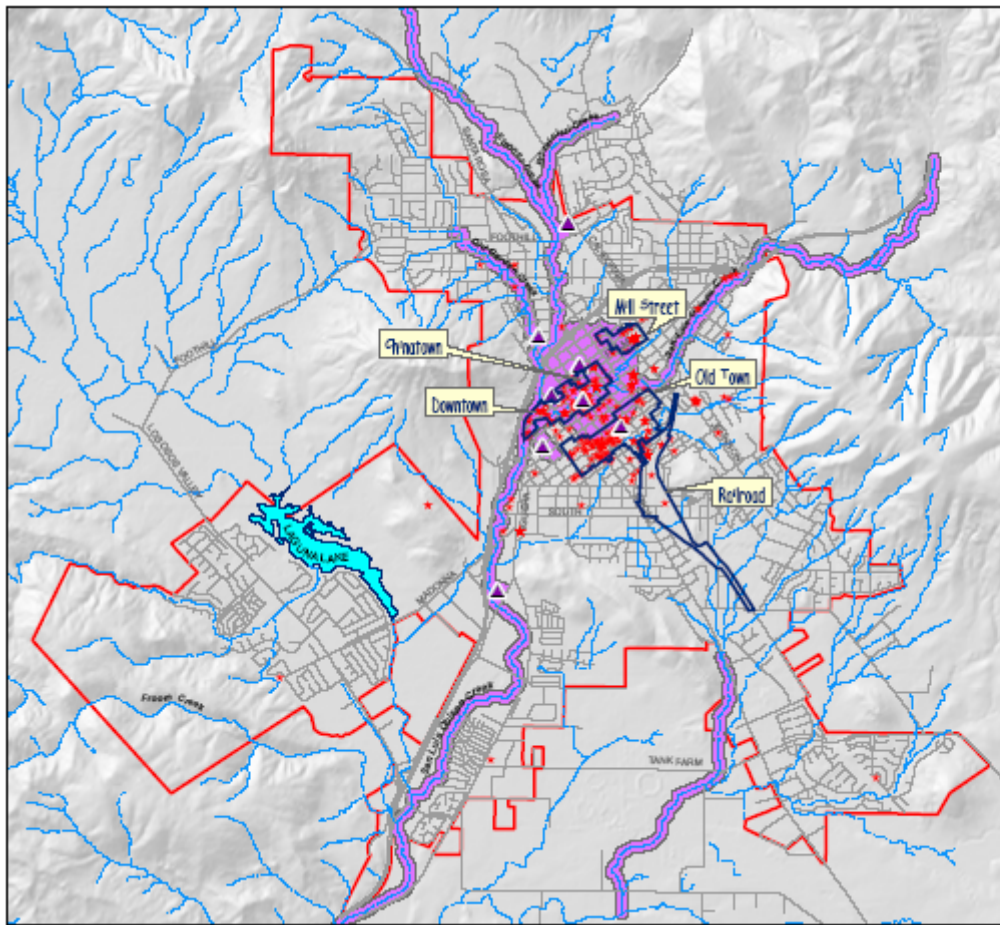


Figure 1:
Cultural Resources

- City Limit
- Creeks
- Historic Districts
- ★ Master List Historic Properties
- ▲ Burial Points
- Burial Sensitivity Areas

SLO GIS
city of
san luis obispo

0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 Miles



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ENERGY

Energy

4.0 Background

Our dependence on fossil fuels makes it difficult to avoid air and water pollution and economic uncertainty. One of the best things we can do for our environmental and economic well-being is to use energy more efficiently and shift to cleaner, renewable, locally controlled energy sources. While the City has made significant progress in energy conservation in recent years, more can be done through emerging technologies and increased emphasis on “sustainable” practices and building design in both public and private development.



Natural gas co-generation equipment at Sinsheimer Pool saves City residents energy and money by heating pool water while producing additional energy to power lights, pumps and other electrical equipment

4.1 Goals and Policies

4.2 Goal. Sustainable energy use.

Increase use of sustainable energy sources such as solar, wind and thermal energy, and reduce reliance on non-sustainable energy sources to the extent possible with available technology and resources.

4.3 Policies

4.3.1 Use of best available practices.

The City will employ the best available practices in energy conservation, procurement, use and production, and will encourage individuals, organizations and other agencies to do likewise.

“Best available practices” means behavior and technologies that reflect recommendations of specialists and that use the least energy for a desired outcome, considering available equipment, life-cycle costs, social and

environmental side effects, and the regulations of other agencies. Best available practices include use of sustainable sources. Sustainable sources are naturally renewed in a relatively short time and avoid substantial undesirable side effects. Table 1 summarizes Sustainable Energy Sources.

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TABLE 1: SUSTAINABLE ENERGY SOURCES

A. Supply Side (production)	B: Demand Side (delivery and use)	C: Combination at site (integrated System)
1. Solar thermal electric: conversion of sunlight to electricity through an intermediate generator using a pressure differential.	1. Conservation	1. Space conditioning through passive heating and cooling: simultaneous utilization of solar access, central night ventilation, use of thermal mass and efficient building envelope.
2. Wind electricity generator: without substantial harm to wildlife	2. Hydrogen: conversion of any sustainable source to an intermediate fuel, such as hydrogen produced by solar-powered electrolysis.	2. Illumination by natural light.
3. Solar photovoltaics: feeding the power grid.		3. Natural Ventilation
4. Biomass: conversion of plant material to fuel, or to electricity through combustion, in a sustained – yield cycle and with emission controls to protect air quality.		4. Solar voltaic: conversion of sunlight directly to electricity, preferred form is structure surfaces at or near the place of use.
5. Tidal Wave or thermocline power: electrical generation from the ocean’s tidal or wave action, or difference in temperature due to depth, without substantial harm to plants or wildlife.		5. Solar water heating: water heating by converting solar to thermal energy through roof- or ground-mounted collectors, generally at the place of use
6. Geothermal: a) preferred from: deep heat sources not dependent on release of brine b) secondary form: near-surfaces sources requiring release of brine.		
7. Hydropower: electrical generation from falling water, without substantial harm to wildlife, and where reservoir siltation will not eliminate the resource.		

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Use of Best Available Practices, Continued

- A. Space conditioning through earth or building thermal mass to moderate day/night differences.
- B. Space conditioning through earth mass to moderate seasonal differences.
- C. Space cooling through natural ventilation.
- D. Space cooling through reflectivity and shading.
- E. Indoor illumination by natural light.
- F. Solar space heating (direct at place of use).
- G. Solar water heating (direct at place of use).
- H. Solar voltaic (conversion of sunlight directly to electricity; preferred form is structure surfaces at or near the place of use).
- I. Solar thermal electric (conversion of sunlight to electricity through an intermediate generator using a temperature differential).
- J. Wind electricity generation, without substantial harm to wildlife.
- K. Geothermal.
 - 1. Preferred form: deep-heat sources not dependent on release of brine
 - 2. Secondary form: near-surface sources requiring release of brine
- L. Biomass: conversion of plant material to fuel, or to electricity through combustion, in a sustained-yield cycle and with emission controls to protect air quality.
- M. Hydropower: electrical generation from falling water, without substantial harm to wildlife, and where reservoir siltation will not eliminate the resource.
- N. Tidal, wave or thermocline power: electrical generation from the ocean's tidal or wave action, or difference in temperature due to depth, without substantial harm to plants or wildlife.

4.3.2 Efficient City building operation.

City buildings and facilities will be operated in the most energy-efficient manner without endangering public health and safety and without reducing public safety or service levels.

4.3.3 Energy-efficiency improvements.

The City will continue to identify energy efficiency improvement measures to the greatest extent possible, undertake all necessary steps to seek funding for their implementation and, upon securing availability of funds, implement the measures in a timely manner.

4.3.4 Use of energy efficient, renewable energy sources.

The City will promote the use of cost effective, renewable, non-depleting energy sources wherever possible, both in new construction projects and in existing buildings and facilities.

4.3.5 Cooperation with other entities.

The City will cooperate with Federal, State and local governments and other appropriate entities to accomplish energy conservation objectives throughout the state, and inform employees, its contractors, staff and the general public of the need for and methods of energy conservation.

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4.3.6 Energy efficiency and Green Building in new development.

The City shall encourage energy-efficient “green buildings” as certified by the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Program or equivalent certification, as further described in Chapter 5.5.7.

4.3.7 City Form.

The City’s form will support energy efficiency and the use of sustainable energy sources.

4.4 Policies

4.4.1 Pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly design.

Residences, work places and facilities for all other activities will be located and designed to promote travel by pedestrians and bicyclists. (also see the Land Use and Circulation Elements)

4.4.2 Alternative transportation.

The City’s transportation and circulation systems shall foster travel by modes other than motor vehicles, including walking, bicycles and public transit. (See also the Community Trip Reduction Policies in the Circulation Element)

4.4.3 Compact, high-density housing.

The City will promote higher-density, compact housing to achieve more efficient use of public facilities and services, land resources, and to improve the jobs/housing balance.

4.4.4 GOAL. Solar access.

Encourage the provision for and protection of solar access.

4.5 Policies

4.5.1 Solar access standards.

To encourage use of solar energy, reasonable solar access shall be provided and protected. The City will protect reasonable solar exposure for existing collectors and likely locations of future collectors, both active and passive. Standards for the subdivision and development of property should assure desirable solar access, as described in Table 2. Protection beyond that established by the City may be provided by recorded agreement among private parties.

TABLE 2: SOLAR ACCESS STANDARDS

Land Uses and Site Conditions	Desirable Solar Access
Residential uses up to about six dwellings per acre, on sites of one acre or more	All south walls and all roof areas should be unshaded between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. on the winter solstice.
Residential uses up to about six dwellings per acre, on sites of less than one acre.	Nearly all south walls and all roof areas should be unshaded between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. on the winter solstice.
Residential uses between six and 12 dwellings per acre, office uses and neighborhood commercial uses, on sites of	All roof areas, nearly all second-story and most first-story south walls should be unshaded between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. on

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Land Uses and Site Conditions	Desirable Solar Access
one acre or more.	the winter solstice.
Residential uses between six and 12 dwellings per acre, office uses and neighborhood commercial uses, on sites less than one acre.	Most roof areas, nearly all second-story and most first-story south walls should be unshaded between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. on the winter solstice.
Residential uses at densities greater than 12 dwellings per acre, public facilities and general commercial and industrial uses on large parcels or in newly subdivided areas.	All roof areas and most south walls should be unshaded between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. on the winter solstice.
Residential uses at densities greater than 12 dwellings per acre, public facilities, and general commercial and industrial uses within downtown and other locations previously subdivided into relatively small lots.	Most roof areas and some south walls on upper floors should be unshaded between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. on the winter solstice.

4.5.2 Subdivision design for solar access.

In subdivisions, the layout of streets and lots shall provide and protect solar exposure. To assure maximum control over potential shading features, the longest dimension of each lot should be oriented within 30 degrees of south, unless the subdivider demonstrates that for certain lots any of the following applies:

- A. The lots are large enough to allow desirable solar access, regardless of lot orientation.
- B. Buildings will be constructed as part of the tract development, and the buildings will be properly orientated, with adequate solar access.
- C. Topography makes variations from the prescribed orientation desirable to reduce grading or tree removal, or to take advantage of a setting that would favor greater reliance on early morning or late afternoon solar exposure.
- D. Topographical conditions, such as steep, north-facing slopes or shading by the mass of a hill, make solar energy use infeasible.
- E. The size of the subdivision, combined with the existing orientation of surrounding streets and lots, precludes desirable lot orientation.

4.5.3 Solar Access Easements.

Solar access easements will be required in all new subdivisions, as provided in the State of California Solar Rights Act, unless any of the following applies:

- A. The subdivision incorporates a building development plan that will assure desirable solar access.
- B. Desirable solar exposure will be protected by the City's Zoning Regulations.
- C. The subdivision establishes yard or height standards designed to assure desirable solar access, supplementary to the Zoning Regulations, which would make a system of easements for each lot unnecessary.

4.5.4 Solar collector placement.

When solar collectors are proposed as part of a development, the development plan will locate solar collectors and include features to assure adequate solar access.

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4.5.5 Solar access exceptions.

Exceptions to the standards for desirable solar access may be made if any of the following applies:

- A. Shading would be an insignificant part of the total solar exposure, in terms of area, duration or both.
- B. Structures on protected properties have an insignificant probability of being modified or replaced, and likely collector locations are sufficiently protected, in spite of shading that would normally be unacceptable, or such structures already have adequately protected collectors.
- C. Shading is between lots in a subdivision for which a customized system of solar access easements will provide an adequate level of protection.
- D. Use of solar energy is unfeasible due to topographical conditions.

4.5.6 Solar collector appearance.

The following design standards shall apply to solar collectors:

- A. Solar collectors should be compatible with the appearance of the structures that contain or support them. Features of compatibility are:
 - 1. Location within the dominant lines of the building or roof.
 - 2. Rooftop collectors match the roof plane as closely as practical; ends of mounting racks covered with an architecturally compatible material.
 - 3. Exposed mechanical, plumbing and structural components minimized; where visible, color is the same as roof, or a compatible color.
 - 4. Location minimizes need to remove trees.
 - 5. Where glare cannot be avoided by location or orientation, surface has low reflectivity.



Roof-mounted photovoltaic panels produce electricity which helps meet the Ludwick Recreation Center's energy needs

- B. Retrofitting buildings with solar collectors should be subject to the lowest level of discretionary review that will implement City policies. Within historic districts or for historically designated sites or buildings, such projects may be referred to the Cultural Heritage Committee.

4.5.7 Unwanted solar heat gain.

Sites and buildings should be designed to avoid unwanted heat gain from solar exposure. Features that provide shading at suitable times of the day and year and

generally should be "passive" or automatic, avoiding the need for occupants to regularly monitor or adjust them.

4.6 Programs

The City will do the following in support of energy sustainability, and will encourage others to do so, as appropriate.

4.6.1 Efficient City energy use.

Manage City operations for energy efficiency, including purchase and use of vehicles, equipment and materials.



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- A. Outdoor and indoor lighting.
- B. Space conditioning and water heating.
- C. Vehicles, travel and traffic flow.
- D. Office equipment.

4.6.2 Manage City operations for energy self-reliance.

Manage City operations for energy self-reliance and production of sustainable energy, consistent with primary functions such as public safety, water supply and wastewater treatment.

4.6.3 Sustainable design in City facilities.

Incorporate conservation and sustainable energy sources and features in existing and new City facilities.

4.6.4 Reduce obstacles to energy conservation.

In its review and approval of new development, the City will seek to minimize unnecessary obstacles to energy conservation and encourage use of sustainable energy sources and technologies while promoting the economic benefits of conservation in its regulation of private activities. For example, the City will encourage new residential development to provide space for outdoor clothes drying, and will not allow private restrictions on doing so.

4.6.5 Encourage sustainable employee commuting practices.

Encourage alternatives to employees commuting as occupants of individual vehicles powered by non-sustainable fuels.

4.6.6 Energy conservation education.

Educate planning and building staff and citizen review bodies on energy conservation issues, including the City's energy conservation policies, and instruct that they work with applicants to achieve the housing goals that conserve energy.

4.6.7 State Building Energy Standards.

Administer the State's building energy standards through its construction permit and inspection activities.

4.6.8 Energy-efficient project design.

Encourage energy-efficient project design by emphasizing use of daylight and solar exposure, shading and natural ventilation, as opposed to designing a particular image and relying on mechanical systems to maintain functionality and comfort. Educate City staff, citizen advisers, developers and designers on ways to exceed minimum State energy standards.

4.6.9 Solar access for new development.

Address solar access in all plans needing City discretionary approval, considering both structures and vegetation. Shading by vegetation is also subject to the California Solar Shade Control Act. This act prohibits the placement of vegetation that would shade a solar collector on another's property, if the collector meets certain height and setback criteria. The City will advise those seeking permits for solar collectors to document vegetation existing when the collector is installed or built.

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4.6.10 Retrofit City facilities for energy savings.

As funding allows, the City will retrofit existing City buildings with energy-saving features such as insulation, glazing and fluorescent lighting fixtures, and will participate in programs to encourage private property owners to do the same.

4.6.11 Financial assistance for energy efficiency improvements.

The City will actively seek all available sources of funding for implementing energy efficiency improvement and utilities infrastructure renewal projects, including federal and state budget appropriations, federal, state and private sector grant opportunities, utilities and other unique public/private sector financing arrangements.

4.6.12 Monitor energy use.

The City will monitor energy usage in major City facilities and prepare a system-wide biennial report on energy use and efficiency.

4.6.13 Prepare energy plan.

The City will prepare an energy plan leading to the long range reduction in the use of non-renewable resources and increased use of renewable resources in City services and facilities. Such a plan shall include standards for construction of new City buildings, public facilities' maintenance, water conservation, solid waste management, and energy conservation strategies in City facilities. The plan will be implemented by all City departments.

4.6.14 Adopt Green Building standards.

The City will adopt an ordinance containing requirements and incentives for innovative, environmentally friendly (also known as "green" or "sustainable") development and building projects. Examples of projects that may qualify for such incentives may include:

- A. Those incorporating innovative, technologically advanced energy-efficient design concepts significantly exceeding State of California Title 24 standards.
- B. Those utilizing "green" building materials and permaculture landscape concepts.
- C. Those containing specific, implementable and sustainable measures for reduced dependence on automobile parking demand.

Possible development incentives to be considered in this ordinance could include density bonuses, setback variations, modified street standards, reduced parking standards or similar modifications to standard requirements

4.6.15 Consider City-owned green energy utility.

As conditions and resources allow, the City may examine the potential to create a city-owned energy utility.

4.6.16 Promote technology and energy conservation businesses.

The City's Economic Development Manager should help establish the City as a center for conservation technology by working with other community organizations and individuals to attract and promote such businesses. This effort should build on existing community capacity and resources, such as that existing in local government, business groups, Cuesta College and at Cal Poly.

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4.6.17 Require solar power for new dwellings.

Within new single-family residential projects of 20 or more dwelling units, 5% of the total number of dwellings shall be built with photovoltaic solar collectors beginning in 2008; this percentage shall increase 4% each year until 2020. Multi-family residential developments shall be exempt from this requirement, except for common-use facilities such as recreation rooms, spas or swimming pools. In these cases, the common facilities shall be built with photovoltaic solar collectors.

4.6.18 County Air Pollution Control District support.

Seek the support of the San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District in calculating emission inventories and the development of balanced strategies for addressing climate protection through development of model ordinances and guidelines designed to meet the City's goals.

MATERIALS

Materials

5.0 Background

Many commonly used materials have limited natural sources and few potential substitutes if they were to be depleted. Also, finished materials embody the energy used to extract, refine, form, and transport them. These processes typically involve some land disturbance and pollution at each step. Efficient materials use, reuse and recycling therefore represent energy savings and pollution avoidance. With encouragement from citizens and from state government, progress has been made in avoiding the one-time use and discard of materials.



Curbside waste recycling and collection programs help reduce the amount of materials going to landfills and conserve valuable resources

However, inefficient recycling efforts can add to resource consumption and pollution if materials with low utility must be transported long distances or harmful components must be separated and disposed of.

Several materials, notably metals and some types of glass and paper, have economic value that justifies their recycling. For other materials, market prices alone may not be enough to avoid disposal. Modern mass-production and consumption systems make it difficult for individuals and local governments to deal with the "life cycles" of complex products and wastes. But more can be done to imitate nature's scheme for using the residue of one process as the raw material for another. Emerging ideas and technologies in "sustainable" building construction and operation offer the potential for more efficient use of finite resources, new business opportunities and enhanced public health.

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5.1 Goals and Policies**5.2 GOAL: Efficient use of materials.**

The City will use materials efficiently in its buildings and facilities, services and operations, and encourage others to do the same

5.3 GOAL: Minimize undesirable effects resulting from use of toxic or potentially toxic materials.

The City will avoid and, where possible, stop using materials which cause secondary or indirect adverse environmental or health impacts.

5.4 Policies**5.4.1 Best available practices.**

The City will employ the best available practices in materials procurement, use and recycling, and will encourage individuals, organizations and other agencies to do likewise. "Best available practices" means behavior and technologies that, considering available equipment, life-cycle costs, social and environmental side effects, and the regulations of other agencies:

- A. Use the least amount of newly refined materials for a desired outcome;
- B. Direct the largest feasible fraction of used materials to further use;
- C. Avoid undesirable effects due to further use of materials.

5.4.2 Material recycling in City facilities and operations.

The City will set a community example for waste diversion and material recycling in City facilities, services and operating systems to achieve a goal of 100 percent recycling of paper, bottles and cans and require similar goals in contracts and procurement for public goods and services and capital improvements.

5.4.3 Material recycling in private development, businesses and operations.

The City will promote waste diversion and material recycling in private development, business and operations, and will encourage businesses or nonprofit entities to provide building materials recycling and source reduction services.

5.5 Programs

The City will do the following in support of efficient materials use and recycling, and will encourage others to do so, as appropriate.



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5.5.1 Efficient use of materials in City operations.

The City will manage its operations for efficient materials use by:

- A. Substituting electronic information exchange for paper whenever feasible and cost effective.
- B. Reproducing paper documents as two-sided publications whenever cost effective

5.5.2 Promote City materials reuse and recycling.

The City will manage its operations to foster reuse and recycling by:

- A. Avoiding use of inks, papers, and plastics that inhibit recycling or that produce pollutants in preparation for recycling.
- B. Purchasing products incorporating recycled materials.
- C. Using plant trimmings for mulch and compost, while avoiding the introduction or spread of invasive, non-native species and pathogens.
- D. Making wood from tree removal available for mulch, milling, pulping or heating, depending on its characteristics and the volume available, while avoiding the introduction or spread of invasive, non-native species and pathogens. Selection of trees for City streets, parks and grounds will take into consideration their eventual disposal.
- E. Producing biosolids (sewage sludge) suitable for land application as an agricultural fertilizer or soil amendment, under scientific and health-based criteria.

5.5.3 Coordinate waste reduction and recycling efforts.

The City will coordinate local, and participate in regional, household and business waste-reduction and recycling efforts.

5.5.4 Use materials with reduced environmental impacts.

In its facilities and operations, the City will use materials and systems with reduced environmental impacts. The design team (architect/engineer) for new buildings and facilities shall recommend building materials and methods with life cycles (manufacture, installation, maintenance, repair and replacement) of reduced environmental impacts. Considerations will include energy efficiency; energy required in the manufacturing process; life-cycle duration; and maintenance and replacement costs.

5.5.5 Recycling businesses inventory.

The City will maintain an inventory of current recycling businesses and services and make it available to the public.

5.5.6 Expanded public education.

The City will expand its public education outreach efforts to raise public awareness of energy and materials conservation goals, sustainable technology, benefits and incentives.

5.5.7 Energy efficiency and Green Building in new development.

The City shall encourage material and energy-efficient “green buildings” as certified by the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Program or equivalent certification, as described below. (See also Chapter 4.3.6)

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Green Building Checklist defined: In the items below, “green building checklist” means the checklist of a green building certification system approved by the Community Development Department. For projects greater than 5,000 square feet of gross floor area, LEED is approved. For residential projects, LEED or the California Green Building Guidelines (with San Luis Obispo amendments) are approved.

- A. Submit Checklist:
 - 1. The applicant of any nonresidential project over 5000 square feet of gross floor area, or any residential project with five or more dwelling units shall submit a completed green building checklist to the Community Development Department. The applicant shall be encouraged to submit an optional narrative describing how each credit will be achieved.
 - 2. The applicant for any other development project not included above shall be encouraged to submit a completed green building checklist to the Community Development Department.
- B. CDD Comments:

The Community Development Department shall provide non-mandatory comments in regards to the submitted green building checklist as appropriate
- C. Posting of Checklist:

Completed green building checklists and optional narratives shall be posted for public education, to track success and to make useful information available to future building occupants.
- D. Checklist Goals:

All projects listed above shall be encouraged to achieve a score that would allow at least the baseline certification level of that system, but strive for greater achievement. LEED or other outside certification is not required.
- E. Projects over 60,000 Square Feet:

Developers of nonresidential projects greater than 60,000 square feet gross floor area, as further described in Chapter 17.40 of the Zoning Regulations, shall be encouraged to achieve at least a LEED Silver Certification from the US Green Building Council, or the equivalent rating using another approved green building certification system approved by the Community Development Department. One means of implementing this policy will be through development review of and Zoning Regulations regarding large commercial buildings.
- F. City Projects:

City-owned projects with a floor area of greater than 5,000 square feet gross floor area shall achieve at least a LEED Silver Certification from the US Green Building Council, or the equivalent rating using another approved green building certification system approved by the Community Development Department.
- G. Other Governmental Buildings:

All governmental agency projects within the City limits greater than 5,000 square feet gross floor area shall be encouraged to achieve at least a LEED Silver Certification from the US Green Building Council, or the equivalent rating using another approved green building certification system.

5.5.8 Recycling Facilities in New Development.

During development review, the City shall require facilities in new developments to accommodate and encourage recycling.

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NATIVE MINERALS

6.0 Background

Native minerals are those occurring in the San Luis Obispo area that have, or are expected to have, economic value. Sand, gravel and stone used in construction, and metal ores, are examples of economically valuable minerals. State guidelines and rules aim for continued accessibility to native minerals, while avoiding significant harm to the environment or human health from their extraction.

In the past, quarries and mines in the San Luis Obispo area produced basaltic stone for masonry, “red rock” for road base and surfacing, and cinnabar, an ore of mercury. No quarry or mine operations are expected to be reactivated or initiated. In the 1980s, a petroleum company asked to explore City-owned land in the Lopez Lake area. The request was denied based on the environmental qualities of the area. Since that time, no other such requests have been received, and the City’s policy on mineral extraction within City limits has remained unchanged.



In early San Luis Obispo, mines and quarries for cinnabar and other minerals were common in local hills

6.1 Goals and Policies

6.2 GOAL: Site reclamation.

Achieve environmentally responsible reclamation of past mineral-extraction sites.

6.3 Policies

6.3.1 Old mineral-extraction sites.

The City will implement the following policies and will encourage other agencies with jurisdiction to do so:

- A. Land use designations for old mineral-extraction sites shall reflect risks associated with them, and should generally be limited to “Open Space”, “Agriculture”, or “Park” designations on the Land Use Element map.
- B. Previously active mineral-extraction sites should be secured and reclaimed in conjunction with any development approvals for the land on which they are located. Securing them means preventing access that entails unacceptable risk. Reclamation means re-establishing ground contours and vegetation to the extent feasible, use of erosion control measures to enhance and protect soil stability, water and air quality, wildlife habitat values and views.

6.4 GOAL: Mining operations.

Ensure environmentally responsible operation and reclamation of any mineral extraction that may occur in the San Luis Obispo planning area.



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6.5 Policies

6.5.1 Potential mineral-extraction sites.

On sites with mineral-extraction potential, the City will:

- A. Prohibit mineral extraction within the city limits.
- B. Prohibit mineral extraction and surface entry for extraction of oil or gas within open space owned by the City in fee or as an easement.
- C. Encourage other agencies with jurisdiction to permit mineral extraction only if significant impacts to human health and the environment will be avoided and site restoration will be assured. Impacts to be addressed include air and water quality, noise, habitat disruption, aesthetics and geologic stability. All phases of the activity, including site access, must be addressed.



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Southern steelhead trout

NATURAL COMMUNITIES

7.0 Background

“Natural Communities” refers to the web of organisms, other than people, that live in the area. Many of the physical requirements for natural communities are provided by open space. Natural communities give open space much of its value for human enjoyment. Natural communities also have value in their own right, independent of their role as sustainers of the human community or as pleasant vistas. As urban uses

expand into open space, the natural cycles and interrelationships upon which natural communities depend are altered. This results in the disturbance, displacement, loss of habitat or mobility and the loss of animal or plant populations. For example, each species requires a specific range of environmental conditions to survive and reproduce. Areas within this range constitute the species’ niche or more generally, habitat. Animals move within and through habitat areas to find water, food, shelter, and to reproduce. Such movements have evolved over time to fit animals’ needs within the natural landscape. Urban development and linear barriers such as major roadways change the landscape too quickly for many animals to adapt, thus interrupting and blocking such movement. As a result, wildlife populations are separated from their historic habitat and from other breeding populations of the same species. The result: a gradual reduction in the numbers and diversity of wildlife. As a steward for the natural resources of future generations, the City must preserve habitat and the species that it supports.

San Luis Obispo is surrounded by extensive open space areas that provide habitat to many animal species. The City’s many creeks provide sheltered corridors that allow wildlife to move between habitats and open space areas. To help preserve natural communities, it is important to protect, improve and where appropriate and feasible, protect and re-establish these corridors.

7.1 Goals and Policies

7.2 GOAL: Sustainable natural populations.

The City will maintain and enhance conditions necessary to enable a species to become self-sustaining. Within the San Luis Obispo planning area, the City will seek to achieve self-sustaining populations of the plants, fish and wildlife that made up the natural communities in the area when urbanization began.

7.3 Policies

7.3.1 Protect listed species.

- A. The City will identify the location, habitat and buffer needs of species listed for protection. This information will be developed by qualified people early in the planning and development review process.
- B. The City will establish and maintain records on the location of listed species. The City will maintain, for public use, generalized maps showing known



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locations of listed species. Specific site information may be kept confidential to protect the resources.

- C. The City will comply with State and Federal requirements for listed species.
- D. The City will protect listed species through its actions on: land-use designations; development standards; development applications; location, design, construction and maintenance of creeks, City roads and facilities; and on land that the City owns or manages.
- E. City actions that could impact listed species shall be consistent with mitigation policies in Chapter 8.6.3. Subject to the approval of agencies with jurisdiction, the City may approve a project where mitigation requires relocation of listed species, but only if there is no practical alternative and relocation is limited to individuals or small parts of a larger population, not the entire remaining population of a species. (If an agency with jurisdiction determines that relocation of an entire population is needed for its survival regardless of a project's development, the City will help with the relocation)
- F. Species listed for protection" are:

1 **Classified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as:**

- a) "Endangered" - In danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.
- b) "Threatened" - Likely to become endangered without protection and management.
- c) "Proposed Endangered" or "Proposed Threatened" - Presently being considered for endangered status.
- d) "Candidate, category 1" - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has sufficient data to support listing as endangered.
- e) "Candidate, category 2" - Needs U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service further data on threats.

2 **Classified by the California Department of Fish and Game as:**

- a) "Endangered" - Prospects for survival are in immediate jeopardy.
- b) "Threatened" - Likely to become endangered without protection and management.
- c) "Rare" - May become endangered if present environment worsens. (only refers to plants)
- d) "Species of Special Concern" - Are not rare on a State scale, but are found in limited locations.

3 **Classified by the California Native Plant Society as:**

- a) "List 1A, Plants of Highest Priority" - Presumed extinct in California.
- b) "List 1B, Plants of Highest Priority" - Plants rare and endangered in California and elsewhere.
- c) "List 2" - Plants rare and endangered in California, but common elsewhere.
- d) "List 3" - Plants about which more information is needed.
- e) "List 4" - Plants of limited distribution (a watch list).





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- 4 ***Not listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Department of Fish and Game or the California Native Plant Society, but which can be shown to meet the criteria of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, Section 15380, "Endangered, Rare or Threatened Species."***

7.3.2 Species of local concern.

The City will:

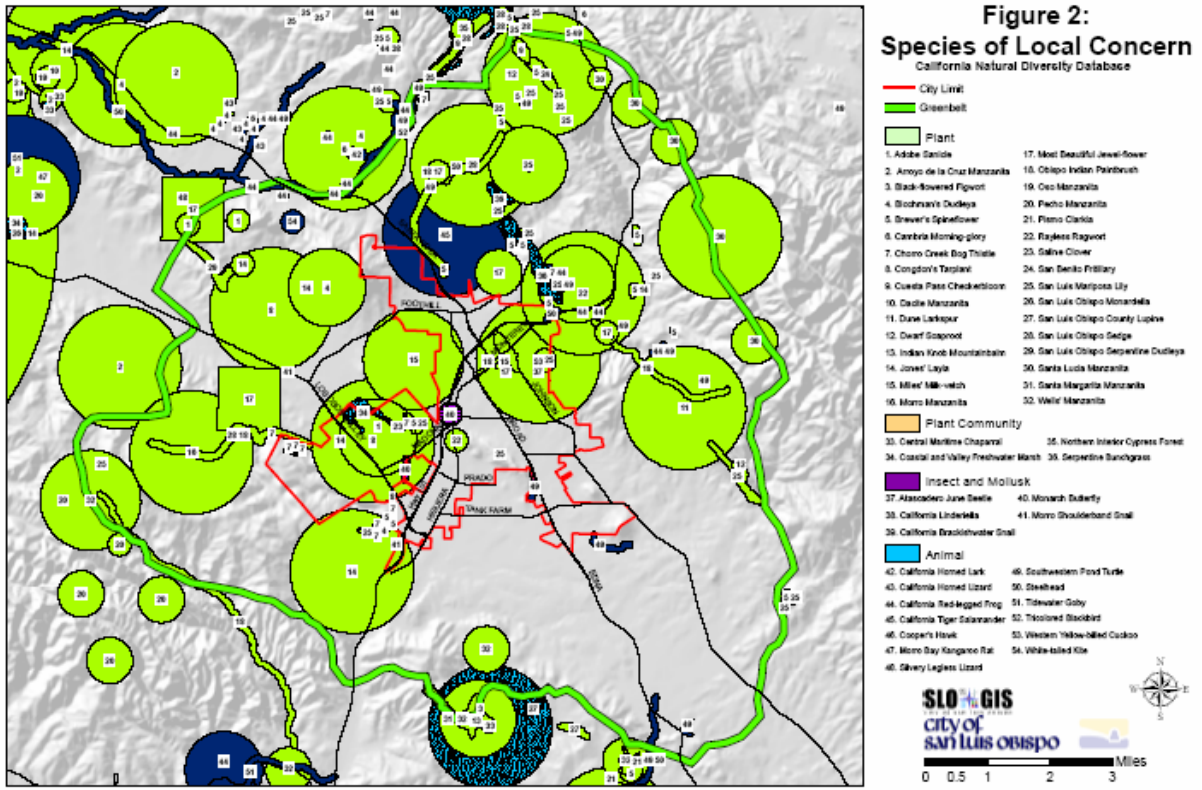
- A. Maintain healthy populations of native species in the long term, even though they are not listed for protection under State or Federal laws. These "species of local concern" are at the limit of their range in San Luis Obispo, or threats to their habitat are increasing.
- B. Identify the location, habitat and buffer needs of species of local concern. This information will be developed by qualified people early in the planning and development review process. (These species are listed in Appendix A, which may be revised by the City's Natural Resources Manager or other biological resource professional upon public notice. Anyone may nominate species for the list.)
- C. Protect species of local concern through: its actions on land use designations, development standards, development applications; the location, design, construction and maintenance of City facilities; land that the City owns or manages.
- D. Encourage individuals, organizations and other agencies to protect species of local concern within their areas of responsibility and jurisdiction.
- E. Protect sensitive habitat, including creeks, from encroachment by livestock and human activities.

7.3.3 Wildlife habitat and corridors.

Continuous wildlife habitat, including corridors free of human disruption, shall be preserved and where necessary, created by interconnecting open spaces, wildlife habitat and corridors. To accomplish this, the City will:

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FIGURE 2: SPECIES OF CONCERN



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- A. Require public and private developments, including public works projects, to evaluate animal species and their movements within and through development sites and create habitats and corridors appropriate for wildlife.
- B. Plan for connectivity of open spaces and wildlife habitat and corridors using specific area plans, neighborhood plans, subdivision maps or other applicable planning processes, consistent with Open Space Guidelines.
- C. Coordinate with San Luis Obispo County and adjoining jurisdictions, federal and state agencies such as Caltrans to assure regional connectivity of open space and wildlife corridors.
- D. Preserve and expand links between open spaces and creek corridors, as shown in Figure 3.

7.4 GOAL: Trees and other plants

Protect, preserve and create the conditions that will promote the preservation of significant trees and other vegetation, particularly native California species.

7.5 Policies**7.5.1 Protection of significant trees.**

Significant trees, as determined by the City Council upon the recommendation of the Tree Committee, Planning or Architectural Review Committee, are those making substantial contributions to natural habitat or to the urban landscape due to their species, size, or rarity. Significant trees, particularly native species, shall be protected. Removal of significant trees shall be subject to the criteria and mitigation requirements in Chapter 8.6.3. Oak Woodland communities in the Greenbelt and in open space areas shall be protected.

7.5.2 Use of native California plants in urban landscaping.

Landscaping should incorporate native plant species, with selection appropriate for location.

7.5.3 Heritage Tree Program.

The City will continue a program to designate and help protect “heritage trees.”

7.5.4 Preservation of grassland communities and other habitat types.

Grassland communities and other habitat types in the Greenbelt and in designated open space areas shall be preserved.

7.5.5 Soil conservation and landform modification.

Public and private development projects shall be designed to prevent soil erosion, minimize landform modifications to avoid habitat disturbance and conserve and reuse on-site soils.

7.5.6 Minimize synthetic or organic environmental toxins.**7.6 Policies****7.6.1 Environmental toxins.**

The City will avoid the use of synthetic organic chemicals unless there is no practical alternative, and support use of integrated pest management techniques. When the use of a synthetic organic chemical cannot be avoided, the material shall

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be selective (its effect limited to the target species so far as possible), and it shall be applied selectively.

7.7 Programs**7.7.1 Protect natural communities.**

The City will do the following in support of natural communities and will encourage individuals, organizations, and other agencies to take the same actions within their areas of responsibility and jurisdiction:

7.7.2 Implement the Natural Communities policies above.**7.7.3 Participate in any area-wide planning efforts such as Habitat Conservation Plans under the U.S. Endangered Species Act.****7.7.4 Participate in environmental review conducted by other agencies for projects that could affect natural communities in the San Luis Obispo planning area.****7.7.5 Develop and maintain current benchmark information on habitat types and conditions.**

For listed species, species of local concern and California Native Plant Society listed species, develop and maintain benchmark information on the known and likely locations of populations, population number and density estimates, limiting factors, environmental threats and other pertinent information for use in planning and environmental review.

7.7.6 Replace invasive, non-native vegetation with native vegetation.

The City and private development will protect and enhance habitat by removing invasive, non-native vegetation that detracts from habitat values and by replanting it with native California plant species. The Natural Resources Manager will prioritize projects and enlist the help of properly trained volunteers to assist in non-native vegetation removal and replanting when appropriate.

7.7.7 Preserve ecotones.

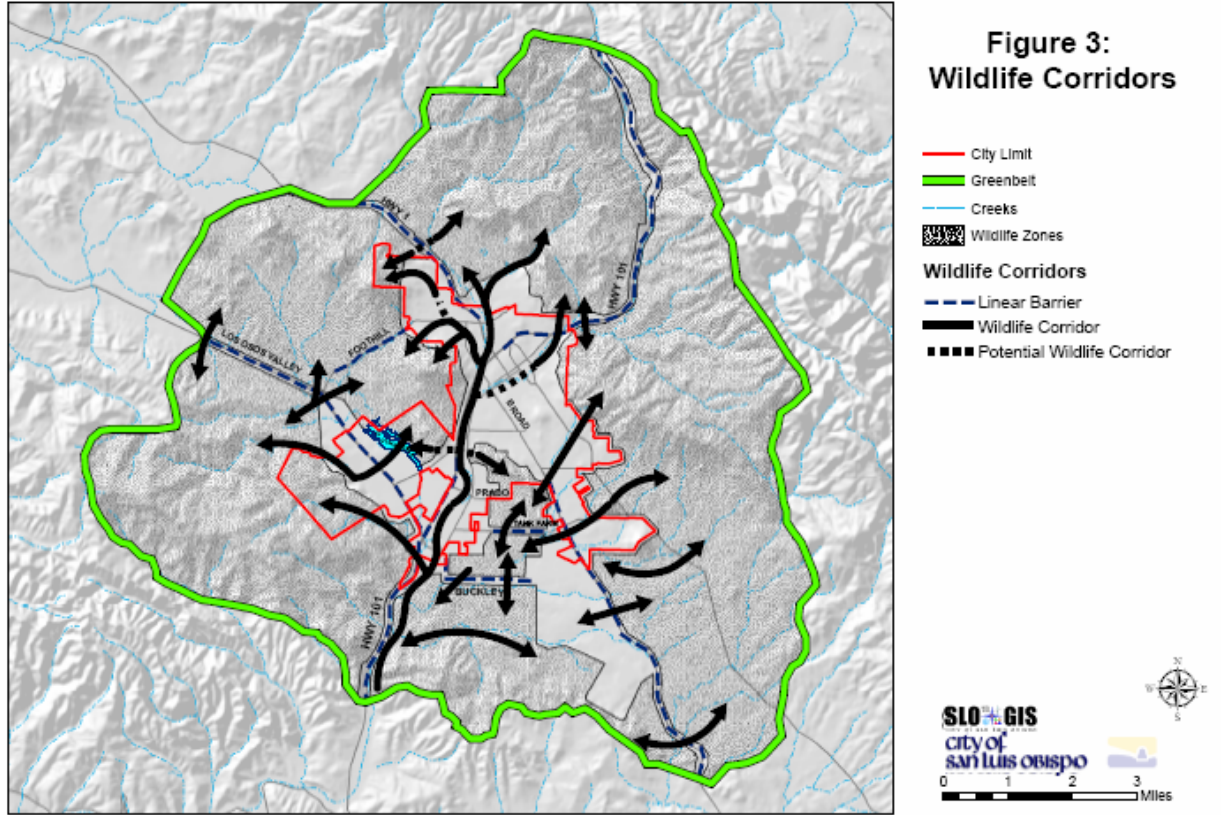
Condition or modify development approvals to ensure that “ecotones,” or natural transitions along the edges of different habitat types, are preserved and enhanced because of their importance to wildlife. Natural ecotones of particular concern include those along the margins of riparian corridors, marshlands, vernal pools, and oak woodlands where they transition to grasslands and other habitat types.

7.7.8 Protect wildlife corridors.

Condition development permits in accordance with applicable mitigation measures to ensure that important corridors for wildlife movement and dispersal are protected. Features of particular importance to wildlife include riparian corridors, wetlands, lake shorelines, and protected natural areas with cover and water. Linkages and corridors shall be provided to maintain connections between habitat areas.

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Figure 3: Wildlife Corridors





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7.7.9 Creek Setbacks.

As further described in the Zoning Regulations, the City will maintain creek setbacks to include: an appropriate separation from the physical top of bank, the appropriate floodway as identified in the Flood Management Policy, native riparian plants or wildlife habitat and space for paths called for by any City-adopted plan (Figure 4). In addition, creek setbacks should be consistent with the following:

- A. The following items should be no closer to the wetland or creek than the setback line: buildings, streets, driveways, parking lots, above-ground utilities, and outdoor commercial storage or work areas.
- B. Development approvals should respect the separation from creek banks and protection of floodways and natural features identified in part A above, whether or not the setback line has been established.
- C. Features which normally would be outside the creek setback may be permitted to encroach where there is no practical alternative, to allow reasonable development of a parcel, consistent with the Conservation and Open Space Element.
- D. Existing bridges may be replaced or widened, consistent with policies in this Element. Removal of any existing bridge or restoration of a channel to more natural conditions will provide for wildlife corridors, traffic circulation, access, utilities, and reasonable use of adjacent properties.

7.7.9 Tree Committee.

The Tree Committee will help implement Natural Communities policies through expanded tree preservation and planting programs.

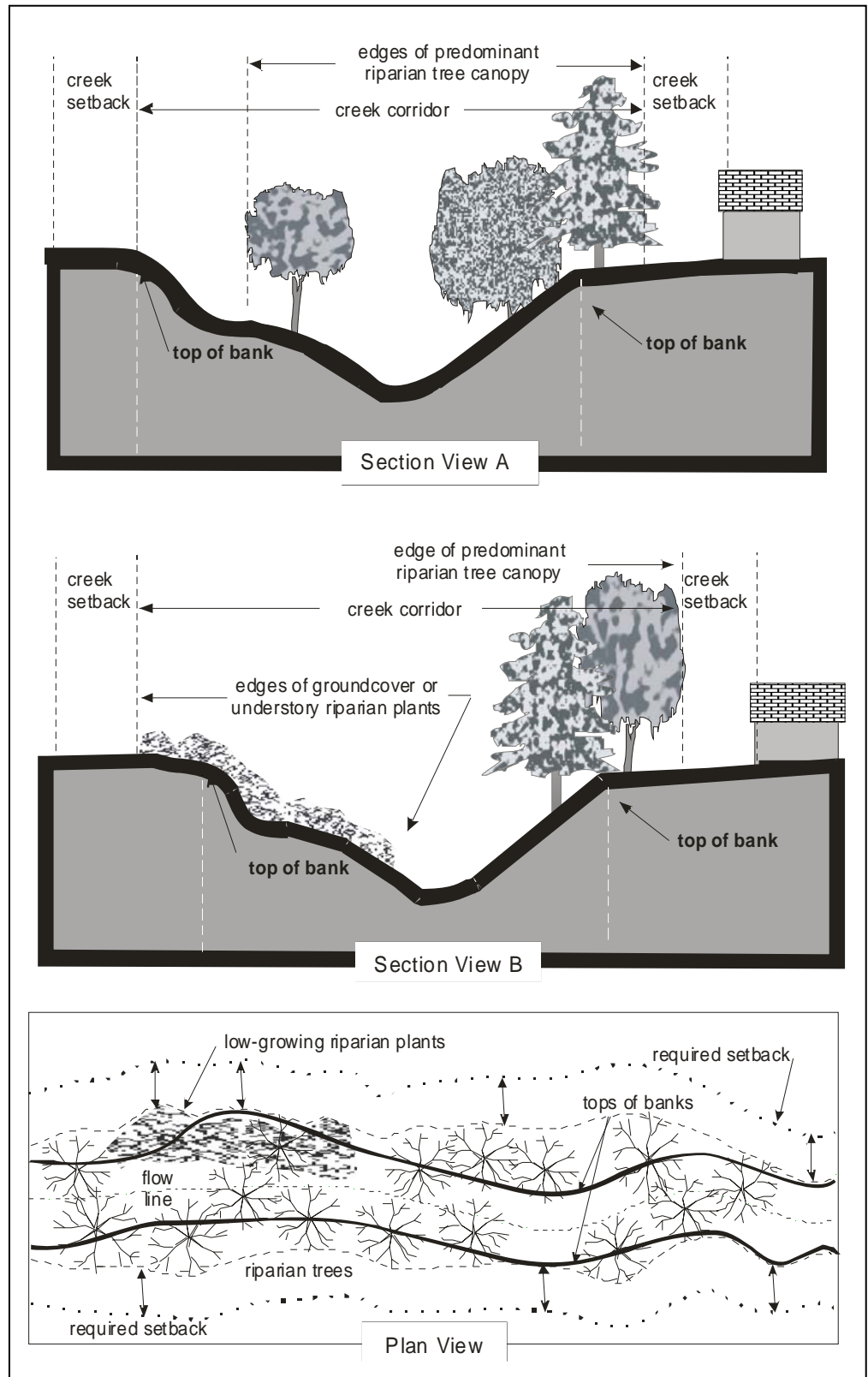


Mature Coast Live Oak on the lower flanks of Bishop Peak



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FIGURE 4: CREEK CORRIDOR AND SETBACKS





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The Morros of San Luis Obispo with Chorro Valley and Morro Bay in the distance, with State Highway 1 crossing diagonally

OPEN SPACE

Background.

San Luis Obispo's desirability as a place to live, visit and do business is closely tied to its scenic character, environmental quality and surrounding open space. This picturesque valley community, traversed by hillsides and creeks and surrounded by mountains, farmlands and oak woodlands has a unique scenic character. San Luis Obispo's charm and character have enriched residents, attracted newcomers and supported a healthy tourist industry. It is this character, defined in large measure by the City's open spaces and Greenbelt, which must be protected for present and future generations while allowing for sufficient urban growth.

As discussed in the Land Use Element's Preamble, Vision and Community Goals, community decisions must respect and protect open space. As explained below, the Greenbelt and open space are tools for preserving habitat, protecting air and water quality, protecting view sheds and defining the City's urbanized boundaries. San Luis Obispo's future must be compatible with the preservation of its open spaces -- hills, creeks, farmlands, its historic resources and other environmental assets. Without these, San Luis Obispo's charm and character will be lost.

Understanding open space.

Unless noted otherwise, this element uses the term "open space" generally -- that is, to refer to any land or water area that remains in a predominantly natural or undeveloped state and which is generally free of structures, inside or outside City limits, within the San Luis Obispo Planning Area. As more precisely described in the Land Use Element, such lands protect and preserve the community's natural and historical resources, define the urban boundary, and provide visual and physical relief from urban development. Open spaces may consist of small portions of a parcel such as a Small Wilderness Preservation Area, or large tracts of land. Such lands may include: prime agricultural soils, range and

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farmland; creeks, marshes, watershed and floodplains; scenic resources; plant and animal habitat; historic and archaeological resources; and passive recreation areas. Open space is, however, a broad term and often applied to other situations. For example, going from the general to most specific sense of the term, open space includes:

- A. Undeveloped or mostly undeveloped lands that are generally free of structures, including privately-owned agricultural land, “Rural Lands” under County of San Luis Obispo jurisdiction, government-owned lands, and lands held by land trusts or other non-profit entities. These lands appear to be open space but may or may not have any official open space protection. The City’s “Greenbelt” consists mostly of these rural lands.
- B. Lands designated as “Open Space” in the General Plan Land Use Element Map. These can be under either public or private ownership, either inside or outside the City limits. Such designation does not provide any official protection for lands outside the City limits unless they are owned by the City or have open space easements over them.
- C. Lands designated as “Interim Open Space” in the General Plan Land Use Element Map. These are lands to be kept open for an indefinite period until constraints (such as flooding or access) can be resolved and urban development or Open Space designation is appropriate.
- D. Lands owned or controlled by the City and intended for long term preservation of agricultural, natural resources, wildlife habitat, cultural resources, passive recreation, visual resources, watershed and for other environmental purposes.

Related terms that are often used interchangeably with open space include the terms Greenbelt, Conservation/Open Space zone and Agriculture. “Greenbelt” refers to a geographic area, shown in Figure 5 of the Conservation and Open Space Element, within which the City seeks to use open space as a tool to achieve multiple community objectives, such as soil and water conservation, open space preservation, wildlife enhancement, growth management, public safety, passive recreation, view preservation and clearly defined urban boundaries. The second is “Conservation/Open Space Zone”, shown as “C/OS” zoning in the Official Zoning Map. Properties zoned C/OS are subject to specific provisions and land use standards under the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations. Agriculture is land where there has been a history of agricultural cultivation or keeping of livestock, which remains generally open and is designated as Agriculture, Open Space or Interim Open Space in the General Plan Land Use Element Map.

8.0 Goals and Policies

8.1 Greenbelt. Open space outside the urban area

Secure and maintain a healthy and attractive Greenbelt around the urban area, comprised of diverse and connected natural habitats, and productive agricultural land that reflects the City’s watershed and topographic boundaries.

8.2 Policies

8.2.1 Open space preserved.

The City will preserve as open space or agriculture the undeveloped and agricultural land outside the urban reserve line, including the designated Greenbelt as shown in Figure 5, and will encourage individuals, organizations and other agencies to do likewise.



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8.2.2 GOAL: Open space within the urban area.

Within the urban area, the City will secure and maintain a diverse network of open land encompassing particularly valuable natural and agricultural resources, connected with the landscape around the urban area. Particularly valuable resources are:

- A. Creek corridors, including open channels with natural banks and vegetation.
- B. Laguna Lake and its undeveloped margins.
- C. Wetlands and vernal pools.
- D. Undeveloped land within the Urban Reserve not intended for urban uses.
- E. Grassland communities and woodlands.
- F. Wildlife habitat and corridors for the health and mobility of individuals and of the species.
- G. The habitat of species listed as threatened or endangered by the State or Federal governments.
- H. Prime agricultural soils and economically viable farmland (Figure 10).
- I. Groundwater recharge areas.
- J. Historically open-space settings for cultural resources, native and traditional landscapes.
- K. Hills, ridgelines and the Morros.
- L. Scenic rock outcroppings and other significant geological features.
- M. Unique plant and animal communities, including "species of local concern."

8.3 Policies

8.3.1 Open space within the urban area.

The City will preserve the areas listed in Goal 8.22, and will encourage individuals, organizations, and other agencies to do likewise. The City will designate these areas as Open Space or Agriculture in the General Plan.

8.3.2 Open-space buffers.

When activities close to open space resources within or outside the urban area could harm them, the City will require buffers between the activities and the resources. The City will actively encourage individuals, organizations and other agencies to follow this policy. Buffers associated with new development shall be on the site of the development, rather than on neighboring land containing the open space resource. Buffers provide distance in the form of setbacks, within which certain features or activities are not allowed or conditionally allowed. Buffers shall also use techniques such as planting and wildlife-compatible fencing. Buffers shall be adequate for the most sensitive species in the protected area, as determined by a qualified professional and shall complement the protected area's habitat values. Buffers shall be required in the following situations:

- A. Between urban development -- including parks and public facilities-- and natural habitats such as creeks, wetlands, hillsides and ridgelines, Morros, scenic rock outcrops and other significant geological features, and grassland communities, to address noise, lighting, storm runoff, spread of invasive, non-native species, and access by people and pets (see also the Safety Element for "defensible space" next to wildland fire areas).
- B. Between urban development and agricultural operations, to address dust, noise, odors, chemical use, and access by people and pets.
- C. Between agricultural operations and natural habitat, to address noise, chemical use, sediment transport, and livestock access.
- D. Between new development and cultural resources, to address visual compatibility and access by people.



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- E. Between new development and scenic resources or the greenbelt, to address view blockage, lighting and noise, and visual transition from urban character to rural character.
- F. Urban development or uses located adjacent to the Urban Reserve Line (URL) to provide a transition to open space or greenbelt areas. Transition areas should add to the preservation of open space lands or resources. At a minimum, a 50 foot transition area (preserved in essentially a natural state) shall be provided within the project along the project boundary with the URL, unless the transition area is defined elsewhere in this Element.



Open space buffers provide a transition between urban development and contiguous wildlife habitat areas

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FIGURE 5: GREEN BELT

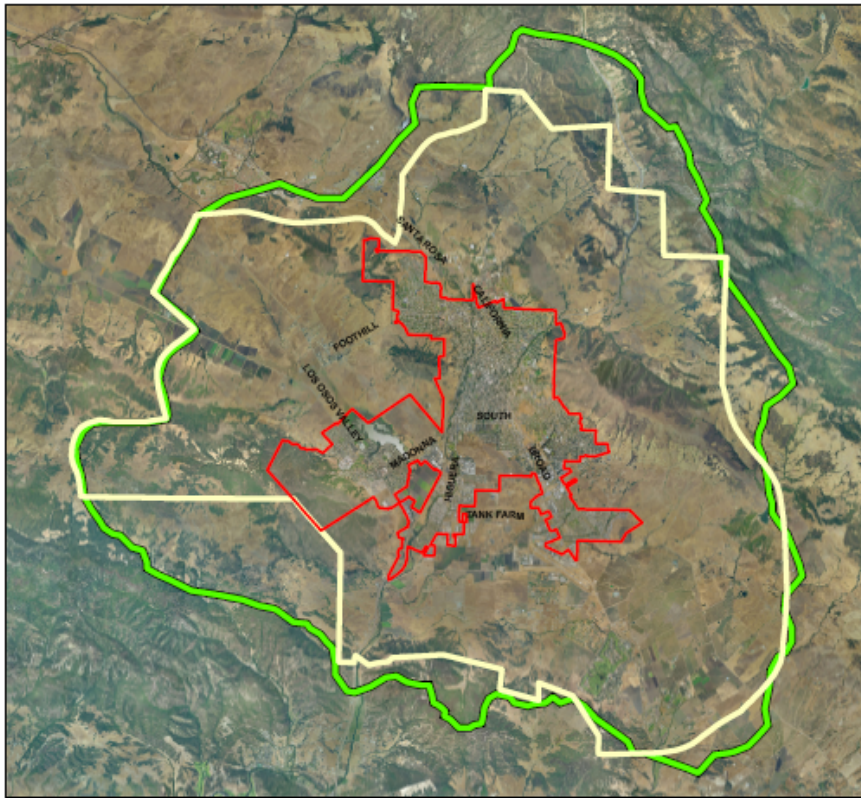


Figure 5:
Greenbelt Boundaries

- City Limit
- Greenbelt Boundary
- Previous Greenbelt Boundary

SLO GIS
city of
san luis obispo

0 0.5 1 2 3 Miles



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FIGURE 6: OPEN SPACE

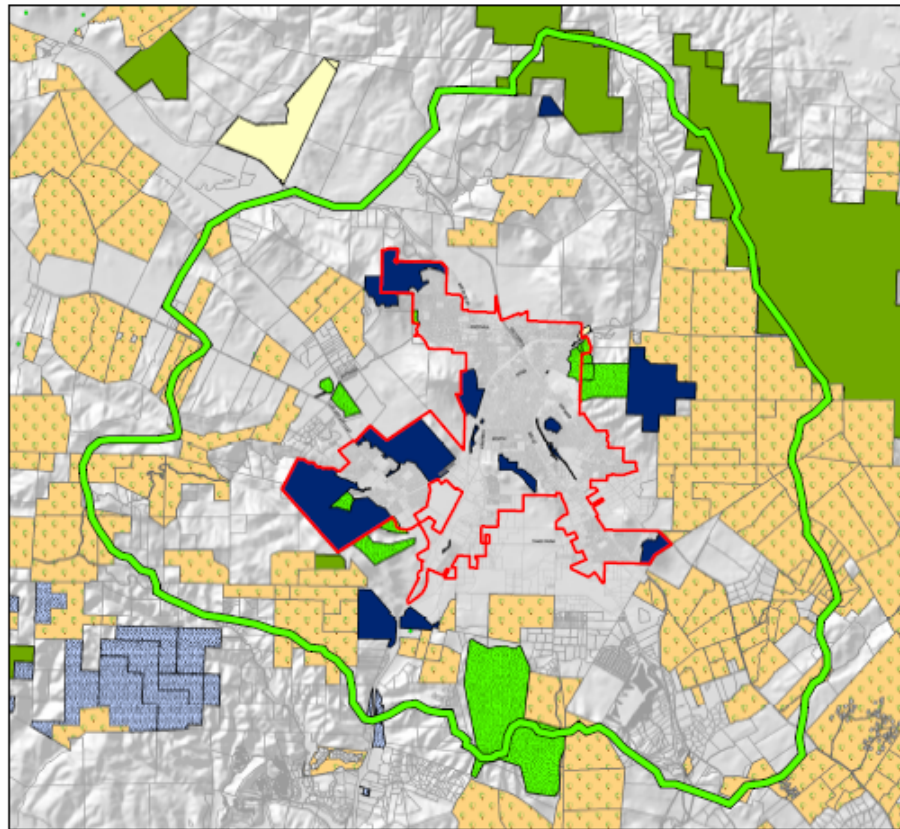


Figure 6:
Open Space

- City Limit
- Greenbelt
- Conservation Easement
- City of SLO Open Space
- Williamson Act
- Federal Open Space
- County Parks
- Private Land Trust

SLO GIS
city of
san luis obispo

0 0.5 1 2 3 Miles

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8.3.3 Open space for safety.

Secure open space where development would be unsafe. Generally, the following locations are considered to be unsafe:

- A. Areas within the most restrictive aviation safety zone as defined in the Airport Land Use Plan.
- B. Land straddling active or potentially active earthquake faults.
- C. Land where risks of ground shaking, slope instability, settlement, or liquefaction cannot be adequately mitigated.
- D. Areas subject to flooding, where the frequency, depth, or velocity of floodwaters poses an unacceptable risk to life, health, or property.
- E. Areas of high or extreme wildland fire hazard.

8.4 Policies**8.4.1 Open space for safety.**

The City will preserve as Open Space, or as Agriculture, the areas listed in Goal 8.23 and will encourage individuals, organizations, and other agencies to do likewise. (See also the Safety Element.)

8.4.2 GOAL: Open spaces access and restoration.

The City intends to allow public access to open space that fosters knowledge and appreciation of open space resources without harming them and without exposing the public to unacceptable risk. The main goal is to protect open space and wildlife habitat, with a secondary goal of providing passive recreation where it will not harm the environment.

8.5 Policies**8.5.1 Public access.**

Public access to open space resources, with interpretive information, should be provided when doing so is consistent with protection of the resources, and with the security and privacy of affected landowners and occupants. Access will generally be limited to non-vehicular movement, and may be visually or physically restricted in sensitive areas. Public access to or through production agricultural land, or through developed residential lots, will be considered only if the owner agrees (Land for active recreation is typically designated "Park" in the General Plan Land Use Map). The City shall also designate open space areas that are not intended for human presence or activity.

8.5.2 Creekside trails.

Creekside trails shall not be established in or across from existing, substantially developed residential areas of the City (such as the San Luis Drive area) where such trails could create a compatibility or privacy conflict with surrounding land uses.

8.5.3 Open-space enhancement and restoration.

The City will enhance and restore open space resources identified in Goals 8.21, 8.22 and 8.23, and will encourage individuals, organizations and other agencies to do likewise.

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8.5.4 Fire prevention activities.

Except in an emergency, fire prevention activities such as fuel clearance or thinning, grading, prescribed burns or other activities shall be conducted pursuant to an approved Conservation Plan, and under the supervision of the Natural Resources Manager and Fire Marshall. Habitat preservation shall be given equal priority with fire prevention.

8.5.5 Passive Recreation.

The City will consider allowing passive recreation where it will not degrade or significantly impact open space resources and where there are no significant neighborhood compatibility impacts, in accordance with an approved open space conservation plan. Passive recreation activities may include: hiking, nature study, bicycle use, rock climbing, horseback riding or other passive recreational activities as permitted and regulated in the Open Space Ordinance.

8.5.6 Determination of appropriate uses for City-owned open space.

Determination of the appropriate land management practices and the recreational uses of City-owned open space lands shall be made on an area-specific basis, based upon the policies in the Conservation and Open Space Element, the Open Space Ordinance (SLOMC 12.22), and the adopted "Conservation Guidelines for City-Owned Open Space Lands." These policies will be applied through the public planning and review process specified in the Conservation Guidelines, and will guide the preparation and adoption of conservation plans for City-owned open space properties.

8.5.7 GOAL: Open space mitigation.

The City will avoid the loss of and require mitigation for the loss of open space resources.

8.6 Policies**8.6.1 Loss of open space.**

The City may permit loss of an open space resource as described in Goals 8.21 and 8.22 only when:

- A. Preserving the resource would permanently deprive the landowner of all reasonable use, and acquisition by the City or a conservation organization is not feasible, or
- B. There is a demonstrated need, based on public health, safety, or welfare, and there is no practical alternative to loss of the resource, or
- C. The resource is on a small parcel essentially surrounded by urban development, and the development contributes to the protection of agricultural land in the urban reserve or greenbelt through transfer of development credit, dedication of open space easements or fee ownership, direct funding for open space acquisition or another equally effective method, as further described in the Land Use Element.

8.6.2 Extent of open space loss.

The extent of loss or degree of harm to the resource shall be minimized, consistent with the justifications for any loss provided above. Where creeks must be modified for flood protection or bank stability, the modification shall be patterned after natural conditions to the maximum extent feasible.

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8.6.3 Required mitigation.

Loss or harm shall be mitigated to the maximum extent feasible. Mitigation must at least comply with Federal and State requirements. Mitigation shall be implemented and monitored in compliance with State and Federal requirements, by qualified professionals, and shall be funded by the project applicant.

- A. For natural habitat that is relatively limited in extent (such as riparian or wetland habitat) mitigation shall consist of creating twice the area of habitat lost, of equal quality, in the following order of preference:
 1. The same kind on the same site.
 2. The same kind on a different site (the site shall be within the San Luis Obispo planning area).
 3. A similar kind (such as seasonal wetland in place of freshwater marsh) on the same site.
 4. A similar kind on a different site (the site shall be within the San Luis Obispo Planning Area).



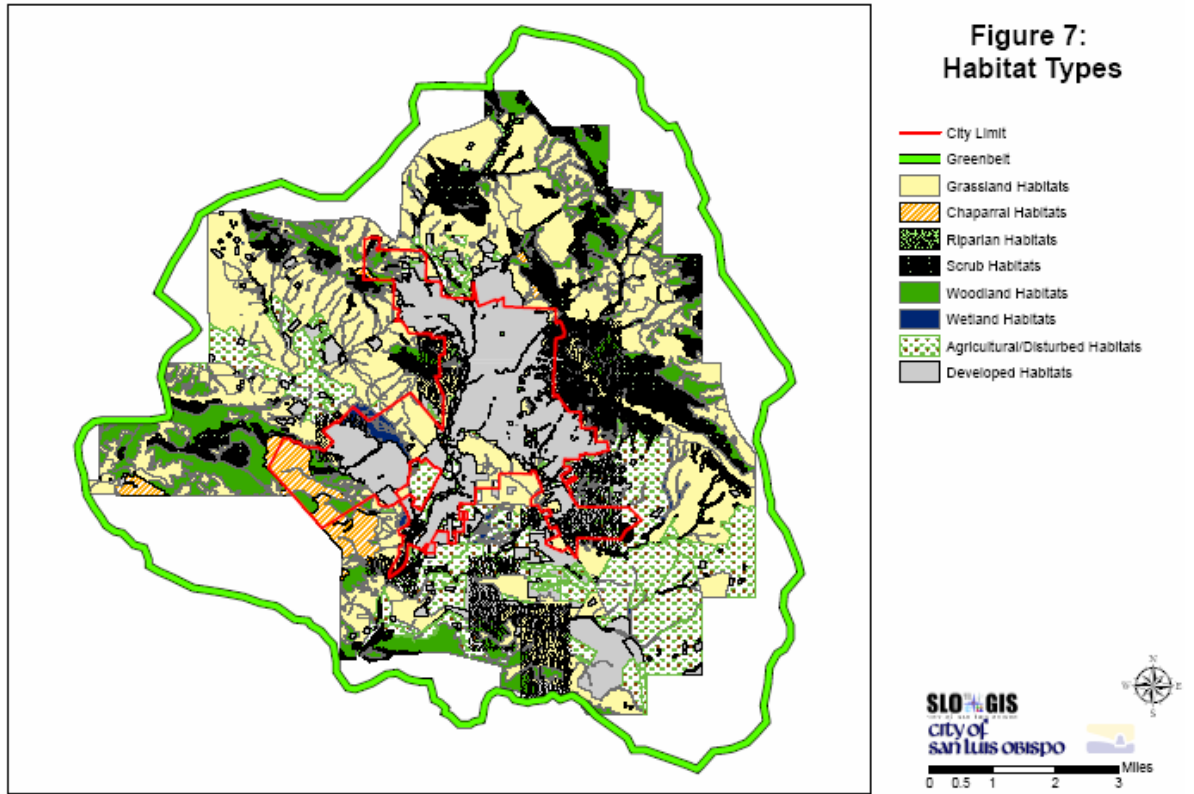
View of Cuesta Pass, looking north along State Highway 101

- B. Habitat created as mitigation should be located and designed to minimize the need for long-term artificial support (such as supplying wetlands from a well requiring energy and maintenance).
- C. For a widespread habitat type or for farmland, mitigation shall consist of permanently protecting an equal area of equal quality, which does not already have permanent protection, within the San Luis Obispo Planning Area.
- D. For projects involving enlargement of the urban reserve, mitigation shall consist of permanently protecting an area not previously protected, that is located and that has sufficient size (generally four times the area to be developed) to secure a permanent edge to the city.



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FIGURE 7: HABITAT TYPES





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- E. Individual small projects, each with an incremental impact on an extensive resource, may provide mitigation through payment of a fee, to be used for protecting that resource within the San Luis Obispo planning area.
- F. The City may establish or participate in a “mitigation bank,” through which resources are protected in a consolidated location ahead of the need to mitigate impacts of individual, small projects. The City will work with other agencies to assure successful operation of any mitigation bank that is established.
- G. Any development that is allowed on a site designated as Open Space or Agriculture, or containing open-space resources, shall be designed to minimize its impacts on open space values on the site and on neighboring land.
 - 1. Hillside development shall comply with the standards of the Land Use Element, including minimization of grading for structures and access, and use of building forms, colors, and landscaping that are not visually intrusive. (See also Chapter 9.21.1)
 - 2. Creek corridors, wetlands, grassland communities, other valuable habitat areas, archaeological resources, agricultural land, and necessary buffers should be within their own parcel, rather than divided among newly created parcels (Figure 8). Where creation of a separate parcel is not practical, the resources shall be within an easement. The easement must clearly establish allowed uses and maintenance responsibilities in furtherance of resource protection.
 - 3. The City will encourage the County not to create new parcels within the greenbelt, with the exception of those permitted under the County’s agriculture cluster incentive. Outside of cluster districts, allowed parcel sizes within the greenbelt should be no smaller, and the number of dwellings allowed on a parcel should be no greater than as designated in the September 2002 San Luis Obispo Area Plan and related County codes.

The City will encourage the County to adopt and implement a mandatory cluster district for appropriate areas of the Greenbelt under County jurisdiction to preserve open space qualities, consistent with this Element.

The City will encourage other agencies to follow these policies.

8.7 Programs

8.7.1 Protect open space resources.

The City will take the following actions to protect open space, and will encourage individuals, organizations, and other agencies to take the same actions within their areas of responsibility and jurisdiction:

- A. Maintain the urban reserve line location, except where a relatively small enlargement of the urban area is tied to permanent protection of substantial open land that did not previously have assured protection.
- B. Promote open space protection by annexing and applying Conservation and Open Space (C/OS) and Agriculture zoning to private property where appropriate and consistent with General Plan goals and policies.
- C. Set conditions of subdivision and development approvals consistent with General Plan goals and policies.



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- D. Acquire land or interests in land for open space, pursuant to City Open Space Guidelines and acquisition priorities. (See also Appendix B, "Acquisition of Open Space.")
 - 1. Obtain dedications of fee ownership or easements as gifts or in exchange for development approvals.
 - 2. Seek and use grants, donations, other revenue sources, and long-term financing mechanisms to purchase fee ownership or easements. The City will maintain annual funding for open space acquisition and protection, and will explore all potential funding sources and other creative incentive programs, including general obligation bonds, sales tax increase, property transfer tax, assessment districts, tax incentives, and state and federal loans and grants.
 - 3. Advocate countywide planning and funding for open space protection.
- E. Manage its open space holdings and enforce its open space easements, consistent with General Plan goals and policies and the Open Space Ordinance. (See also Appendix C, "Management of Open Space.")
- F. Encourage transfer of development credit from open lands to lands designated for development, or retirement of development credit.
- G. Locate, design and operate facilities consistent with General Plan goals and policies.
- H. Encourage sustainable agricultural practices to protect the health of human and natural communities, and to minimize conflicts between agriculture and urban neighbors, avoid grading adjacent to or within creeks and wetlands and limit livestock access within creeks and wetlands.
- I. Provide information for citizens and in particular, landowners, on the values and techniques for resource protection and land conservation.
- J. Improve interagency cooperation for open space acquisition, greenbelt, creeks, wetlands, and wildlife habitat protection in open space areas by coordinating with other government agencies and organizations having interest or expertise in resource protection.
- K. Avoid imposing taxes or fees that discourage retention of open space or agricultural uses.
- L. Establish mutually respectful, long-term relationships with landowners, and conservation organizations such as land trusts, and local environmental organizations.
- M. Maintain the position of Natural Resources Manager so that open space functions are consolidated in one existing City department under one person.
- N. The Natural Resource Manager will establish and periodically review performance standards and dimensions for buffers between open space or agricultural resources and urban uses.

8.7.2 Enhance and restore open space.

The City will do the following in support of open space enhancement and restoration, in coordination with other agencies and organizations, and will encourage individuals, organizations, and other agencies to take the same actions within their areas of responsibility:

- A. Inventory natural areas that have been degraded, beginning with City-owned property, and prepare a list of sites and activities, in priority order, for restoration efforts.
- B. Establish self-sustaining populations of native species that were historically found in natural habitat areas.



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1. Revegetate disturbed and over-grazed upland areas, including grassland communities, using site-specific or region-specific plants so far as practical.
 2. To reverse historical trends of creek channelization and modification, re-establish native riparian vegetation.
 3. Eliminate sources of water pollutants and improper water diversions.
- C. Remove invasive, non-native species in natural habitat areas, and prevent the introduction or spread of invasive, non-native species and pathogens.
- D. Where allowed by City ownership, easements, or other agreements, remove man-made elements such as buildings, paving, concrete lining of waterways, signs, and utilities, when they are contrary to the purpose for the open space and they are not needed for public health or safety, or for implementation of City plans.
- E. Provide and maintain suitably-sized access corridors through or under new and previously established, man-made obstacles to wildlife movement (such as appropriately sized culverts under arterial streets, highways and other major roads).
- F. Remove trash, debris, and contaminants, using methods that minimally disrupt the open-space resources.
- G. Provide continuing community education and outreach for all citizens, youth and youth groups, and property owners on open space and natural resource values, programs and responsibilities.
- H. Enlist the help of volunteers and academic programs in restoring and



Citizen volunteers and youth groups assist in open space revegetation programs



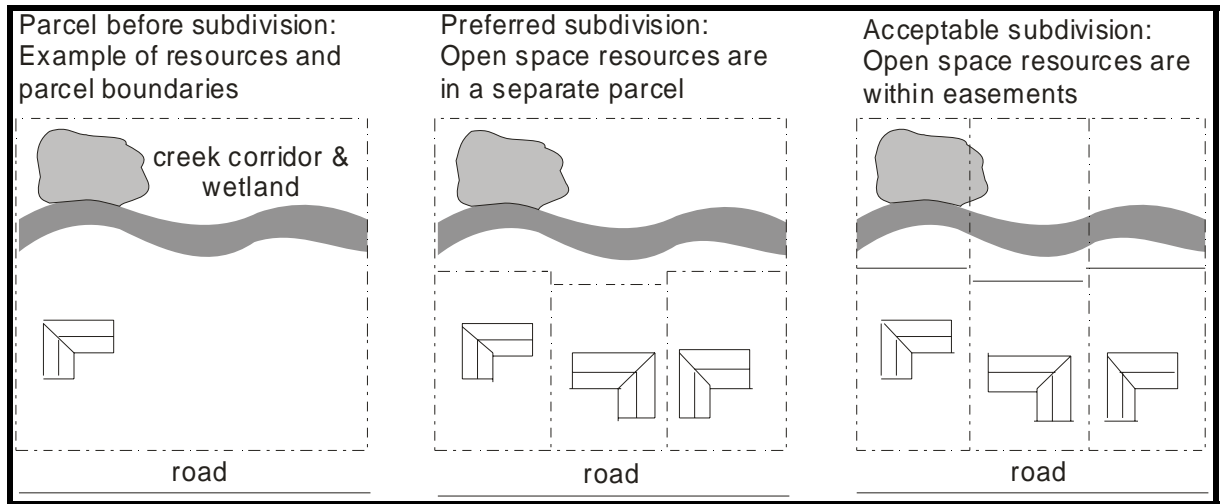
City-owned open spaces must be carefully managed to protect open space resources

- monitoring habitat health.
- I. Set conditions of subdivision and development approvals consistent with General Plan goals and policies. (See also Chapter 8.25.1)
 - J. Following adequate public review, adopt conservation plans for open space areas under City easement or fee ownership. The plans shall include a resource inventory, needs analysis, acceptable levels of change, grazing, monitoring, wildlife (including listed species, sensitive species, and species of local concern, management and implementation strategies, including wildfire preparedness plans.
- K. Identify and secure alternative funding mechanisms for re-planting degraded creek corridor sections with native California vegetation.



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FIGURE 8 OPEN SPACE RESOURCES IN A SUBDIVISION





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FIGURE 9: CREEKS AND WETLANDS

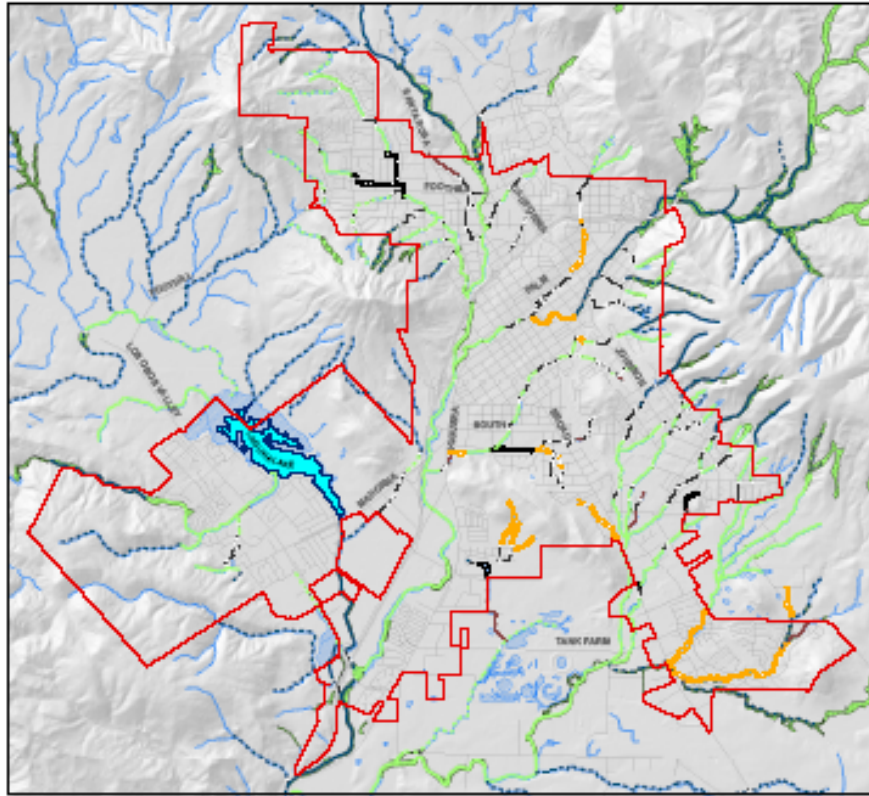


Figure 9:
Creeks and Wetlands

- City Limit
- Riparian Habitats
- Wetland Habitats
- Creeks:
 - Perennial creek with good riparian corridor
 - Intermittent creek with good riparian corridor
 - Perennial creek with degraded corridor but able to be restored or repaired
 - Intermittent creek with degraded corridor but able to be restored or repaired
 - Perennial creek with degraded corridor, high encroachment, and difficulty in restoring
- Waterways:
 - Drainage ditch
 - Open concrete weir or channel
 - Underground culvert or major bridge

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FIGURE 10: PRIME AGRICULTURAL SOILS

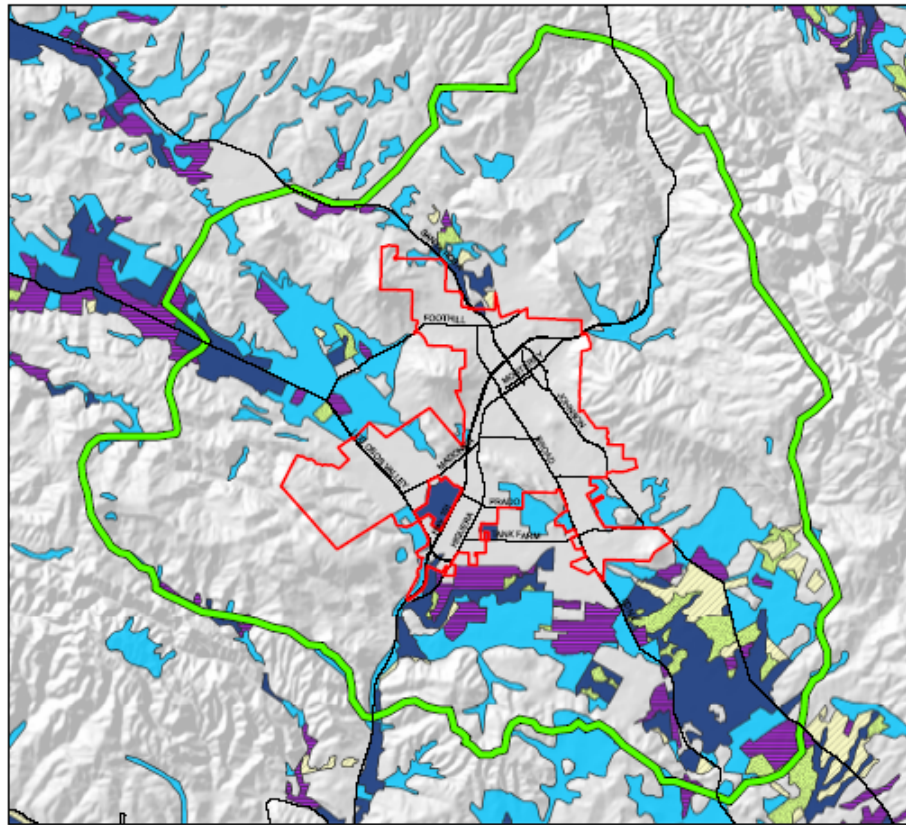




Figure 10:
Prime Agricultural Soils

-  City Limit
-  Greenbelt
-  Prime Farmland
-  Farmland of Local Importance
-  Farmland of Local Potential
-  Farmland of Statewide Importance
-  Unique Farmland


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VIEWS

Background

San Luis Obispo has been favored with a beautiful natural setting. Also, the community has strived for attractive urban development. Protection of these assets enhances the community's quality of life and economic vitality. Protection involves both the integrity of the resource being viewed, and lines of sight to the resource.



City Limits form a well defined urban edge, with open space beyond

Goals and Policies

9.0 Viewsheds.

9.1 Policies

9.1.1 Preserve natural and agricultural landscapes.

The City will implement the following policies and will encourage other agencies with jurisdiction to do likewise:

- A. Natural and agricultural landscapes that the City has not designated for urban use shall be maintained in their current patterns of use.
- B. Any development that is permitted in natural or agricultural landscapes shall be visually subordinate to and compatible with the landscape features. Development includes, but is not limited to buildings, signs (including billboard signs), roads, utility and telecommunication lines and structures. Such development shall:
 - 1. Avoid visually prominent locations such as ridgelines, and slopes exceeding 20 percent.
 - 2. Avoid unnecessary grading, vegetation removal, and site lighting.
 - 3. Incorporate building forms, architectural materials, and landscaping, that respect the setting, including the historical pattern of development in similar settings, and avoid stark contrasts with its setting.
 - 4. Preserve scenic or unique landforms, significant trees in terms of size, age, species or rarity, and rock outcroppings.
- C. The City's non-emergency repair, maintenance, and small construction projects in highly visible locations, such as hillsides and downtown creeks, where scenic resources could be affected, shall be subject to at least "minor or incidental" architectural review.

9.1.2 Urban development.

The City will implement the following principle and will encourage other agencies with jurisdiction to do so: urban development should reflect its architectural context. This does not necessarily prescribe a specific style, but requires deliberate design choices that acknowledge human scale, natural site features, and neighboring urban development, and that are compatible with historical and architectural resources. Plans for sub-areas of the city may require certain architectural styles.

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9.1.3 Utilities and signs.

In and near public streets, plazas, and parks, features that clutter, degrade, intrude on, or obstruct views should be avoided. Necessary features, such as utility and communication equipment, and traffic equipment and signs should be designed and placed so as to not impinge upon or degrade scenic views of the Morros or surrounding hillsides, or farmland, consistent with the primary objective of safety. New billboard signs shall not be allowed, and existing billboard signs shall be removed as soon as practicable, as provided in the Sign Regulations.

9.1.4 Streetscapes and major roadways.

In the acquisition, design, construction or significant modification of major roadways (highways/regional routes and arterial streets), the City will promote the creation of “streetscapes” and linear scenic parkways or corridors that promote the City’s visual quality and character, enhance adjacent uses, and integrate roadways with surrounding districts. To accomplish this, the City will:

- A. Establish streetscape design standards for major roadways.
- B. Encourage the creation and maintenance median planters and widened parkway plantings.
- C. Retain mature trees in the public right-of-way.
- D. Emphasize the planting and maintenance of California Native tree species of sufficient height, spread, form and horticultural characteristics to create the desired streetscape canopy, shade, buffering from adjacent uses, and other desired streetscape characteristics, consistent with the Tree Ordinance or as recommended by the Tree Committee or as approved by the Architectural Review Commission.
- E. Encourage the use of water-conserving landscaping, street furniture, decorative lighting and paving, arcaded walkways, public art, and other pedestrian-oriented features to enhance the streetscape appearance, comfort and safety.
- F. Encourage and where possible, require undergrounding of overhead utility lines and structures.

9.1.5 View protection in new development.

The City will include in all environmental review and carefully consider effects of new development, streets and road construction on views and visual quality by applying the Community Design Guidelines, height restrictions, hillside standards, Historical Preservation Program Guidelines and the California Environmental Quality Act and Guidelines.

9.1.6 Night-Sky preservation.

City will adopt a “night sky” ordinance to preserve nighttime views, prevent light pollution, and to protect public safety by establishing street and public area lighting standards.

9.1.7 GOAL: Viewing opportunities.

Provide ample opportunities for viewing attractive features.

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9.2 Policies**9.2.1 Views to and from public places, including scenic roadways.**

The City will preserve and improve views of important scenic resources from public places, and encourage other agencies with jurisdiction to do so. Public places include parks, plazas, the grounds of civic buildings, streets and roads, and publicly accessible open space. In particular, the route segments shown in Figure 10 are designated as scenic roadways.

- A. Development projects shall not wall off scenic roadways and block views.
- B. Utilities, traffic signals, and public and private signs and lights shall not intrude on or clutter views, consistent with safety needs.
- C. Where important vistas of distant landscape features occur along streets, street trees shall be clustered to facilitate viewing of the distant features.
- D. Development projects, including signs, in the viewshed of a scenic roadway shall be considered “sensitive” and require architectural review.

9.2.2 Views to and from private development.

Projects should incorporate as amenities views from and within private development sites. Private development designs should cause the least view blockage for neighboring property that allows project objectives to be met.

9.2.3 Outdoor lighting.

Outdoor lighting shall avoid: operating at unnecessary locations, levels, and times; spillage to areas not needing or wanting illumination; glare (intense line-of-site contrast); and frequencies (colors) that interfere with astronomical viewing.

9.3 Programs

The City shall do the following to protect and enhance views, and will encourage others to do so, as appropriate:

9.3.1 Public facilities.

Locate and design public facilities and utilities consistent with General Plan goals and policies.

9.3.2 Update Community Design Guidelines.

Update and maintain Community Design Guidelines to address views from scenic roadways and include them in design standards in plans for sub-areas of the City.

9.3.3 Sign Regulations.

Maintain and apply Sign Regulations consistent with General Plan goals and policies. When possible, signs in the public right-of-way should be consolidated on a single low-profile standard.

9.3.4 Environmental and architectural review.

Conduct environmental review and architectural review consistent with General Plan goals and policies regarding visual impacts and quality.

9.3.5 Visual assessments.

Require evaluations (accurate visual simulations) for projects affecting important scenic resources and views from public places.

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9.3.6 View blockage along scenic highways.

Determine that view blockage along scenic roadways is a significant impact.

9.3.7 Development proposals in unincorporated County.

Review County-proposed general plan amendments and development proposals within the City's Planning Area for consistency with City General Plan goals and policies.

9.3.8 Scenic highway designation.

Advocate State and County scenic highway designations and protective programs for scenic routes connecting San Luis Obispo with other communities.

9.3.9 Undergrounding utilities.

Place existing overhead utilities underground, with highest priority for scenic roadways, entries to the city, and historical districts.

9.3.10 Prohibit billboards.

Not allow additional billboards.

9.3.11 Billboard removal.

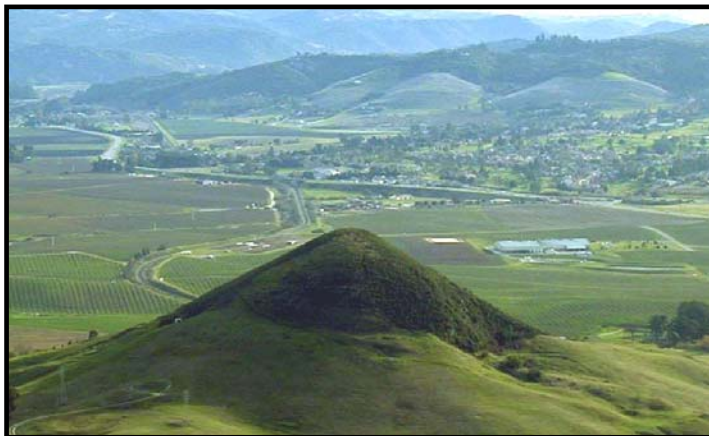
Remove existing billboards through amortization, conditions of development approval, and grants for enhancing open-space and transportation corridors, with highest priority for scenic roadways, entries to the city, and historical districts.

9.3.12 Preserve the Morros.

In cooperation with the County of San Luis Obispo, other government agencies, non-profit agencies and property owners, the City will seek to preserve the Morros as open space through preservation incentives, easements, land acquisition, or other measures to preserve visual qualities.

9.3.13 Monitor viewsheds.

The City will establish and maintain a program of describing and monitoring viewsheds within and adjacent to City limits to establish a photographic baseline of visual setting and conditions.



Islay Hill, one of the "Seven Sisters", a series of extinct volcanoes that transect the City



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FIGURE 11: SCENIC ROADWAYS AND VISTAS

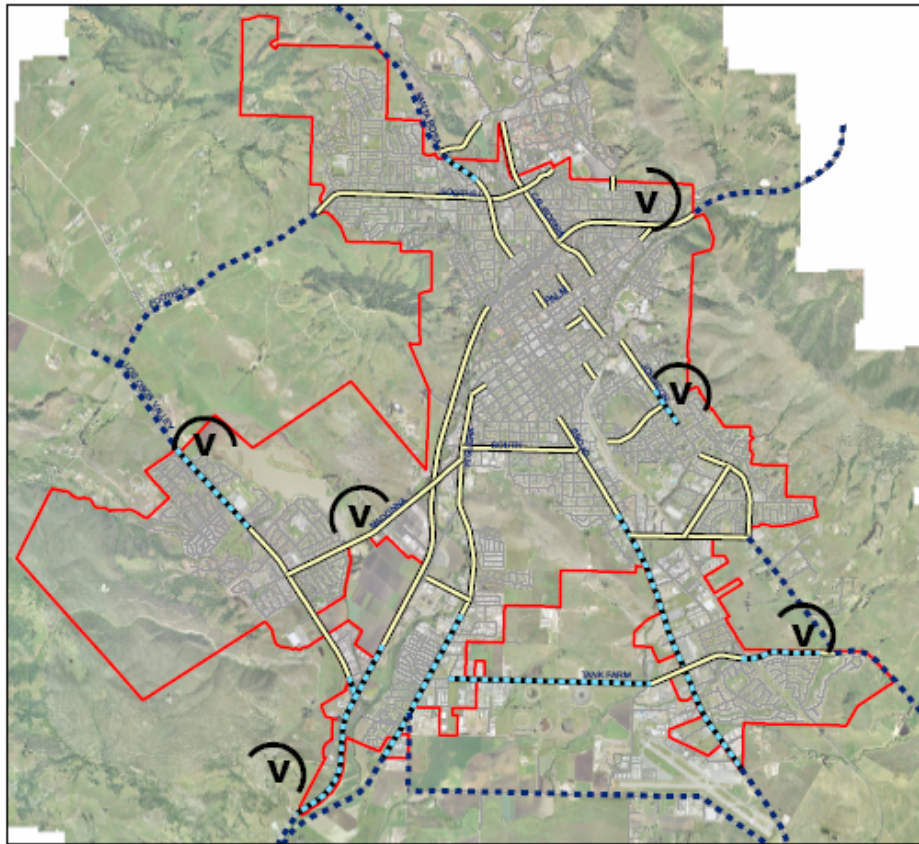




Figure 11:
Scenic Roadways
and Vistas

- City Limit
- Greenbelt
- V Cone of View
- moderate scenic value
- high scenic value
- high or moderate scenic value outside city limit


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WATER

Introduction

Water is the fluid of life, essential for natural and human communities. The Water and Wastewater Management Element contains detailed information and policies, focusing on the relationship between urban water demand and supply. The following goals and policies address water as a component of a sustainable community.



City wastewater treatment facility on Prado Road

Goals and Policies

10.0 GOAL: Urban water needs.

Meet urban water needs without substantial harm to natural communities or productive agriculture.

10.1 Policies

10.1.1 Water use planning.

In planning for urban water needs, the City will adopt and strive for the most efficient available practices. The City will encourage other agencies to follow this policy. “The most efficient available practices” means behavior and devices that use the least water for a desired outcome, considering available equipment, life-cycle costs, social and environmental side effects, and the regulations of other agencies. Water use planning shall take into account the reliability reserve and related concepts set forth in Section 909 of the Charter of the City of San Luis Obispo and the Water and Wastewater Element.

10.1.2 Competition for supplies.

The City will consider the effects of water supply projects on agriculture, wildlife habitat and stream flows, and should ensure continued water availability for these uses in planning for long-term water supplies. The City will encourage individuals, organizations, and other agencies to follow this policy.

10.1.3 GOAL: Water Quality

Protect and maintain water quality in aquifers, Laguna Lake, streams and wetlands that supports all beneficial uses, agriculture, and wildlife habitat.

10.2 Policies

10.2.1 Water Quality

The City will employ the best available practices for pollution avoidance and control, and will encourage others to do so. “Best available practices” means behavior and technologies that result in the highest water quality, considering available equipment, life-cycle costs, social and environmental side effects, and the regulations of other agencies.



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10.2.2 Ahwahnee Water Principles.

In planning for its water operations, programs and services, the City will be guided by the Ahwahnee Water Principles and will encourage individuals, organizations, and other agencies to follow these policies:

- A. Community design should be compact, mixed use, walkable and transit-oriented so that automobile-generated urban runoff pollutants are minimized and the open lands that absorb water are preserved to the maximum extent possible.
- B. Natural resources such as wetlands, flood plains, recharge zones, riparian areas, open space, and native habitats should be identified, preserved and restored as valued assets for flood protection, water quality improvement, groundwater recharge, habitat, and overall long-term water resource sustainability.
- C. Water holding areas such as creekbeds, recessed athletic fields, ponds, cisterns, and other features that serve to recharge groundwater, reduce runoff, improve water quality and decrease flooding should be incorporated into the urban landscape.
- D. All aspects of landscaping from the selection of plants to soil preparation and the installation of irrigation systems should be designed to reduce water demand, retain runoff, decrease flooding, and recharge groundwater.
- E. Permeable surfaces should be used for hardscape. Impervious surfaces such as driveways, streets, and parking lots should be minimized so that land is available to absorb storm water, reduce polluted urban runoff, recharge groundwater and reduce flooding.
- F. Dual plumbing that allows grey water from showers, sinks and washers to be reused for landscape irrigation should be included in the infrastructure of new development, consistent with State guidelines.
- G. Community design should maximize the use of recycled water for appropriate applications including outdoor irrigation, toilet flushing, and commercial and industrial processes. Purple pipe should be installed in all new construction and remodeled buildings in anticipation of the future availability of recycled water.
- H. Urban water conservation technologies such as low-flow toilets, efficient clothes washers, and more efficient water-using industrial equipment should be incorporated in all new construction and retrofitted in remodeled buildings.
- I. Ground water treatment and brackish water desalination should be pursued when necessary to maximize locally available, drought-proof water supplies.

10.3 Programs

10.3.1 Efficient water use.

The City will do the following in support of efficient water use, and will encourage individuals, organizations, and other agencies to do likewise:

- A. Landscaping:
 - 1. Choose plants that are suitable for the climate and their intended function, with emphasis on use of native and drought-tolerant plants.
 - 2. Prepare soils for water penetration and retention.
 - 3. Design and operate suitable and efficient irrigation systems.



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- 4. The City will encourage drought-tolerant landscaping, vegetable gardens and fruit trees in lieu of large expanses of lawn or other more water-demanding plantings.

Landscape maintenance: Landscaped areas will be properly designed for efficient water use, and shall be properly installed and maintained, including the upkeep and replacement of low-flow irrigation fixtures and equipment.

Facilitate use of tertiary-treated water and seek to legalize use of grey water for non-potable household purposes.

Promote water conservation through leak control in residential, commercial, industrial and public plumbing systems.

10.3.2 Maintain water quality.

The City will do the following in to maintain a high level of water quality, and will encourage individuals, organizations, and other agencies to do likewise:

- A. Design and operate its water supply, treatment, and distribution system to prevent adverse effects on water quality (potential point source of pollutants such as chlorine).
- B. Design and operate its wastewater collection and treatment system to prevent adverse effects on water quality (potential point source of pollutants such as untreated sewage and chlorine).
- C. Design, construct, and maintain its facilities such as parks, buildings and grounds, storm water facilities and parking to prevent adverse effects on water quality (potential point sources for pollutants such as petroleum and non-point sources of runoff contaminated with fertilizers, pesticides, litter, and vehicle residues).
- D. Regulate the design, construction, and operation of private facilities over which the City has permit authority to ensure they will not have adverse effects on water quality (potential point sources for, as examples, sediment from construction and chemicals used in operations, and non-point sources for contaminated runoff).
- E. Participate with other agencies, in particular the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, in watershed planning and management.
- F. In locations subject to flooding, not allow activities, such as outdoor storage, that would be substantial sources of chemical or biological contamination during a flood, even though buildings associated with the activities would meet flood-protection standards.
- G. Establish standards for non-point source water pollution in cooperation with the Regional Water Quality Control Board.
- H. Establish a program of baseline water quality testing for City creeks.
- I. Identify and protect groundwater recharge areas to maintain suitable groundwater levels and to protect groundwater quality for existing and potential municipal water sources.



Looking southwest from Bishop Peak, toward Laguna Lake



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APPENDIX A: SPECIES OF LOCAL CONCERN

The City is concerned with maintaining healthy populations of the following species in the long term, even though they are not listed for protection under State or Federal laws. (Presence or absence of a picture has no significance; pictures are not in proportion.)

Species	Reason for Listing	City Conservation Strategy
Plants		
Clay Mariposa Lily	Limited distribution; habitat loss.	Designate sufficient, suitable habitat areas as open space; survey designated potential development sites before or at time of development proposal, and protect, relocate, or propagate individuals.
Club-Haired Mariposa Lily	Limited distribution; habitat loss.	Designate sufficient, suitable habitat areas as open space; survey designated potential development sites before or at time of development proposal, and protect, relocate, or propagate individuals.
Hoover Button Celery	Limited distribution; habitat loss.	Designate sufficient, suitable habitat areas as open space; survey designated potential development sites before or at time of development proposal, and protect, relocate, or propagate individuals.
Fishes		
Prickly Sculpin.	Dependence on stream habitat; habitat degradation.	Protect water quantity and quality.
Amphibians		
Western Toad	Limited distribution; habitat loss and degradation.	Designate likely habitat areas as open space; survey approved activity sites prior to activity, and relocate individuals to suitable, safe habitat.
California Newt	Limited distribution; habitat loss and degradation.	Designate likely habitat areas as open space; survey approved activity sites prior to activity, and relocate individuals to suitable, safe habitat.

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Species	Reason for Listing	City Conservation Strategy
Western Skink	Limited distribution; habitat loss and degradation.	Designate likely habitat areas as open space; survey approved activity sites prior to activity, and relocate individuals to suitable, safe habitat.
Coast Horned Lizard	Limited distribution; habitat loss and degradation.	Designate likely habitat areas as open space; survey approved activity sites prior to activity, and relocate individuals to suitable, safe habitat.
Ringneck Snake	Limited distribution; habitat loss and degradation.	Designate likely habitat areas as open space; survey approved activity sites prior to activity, and relocate individuals to suitable, safe habitat.
Striped Racer	Limited distribution; habitat loss and degradation.	Designate likely habitat areas as open space; survey approved activity sites prior to activity, and relocate individuals to suitable, safe habitat.
Birds		
Raptors in general	Reduction of prey species due to habitat loss and degradation; susceptibility to contaminants in food chain.	Designate sufficient habitat areas as open space; manage City-owned open space to sustain prey populations; avoid introducing contaminants to food chain; survey proposed activity sites prior to activity, and avoid disturbing nesting individuals. Maintain perches, including artificial ones.
Cooper Hawk	Limited local distribution.	In particular, survey proposed activity sites prior to activity, and avoid disturbing nesting areas.
Sharp-Shinned Hawk	Limited local distribution.	In particular, survey proposed activity sites prior to activity, and avoid disturbing nesting areas.
Golden Eagle	Limited local	In particular, survey



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Species	Reason for Listing	City Conservation Strategy
	distribution.	proposed activity sites prior to activity, and avoid disturbing nesting areas.
Ferruginous Hawk	Limited local distribution.	See general measures for raptors.
Northern Harrier	Limited local distribution.	In particular, survey proposed activity sites prior to activity, and avoid disturbing nesting areas.
White-Tailed Kite	Limited local distribution.	In particular, survey proposed activity sites prior to activity, and avoid disturbing nesting areas.
Prairie Falcon	Limited local distribution.	In particular, survey proposed activity sites prior to activity, and avoid disturbing nesting areas.
Burrowing Owl	Limited local distribution; loss of burrowing sites that are used for rest, cover, and nesting.	In particular, protect fields and creek-banks containing, or suitable for, burrows; avoid disturbance of burrows by people and pets.
Hérons in general	Limited distribution; habitat loss and degradation.	Protect and enhance wetlands; protect rookeries and avoid activities adjacent to rookeries that would disrupt nesting.
Great Blue Heron	Limited distribution; habitat loss and degradation.	Protect and enhance wetlands; protect rookeries and avoid activities adjacent to rookeries that would disrupt nesting.
Black-Crowned Night Heron	Limited distribution; habitat loss and degradation.	Protect and enhance wetlands; protect rookeries and avoid activities adjacent to rookeries that would disrupt nesting.
Great Egret	Limited distribution; habitat loss and degradation.	Protect and enhance wetlands; protect rookeries and avoid activities adjacent to rookeries that would disrupt nesting.
Snowy Egret	Limited distribution; habitat loss and degradation.	Protect and enhance wetlands; protect rookeries and avoid activities



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Species	Reason for Listing	City Conservation Strategy
		adjacent to rookeries that would disrupt nesting.
American Bittern	Limited distribution; habitat loss and degradation.	Protect and enhance wetlands.
Western Least Bittern	Limited distribution; habitat loss and degradation.	Protect and enhance wetlands; in particular, survey proposed activity sites prior to activity, and avoid disturbing nesting areas.
Long-Billed Curlew	Limited distribution; habitat loss and degradation.	Protect and enhance wetlands; in particular, survey proposed activity sites prior to activity, and avoid disturbing nesting areas
Vaux Swift	Limited distribution.	Survey proposed activity sites prior to activity, and avoid disturbing nesting areas.
Rufous Hummingbird	Limited distribution	Survey proposed activity sites prior to activity, and avoid disturbing nesting areas.
Roadrunner	Likely limit of historic range;; habitat degradation and reduced prey within historic range.	Protect sufficient edge habitat (especially among chaparral, grassland, and scrub communities.)
Warblers, in general	Habitat loss and degradation; predation by pets and feral cats.	Protect riparian and edge habitats; in particular, avoid scattered residential development in natural areas.
Yellow Warbler	Habitat loss and degradation; predation by pets and feral cats.	Protect riparian and edge habitats; in particular, avoid scattered residential development in natural areas.
Wrens in general	Habitat loss and degradation; predation by pets and feral cats.	Protect riparian and edge habitats; in particular, avoid scattered residential development in natural areas.
Vireos	Habitat loss and	Protect riparian and edge

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Species	Reason for Listing	City Conservation Strategy
	degradation; predation by pets and feral cats.	habitats; in particular, avoid scattered residential development in natural areas.
Flycatchers	Habitat loss and degradation; predation by pets and feral cats.	Protect riparian and edge habitats; in particular, avoid scattered residential development in natural areas.
Olive-sided Flycatcher	Habitat loss and degradation; predation by pets and feral cats.	Protect riparian and edge habitats; in particular, avoid scattered residential development in natural areas.
Grosbeaks	Habitat loss and degradation; predation by pets and feral cats.	Protect riparian and edge habitats; in particular, avoid scattered residential development in natural areas.
Sparrows (all native species)	Habitat loss and degradation; predation by pets and feral cats.	Protect riparian and edge habitats; in particular, avoid scattered residential development in natural areas.
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	Habitat loss and degradation; predation by pets and feral cats.	Protect riparian and edge habitats; in particular, avoid scattered residential development in natural areas.
California Gull (chicks pictured)	Limited Distribution	Avoid disturbance of nesting areas.
Loggerhead Shrike	Limited distribution; habitat loss and degradation.	Designate sufficient habitat areas as open space.
California Horned Lark	Limited distribution; habitat loss and degradation.	Designate sufficient habitat areas as open space.
Mammals		
Mountain Lion	Limited distribution; historic pattern of treating lions and some prey as pests; habitat loss or encroachment by human activities (resulting in conflicts)	Avoid urban expansion into habitat areas; manage City-owned open space beyond the urban edge to provide suitable habitat. Provide wildlife corridors for arterial streets and highways.



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Species	Reason for Listing	City Conservation Strategy
	and killing of lions, either intentionally or through accidental vehicle strikes).	
Black Bear	Limited distribution; historic pattern of hunting and habitat loss or encroachment by human activities (resulting in conflicts and killing of bears, either intentionally or through accidental vehicle strikes).	Avoid urban expansion into habitat areas; manage City-owned open space beyond the urban edge to provide suitable habitat. Provide wildlife corridors for arterial streets and highways.
Shrews (all)	Limited distribution; habitat loss and degradation.	Avoid urban expansion into habitat areas; manage City-owned open space beyond the urban edge to provide suitable habitat. Provide wildlife corridors for arterial streets and highways.
Bats (all) Big Free-tailed Bat Pallid Bat	Limited distribution; disruption of roosting sites; possibly affects of pesticide contamination for some species	Survey proposed activity sites prior to activity, and avoid roost sites or schedule activities to avoid roost disturbance, particularly when immature bats are present; avoid use of pesticides that could affect susceptible species.
Insects		
Monarch Butterfly	Interruption of multi-generation migrations due to loss of roosting sites; pesticide mortality.	Maintain sheltering groups of trees; survey proposed activity sites prior to activity, and avoid roost sites or schedule activities to avoid roost disturbance, particularly when overwintering flocks are present; avoid use of pesticides near roosts or around concentrations of host plant (milkweed).

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**APPENDIX B: ACQUISITION OF OPEN SPACE
LANDS**

1. The City will strive for the most effective protection of open space resources through its use of public funds.
2. The City will partner with land trusts, environmental organizations and other groups to acquire open space lands, either in fee or as an easement.
3. To be considered for City acquisition, a site must have value in one or more of the following categories:
 - A. Valuable natural resources, such as habitat for listed species or species of local concern, groundwater, or surface water.
 - B. Scenic qualities, cultural resources, or unusual geologic features.
 - C. Natural hazards to public health or safety, such as flooding or landslide, which make reasonable development on the property unlikely.
 - D. Important opportunities for low-impact recreation, such as connecting the Morros by a hiking trail, linking San Luis Obispo to connecting trails in the unincorporated County, or for providing valuable environmental education opportunities.
 - E. Proximity to land that is already permanently protected as open space, or the property is close to land that is likely to be protected in the foreseeable future, thus forming or potentially forming a continuous area of protected lands.
 - F. Productive or potentially productive agricultural land, or an effective buffer that would protect agricultural operations.
 - G. Individually or cumulatively forms an important part of the City's greenbelt.
4. A site that meets one or more of the criteria in part 3 above should have high priority for purchase if it meets one or more of the following criteria:
 - A. The property, or resources on the property, are under threat of incompatible development or irreversible damage.
 - B. The site has timely or attractive purchase considerations or conditions (for example, local cash contributions are available or additional land area is available).
 - C. The site is one of the last sections providing continuous habitat or a wildlife corridor, or a trail linkage.
 - D. The site is of sufficient size that resources are likely to remain intact, even if adjacent properties are developed.
 - E. Purchase of the site would maximize the effectiveness of acquisition expenditures (for example, purchasing one piece of property may guarantee that a second piece of property remains in open space or agriculture, even though a public agency does not obtain the second property).
5. The City should generally obtain fee ownership for:
 - A. Sites that may have or require frequent public access to or through them, such as a public trail.
 - B. Agricultural lands when (1) there may be harmful impacts from current or future agricultural practices, (2) the property could be leased back for continued agricultural use, or (3) public access is desired.
 - C. Lands for which buying the development rights is almost as expensive as obtaining the land in fee.
 - D. Lands that contain delicate habitat requiring monitoring and enforcement.
 - E. Land on which enforcing an easement would be difficult or costly.



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6. A site that meets the criteria in parts 3 through 5 above should generally not be acquired by the City as open space if:
 - A. The site is developed with facilities or structures, and thus would not be consistent with the open space definition.
 - B. The site or resource can be obtained in a timely manner as a condition of City, State, or County development approvals or agreements.
 - C. The site's values are primarily scenic, but the property cannot be readily viewed by the general public.
 - D. Adjacent properties are being developed in a way that is likely to significantly diminish the conservation values of the property in question.
 - E. Management of the property would be very costly, or the terms of an easement would be unusually difficult to enforce.
 - F. The site cannot be acquired with reasonable effort in relation to its value or purpose.
7. The City should generally obtain an easement or development rights:
 - A. On agricultural lands where the cost of development rights is significantly less than fee ownership.
 - B. Where continuation of the private use is compatible with the open space designation, and management by the City is not required.
 - C. To protect views or scenic resources involving little or no public access.
8. The City will sell, exchange, or transfer an interest in open space lands, or relinquish a permanent open space easement, only by approval of the City Council following a public hearing, and only after a 60-day period in which the decision can be suspended pending reversal by referendum.
9. The City's Natural Resource Manager will be responsible for the Open Space Acquisitions Program.

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**APPENDIX C: MANAGEMENT OF OPEN SPACE
LANDS**

1. The City will manage land that it owns, or controls through lease or easement, to implement the policies of this element, and will encourage other agencies to do so on their land. This Appendix focuses on management practices for lands designated by the Land Use Element as Open Space or Agriculture, but does not exclude other designations such as Park or Public.
2. The City's Conservation Guidelines for Open Spaces, in conjunction with approved individual Open Space Conservation Plans and the City's Open Space Ordinance, shall guide day-to-day management decisions and activities in open space areas.
3. On open space land that the City manages, the City may decide to permit more than one type of activity or use. Where different uses may not be compatible, the following priorities will guide decisions. The items listed under a priority heading are co-equal. (Land uses are subject to any deed restrictions placed by owners conveying land to the City for open space purposes, and to easements or rights retained by others.)
 - Priority 1
 - Protection of existing wildlife and natural habitat generally.
 - Protection of existing listed species and their existing habitat, or re-establishment of such habitat where damaged.
 - Protection of public resources such as water quality (watershed runoff and groundwater recharge).
 - Avoidance of threats to public health and safety, such as ground instability (In the case of vegetation management for wildland fire, separation between hazardous vegetation and structures generally should be provided on the land containing the structure, by the owner of the land containing the structure. Where vegetation management on City-owned land is needed or desirable, management practices will minimize harm to wildlife habitat and scenic resources).
 - Priority 2
 - Public access and passive recreation.
 - Protection of scenic resources.
 - Priority 3
 - Scientific study.
 - Agricultural production.
4. Any encroachment of a private use onto the City's land must benefit the City's ownership and management objectives, and shall be subject to approval by the City Council.
5. The City will adopt conservation plans (or master plans with conservation components) for large parcels, and for small parcels where conservation challenges and solutions need to be clarified. The preparation and adoption process shall foster participation by resource-protection experts and by the public. On lands designated Park (such as Laguna Lake, Mission Plaza, and Meadow Park), the plans will provide for previously established recreational uses. They may provide for passive recreational uses that do not adversely impact listed species and that minimize adverse impacts on other wildlife resources. The City's Lopez Canyon property (outside the planning area) and Reservoir Canyon property will be managed as open space.
6. The City will coordinate law enforcement and emergency response for its open space lands with all potentially affected agencies.

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7. The City may lease land to other agencies or organizations for maintenance or service activities, provided the lease agreement reflects all City policies and management objectives.
8. The City should lease lands designated Agriculture for continued agricultural use, provided the lease agreement reflects all City policies and management objectives.
9. The City may provide services to or maintain resource-protection lands owned by others, where warranted by adjacency to City-owned land and long-term resource-protection needs. Such activity shall be subject to an agreement approved by the City Council. The costs for such services shall be borne by the owner, unless the City Council determines that bearing part or all of the cost is necessary to implement City policies.
10. The City will monitor its open space holdings often enough for timely discovery and response to problems such as substantial hazards, encroachment, trespass, and degradation of resources.
11. The City may enlist volunteers, including community organizations and neighboring landowners, to help monitor and maintain open space and recreational resources. Volunteers will receive training appropriate to the tasks they will be performing, including recognition of situations and conditions requiring professional response.
12. The City will maintain a publicly accessible inventory of the location and type of its open space holdings and easements. The inventory will contain or be linked to documentation of the initial condition, and the evolving conditions, of land and easement areas that it acquires.
13. When compatible with the primary purpose of the open space, the City should use revenue from open space lands, such as agricultural lease payments, to fund open-space maintenance. Such revenues may also be used to acquire open space.
14. Mitigation for the impacts of private projects shall generally be conducted on private lands. However, special circumstances may arise that justify use of City-owned land as a mitigation site:
 - A. Where there is a clear City benefit from a transaction that involves the use of City land as a mitigation site, or
 - B. Where General Plan goals will be furthered by the appropriate use of City lands for mitigation purposes. Private mitigation actions on City-owned land shall have a clear resource-protection or amenity value to the site, and shall be subject to approval by the City Council. Mitigation at a City park shall be subject to review and recommendation by the Parks and Recreation Commission. Mitigation on City-owned open space shall be subject to review and recommendation by the Natural Resources Manager.
15. The City may form an Open Space Committee to advise staff on open space acquisition and management.



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APPENDIX E: REFERENCES

- City of San Luis Obispo, General Plan Digest. December 2004
- City of San Luis Obispo, General Plan Circulation, Conservation, Energy Conservation, Housing, Land Use, Open Space, Parks and Recreation, Safety, Water and Wastewater Elements. various adoption dates.
- City of San Luis Obispo, Draft General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element (Hearing Draft). August 2002.
- City of San Luis Obispo, Administration Department, Conservation Guidelines for Open Space Lands of the City of San Luis Obispo. October 2002.
- State of California, Governor's Office of Planning and Research, Element Consolidation: Streamlining Local General Plans. July 1998.
- The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County, Saving Special Places: A Study of Open Space Values in the San Luis Obispo Greenbelt. August 1995.
- The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County, Saving Special Places II: Revisiting Open Space Priorities And the San Luis Obispo Greenbelt in 2003. October 2003.



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APPENDIX F: COUNCIL RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION NO. 9785 (2006 Series)

**A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
UPDATING AND CONSOLIDATING THE CONSERVATION, ENERGY
CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENTS INTO A CONSERVATION AND
OPEN SPACE ELEMENT, ADOPTING SAID ELEMENT, AND AMENDING THE
CIRCULATION, HOUSING, LAND USE, PARKS AND RECREATION, SAFETY, AND
WATER AND WASTE WATER ELEMENT OF THE GENERAL PLAN (GPA/ER 149-98)**

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of San Luis Obispo conducted public hearings in the Council Chamber of City Hall, 990 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo, California, on February 28 and April 4, 2006, for the purpose of considering a Planning Commission recommendation on City application ER/GPA 149-98, a project to update and combine the General Plan Conservation, Energy Conservation and Open Space Elements into one element, a Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE), and to amend the General Plan Circulation, Housing, Land Use, Parks and Recreation, Safety, Water and Wastewater Elements to maintain consistency; and

WHEREAS, the City initiated said project to update the Conservation and Energy Conservation Elements, last revised in 1973 and 1981 respectively, and to update and consolidate conservation-related General Plan policies, reduce redundancy, help maintain internal consistency, maintain or strengthen the environmental safeguards in the General Plan, and make conservation policies and programs easier to find, understand and use; and

WHEREAS, State general plan guidelines encourage element consolidation to minimize redundancy, group functionally related goals, objectives and policies, help maintain internal consistency and to keep the general plan to a reasonable size, making the plan both easier to understand and implement; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission and Council have considered the information and comments pertaining to the update, including the public comments provided verbally at three public workshops and 24 public hearings, in written communications provided to the Commission and Council, and the evaluations and recommendations by staff, presented at said hearings; and

WHEREAS, during the course of said hearings the Planning Commission conducted a detailed review of possible General Plan amendments in comparison to the draft COSE to maintain policy continuity and encouraged, considered and responded to public questions, comments and suggested text changes on both the amendments and the Draft Element; and

WHEREAS, the project has been evaluated in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act and pursuant to an initial environmental study (City File Number ER 149-98), and the Community Development Director has granted a negative declaration of environmental impact; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission and Council considered the Negative Declaration of environmental impact and the Initial Environmental Study (ER 149-98) on which it was based, and determined that Negative Declaration granted on October 28, 2005 adequately addresses the proposed General Plan Element and amendments and determined that policies in March 2006

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Draft COSE are substantially consistent with or stronger than those in the October 2005 draft evaluated in the Initial Study. Consequently, the Council has determined that no further environmental review was warranted; and

WHEREAS, the Council acknowledges the significant contributions of time and expertise provided by community groups in preparing and shaping the Draft Element, including ECOSLO, Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club, SLO Green Build, California Central Coast Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce, and by many individuals.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of San Luis Obispo as follows:

SECTION 1. Environmental Determination. The City Council has reviewed and considered the information contained in the initial study and the negative declaration for ER No. 149-98 prepared for the October 2005 Draft Conservation and Open Space Element. This Council has, as a result of its deliberations, Planning Commission recommendation, the initial environmental study, and the evidence presented at hearings on this matter, determined that pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") and the State CEQA Guidelines, a negative declaration adequately addresses the potential environmental impacts of the Draft Conservation and Open Space Element as revised in the March 2006 Draft COSE. On the basis of this review, Council finds that in light of the whole public record, there is no evidence from which it can be fairly argued that the project, including related General Plan amendments, will have a significant, adverse effect on the environment, and hereby certifies and approves the negative declaration of environmental impact for the Conservation and Open Space Element and related General Plan amendments as recommended by the Planning Commission on February 8, 2006.

SECTION 2. Record of Proceedings. The City Council has received and considered the Planning Commission recommendation, minutes from public meetings and workshops, record of public correspondence, and the Planning Commission staff reports on the Conservation and Open Space Element and General Plan amendments. Copies of these items or testimony are on file in the office of the City Clerk and in the Community Development Department. The Planning Commission held 17 public hearings and three public workshops to consider the draft Conservation and Open Space Element and related documents. In addition, the City Council conducted three public hearings to discuss the Conservation and Open Space Element and related matters. The minutes of those hearings indicate Commission and Council member comments on the Conservation and Open Space Element and are on file in the office of the City Clerk.

SECTION 3. Findings. This Council, after considering the March 2006 Draft Conservation and Open Space Element and draft General Plan amendments, the Planning Commission's recommendations, staff recommendations, public testimony and correspondence, and reports thereon, makes the following findings:

1. The proposed Conservation and Open Space Element (March 2006 Draft) will promote the public health, safety and welfare by ensuring that policies supporting conservation,



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energy efficiency, preservation of natural and cultural resources and natural communities, and protection of open space resources guide City values, operations and decision-making; and

2. The proposed Conservation and Open Space Element maintains and/or expands the City's important conservation environmental policies and programs, and in combination with the Open Space Ordinance, Creek Setback Regulations and Conservation Plans, upholds the City's role as an environmental steward and leader by updating and consolidating these into a single, easily used and understood document; and

3. The proposed Conservation and Open Space Element reflects the Commission's detailed review of and comparison with possible changes to the Land Use and Open Space Elements, and with the proposed amendments, is consistent with the General Plan.

SECTION 4. Approval of the Conservation and Open Space Element. Council hereby approves the Conservation and Open Space Element (March 2006 Draft), as shown in Attachment 3 of the February 28, 2006 Council agenda report, as amended at Council hearings on February 28 and April 4, 2006.

SECTION 5. General Plan Amendments. The General Plan is hereby amended to maintain consistency with the Conservation and Open Space Element, as shown in Attachment 4 of the April 4, 2006 Council agenda report.

SECTION 6. Publication and Availability. The Community Development Director shall cause the updated Conservation and Open Space Element and amended General Plan elements to be published and provided to City officials, affected agencies, public libraries, and to the public.

SECTION 7. Effective Date. The Conservation and Open Space Element shall become effective immediately upon adoption of this resolution.

Upon motion of Council Member Ewan seconded by Council Member Brown and on the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Council Members Brown, Ewan, and Mulholland, Vice Mayor Ewan and Mayor Romero
NOES:	None
ABSENT:	None

The foregoing resolution was adopted this 4th day of April 2006.

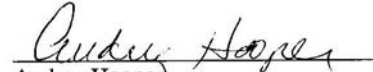


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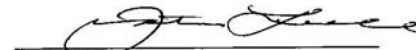
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Mayor David F. Romero

ATTEST:


Audrey Hooper
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Jonathan P. Lowell
City Attorney