



**2019
General Plan
Annual Progress Report**

General Plan Progress Report

2019 Reporting Year

Introduction

This annual report on the Merced County General Plan has been prepared pursuant to California Government Code Section 65400. The purpose is to update the Board of Supervisors, Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), and the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) of the County's progress in implementing the General Plan and on progress meeting regional housing needs. This document is intended for reporting purposes only, and does not create or alter policy.

Merced County initiated a comprehensive update of its 1990 General Plan in September 2005. The outreach program included three series of community workshops, stakeholder interviews, focus group meetings, a General Plan website, and printed and electronic newsletters.

Merced County completed the update of the General Plan, which was adopted on December 13, 2013. The 2030 General plan sets the direction for the future of the county over the next 20 years.

The 2018 Annual Progress Report was presented to the Board of Supervisors on March 26, 2019. This 2019 Annual Progress Report is presented to the Board of Supervisors on March 31, 2020.

General Plan Amendments in the 2019 Reporting Year

While specific General Plan implementation activities took place, there were no amendments made to General Plan Policies during the 2019 reporting year. The General Plan Land Use Amendments highlighted below were, however, submitted to the Community and Economic Development Department or initiated by the County during the reporting year. No other amendments (additions, deletions, modifications, or alterations) were made to the General Plan during the 2019 reporting year.

1. **Le Grand Community Plan.** A specific plan for the unincorporated community of Le Grand was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in September of this reporting year. The intent of this community plan is to guide future growth and development within a twenty-year horizon. A number of zoning and land use designations were amended to guide the location of industry, businesses, homes, roads, and public facilities. The Community Plan is based on a thorough analysis of Le Grand's existing physical and environmental conditions as well as extensive input from the Le Grand Municipal Advisory Council (MAC), business owners, property owners, and residents. The Le Grand Community Plan consists of a vision statement, guiding principles, goals, policies, and design guidelines that are intended to shape the community's future growth. The Community Plan also identifies necessary infrastructure improvements and includes implementation actions to support goals and policies.
2. **GPA19-001: BA Acquisitions.** This project is located at the intersection of West Highway 140 and Interstate 5, and proposes amendment of the General Plan Land Use designation from Highway Interchange Center – Agricultural to Highway Interchange Center – General

Commercial in order to accommodate future commercial development. As of publication of this report, GPA19-001 is pending withdrawal due to lack of activity by the applicant.

3. **GPA19-002: Pegasus American Corporation.** This project is located at the intersection of North Stephens Street and West South Avenue in Delhi, and proposes amendment of the General Plan Land Use Designation from Business Park to General Commercial in order to accommodate future commercial development. As of publication of this report, GPA19-002 is pending withdrawal due to lack of activity by the applicant.
4. **GPA19-003: County of Merced.** This County-initiated land use amendment is located adjacent to the Mission Avenue/Campus Parkway exit on Highway 99. The amendment – approved by the Board of Supervisors on November 19, 2019 – amended the General Plan Land Use designation from Undesignated to Agricultural. The site serves as stormwater basin for runoff from nearby County roads and also allows for development of a freeway-oriented sign for neighboring development.

Significant Planning Activity in the 2019 Reporting Year

While the below projects do not constitute an exhaustive list of planning activity during the 2019 reporting year, the highlighted projects required significant County effort in the 2019 reporting year and are directly related to implementation measures identified in the Merced County General Plan and other County Policies.

1. **Completion and Adoption of Comprehensive Zoning Code Update**
(Implementation Measures ED-D, LU-A, LU-G, HE1-10, HE2-3, HE4-1, HE4-3, HE4-9)
During the 2019 reporting year, the Merced County Board of Supervisors adopted a comprehensive update of Title 18 (Zoning) of the Merced County Code. This update achieved several goals and fulfilled several implementation measures of the General Plan. The updated zoning code addresses specific policies related to public health, housing, economic development, and the agricultural sector, and aligns the County code with state policies related to affordable housing and development.
2. **Winton Community Plan**
The County is in the process of developing a community specific plan for the unincorporated community of Winton. Similar to other community plans completed and adopted within the last two years, the Winton Community plan will serve to guide community growth and development within the twenty-year horizon of the plan. The draft plan was completed with community input from the municipal advisory committee (MAC) and other community stakeholders during several public workshops. At the time of this report, environmental analysis of the plan is underway, and public hearings for consideration of plan adoption are anticipated in the 2020 reporting year.
3. **Climate Action Plan**
(Implementation Measure AQ-A)
The County continued work on a Climate Action Plan, including completion of a draft Greenhouse Gas Inventory that will aid in development of Greenhouse Gas reduction policies. Specific reduction targets, greenhouse gas reduction measures, and metrics will be developed in the 2020 reporting year with assistance from community residents, businesses, policymakers, and other stakeholders.
4. **Virginia Smith Trust / University Community Plan**
Late in the 2019 reporting year, the County received an application for master planning of the “Virginia Smith Trust” property located south of the UC Merced Campus northeast of

the City of Merced. According to the University Community Plan (adopted 2004), this project could result in the development of up to 5,800 residential units and 1.6 million square feet of commercial (retail, office, and research/development) space. This project will include some analysis of whether development figures identified in 2004 are still feasible today. County Staff will continue to work closely with City, regional, and UC partners to identify how existing policies may affect development of the University Community Plan area.

5. **Industrial Hemp Program**

Ordinance 1972 was adopted on August 27, 2019, establishing regulation for the cultivation of industrial hemp in Merced County. This ordinance was prepared and adopted with stakeholder input in response to the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (“2018 Farm Bill”), which removed non-psychoactive cannabis/hemp from Schedule 1 of the federally-regulated Controlled Substance Act. Licensing for any industrial hemp cultivation is now required throughout Merced County.

6. **Sustainable Groundwater Management Act**

The County is actively participating in groundwater sustainability plan development and implementation across all Groundwater Sustainability Agencies within the County’s Jurisdiction.

Housing Element Reporting

The Merced County Housing Element was updated and adopted on July 12, 2016 and was certified by the California Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) on August 29, 2016. Merced County is currently in compliance with HCD’s Housing Element requirements. In compliance with Government Code sections 6544, 65583, and 65584, the County’s response to the Annual Housing Element Report is presented as **Appendix A** to this report.

Priorities for Land Use Decision Making

At this time, Merced County does not have any active or pending broad land use decision making (i.e. passage or moratoria or emergency ordinances).

General Plan Compliance

The General Plan is currently in compliance with OPRs General Plan Guidelines. Future changes to include housing and environmental justice policies to comply with recent State legislation will be presented to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors at future meetings.

APPENDIX A
HOUSING ELEMENT PROGRESS REPORT

NOTE: This information is available for review at Merced County Community and Economic Development, 2222 M St., 2nd Floor, Merced, CA 95340, or electronically by request.

Page: 1
Date: 1/26/2025

ANNUAL ELEMENT PROGRESS REPORT
 Housing Element Implementation
 2024-2025

See "N" indicators in yellow cell
 See legend below for status indicators

Element ID	Element Name	Start Date	End Date	Category	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	YTD	Status	Notes
HE001	San Joaquin County... Housing Element Implementation	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE002	San Joaquin County... Housing Element Implementation	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE003	San Joaquin County... Housing Element Implementation	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE004	San Joaquin County... Housing Element Implementation	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE005	San Joaquin County... Housing Element Implementation	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE006	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE007	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE008	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE009	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE010	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE011	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE012	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE013	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE014	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE015	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE016	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE017	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE018	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE019	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE020	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE021	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE022	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE023	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE024	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE025	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE026	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE027	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE028	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE029	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE030	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE031	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE032	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE033	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE034	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE035	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE036	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE037	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE038	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE039	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE040	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE041	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE042	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE043	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE044	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE045	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE046	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE047	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE048	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE049	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							
HE050	San Joaquin County...	2024-01-01	2025-03-31	...							

Jurisdiction	Merced County - Unincorporated	
Reporting Year	2019	(Jan. 1 - Dec. 31)

ANNUAL ELEMENT PROGRESS REPORT
Housing Element Implementation
 (CCR Title 25 §6202)

This table is auto-populated once you enter your jurisdiction name and current year data. Past year information comes from previous APRs.
 Please contact HCD if your data is different than the material supplied here

Table B													
Regional Housing Needs Allocation Progress													
Permitted Units Issued by Affordability													
		1	2								3	4	
Income Level		RHNA Allocation by Income Level	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total Units to Date (all years)	Total Remaining RHNA by Income Level
Very Low	Deed Restricted	1085											1085
	Non-Deed Restricted												
Low	Deed Restricted	775										38	737
	Non-Deed Restricted				13	25							
Moderate	Deed Restricted	711										92	619
	Non-Deed Restricted		37	52	1	2							
Above Moderate	Non-Deed Restricted	1885	137	118	149	105						509	1376
Total RHNA		4456											
Total Units			174	170	163	132						639	3817

Note: units serving extremely low-income households are included in the very low-income permitted units totals
 Cells in grey contain auto-calculation formulas

ANNUAL ELEMENT PROGRESS REPORT

Housing Element Implementation

(CCR Title 25 §6202)

Jurisdiction	Merced County - Unincorporated		
Reporting Year	2019	(Jan. 1 - Dec. 31)	
Table D			
Program Implementation Status pursuant to GC Section 65583			
Housing Programs Progress Report			
Describe progress of all programs including local efforts to remove governmental constraints to the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing as identified in the housing element.			
1	2	3	4
Name of Program	Objective	Timeframe in H.E	Status of Program Implementation
1-1 Vacant/Underutilized Land Inventory	Assist public to find suitable land for residential uses	Ongoing	County GIS Mapping tool used on regular basis with public. Staff working with local housing developers to identify candidate sites.
1-2 Rezone Sites to Meet 2007-2014 RHNA	Rezones sites to accommodate RHNA	2017	Complete 2017.
1-3 Monitoring of Residential Capacity (No Net Loss)	Ensure adequate land for housing	Ongoing	Staff monitoring development on project-by-project basis
1-4 Community Plan Updates	Ensure adequate land for housing	2018-2020	Planada CP adopted in 2017; Winton and Le Grand CP updates in progress; and, Franklin-Beachwood CP update to follow
1-5 Coordination on Infrastructure Improvements in Existing Communities	Encourage sewer/water for housing	Ongoing	Staff coordinate with Env. Health Division on project-by-project basis
1-6 Infrastructure Financing Assistance in New Communities	Reduce upfront costs to housing	2018-2020	No code modifications have been completed.
1-7 Child Care	Encourage and incentize facilities	Ongoing	General Plan update and Zoning Code update includes incentives
1-8 Planning for Large Sites	Encourage housing development	As Necessary	Numerous meetings with developers on master plan sites (e.g. Delhi, CA)
1-9 Sufficient Capacity for Vacant Sites	Adequate sewer/water for housing	2016-2017	Implementation of Water Supply Assessments, and ongoing interaction with special districts supporting capacity
1-10 Modify Pmt. Process for MF Housing	Simplify permit process for MF	2019	Code modification with comprehensive Zoning Code Update

2-1 Incentives for Affordable Housing	Encourage and incentivize housing	Ongoing	Priority and incentives available as projects are submitted for review
2-2 Pursue State and Federal Housing	Obtain funding for housing	Annually	Ongoing monitoring of State and Federal funding opportunities
2-3 Density Bonus Ordinance Amendment	Amend Zoning Code Re: Bonus	2019	Code modification with comprehensive Zoning Code Update
2-4 First Time Homebuyer Program	Obtain HOME and CDBG Funds	Ongoing	Ongoing with CDBG/HOME and other subsidized housing permits
2-5 Neighborhood Stabilization Program	Rehabilitate foreclosed properties to accrue funding for housing	Ongoing	Implement as funding becomes available
2-6 Housing Choice Voucher Program	County support Housing Authority	Ongoing	Ongoing, vouchers used
2-7 Preserving At-Risk Units	Maintain affordable units	Ongoing	Housing Authority and Self-Help projects monitored
2-8 Housing Program Information	Disseminate information on programs	Ongoing	Ongoing by various County organizations
2-9 Legislative Relief	Promote funds/grants for County	Ongoing	Part of County legislative platform each year
3-1 Zoning Code Amendments for Special Needs Housing	Amend Zoning Code Re: Housing	2019	Code modification with comprehensive Zoning Code Update
3-2 Publicizing Reasonable Accommodation	Create public information materials Re: Reasonable Accommodation	2021-2024	No draft of publication materials have been created.
3-3 Priority Permit Processing for Special Needs Housing	Prioritize special needs housing	Ongoing	Priority is available as projects are submitted for review
3-4 Farmworker Housing Permitting Process	Continue ADOMP program	Ongoing	Additional Dwelling Occupancy Monitoring Program continued
3-5 Farmworker Housing Opportunities	Taskforce to encourage housing	Ongoing	Task force to be led by Housing Authority and has yet to be established.
4-1 Owner-Occupied Housing Rehab	Support assistance for rehab	Ongoing	\$700k in HOME funds awarded; Homebuyer assist/rehab
4-2 Code Enforcement	Property maintenance and abatement for substandard housing	Ongoing	Performed annually by Buildings, Env. Health, and Code Enforcement Divisions
5-1 Fair Housing Information	Info on fair housing resources	Ongoing	Pamphlets and web info available
5-2 Seek Funding for Disadvantaged Communities	Grant funding for housing in disadvantaged	Annually	Ongoing monitoring of State and Federal funding opportunities; Walkable Winton Plan completed and pending adoption, funded by CalTrans Sustainable Communities Grant

Jurisdiction	Unincorporated	
Reporting Period	2019	(Jan. 1 - Dec. 31)

ANNUAL ELEMENT PROGRESS REPORT

Housing Element Implementation

(CCR Title 25 §6202)

Note: "+" indicates an optional field
Cells in grey contain auto-calculation formulas

Table F

Units Rehabilitated, Preserved and Acquired for Alternative Adequate Sites pursuant to Government Code section 65583.1(c)(2)

This table is optional. Jurisdictions may list (for informational purposes only) units that do not count toward RHNA, but were substantially rehabilitated, acquired or preserved. To enter units in this table as progress toward RHNA, please contact HCD at APR@hcd.ca.gov. HCD will provide a password to unlock the grey fields. Units may only be credited to the table below when a jurisdiction has included a program in its housing element to rehabilitate, preserve or acquire units to accommodate a portion of its RHNA which meet the specific criteria as outlined in Government Code section 65583.1(c)(2).

Activity Type	Units that Do Not Count Towards RHNA ⁺ Listed for Informational Purposes Only				Units that Count Towards RHNA ⁺ Note - Because the statutory requirements severely limit what can be counted, please contact HCD to receive the password that will enable you to populate these fields.				The description should adequately document how each unit complies with subsection (c)(7) of Government Code Section 65583.1 ⁺
	Extremely Low-Income ⁺	Very Low-Income ⁺	Low-Income ⁺	TOTAL UNITS ⁺	Extremely Low-Income ⁺	Very Low-Income ⁺	Low-Income ⁺	TOTAL UNITS ⁺	
Rehabilitation Activity									
Preservation of Units At-Risk									
Acquisition of Units									
Total Units by Income									

Jurisdiction	ed County - Unincorporated	
Reporting Year	2019	(Jan. 1 - Dec. 31)

Building Permits Issued by Affordability Summary		
Income Level		Current Year
Very Low	Deed Restricted	0
	Non-Deed Restricted	0
Low	Deed Restricted	0
	Non-Deed Restricted	25
Moderate	Deed Restricted	0
	Non-Deed Restricted	2
Above Moderate		105
Total Units		132

Note: Units serving extremely low-income households are included in the very low-income permitted units totals

Housing Applications Summary	
Total Housing Applications Submitted:	0
Number of Proposed Units in All Applications Received:	15
Total Housing Units Approved:	15
Total Housing Units Disapproved:	0

Use of SB 35 Streamlining Provisions	
Number of Applications for Streamlining	0
Number of Streamlining Applications Approved	0
Total Developments Approved with Streamlining	0
Total Units Constructed with Streamlining	0

Units Constructed - SB 35 Streamlining Permits			
Income	Rental	Ownership	Total
Very Low	0	0	0
Low	0	0	0
Moderate	0	0	0
Above Moderate	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0

Cells in grey contain auto-calculation formulas