



GENERAL PLAN FACT SHEET

What is a General Plan?

A General Plan is the local government's long-term blueprint for the community's vision of future growth. It is the guide for the future social, physical, and economic development of the city. A General Plan is a long-term document consisting of written text and diagrams that expresses how a community should develop over time, and it is a key tool for influencing the quality of life. It specifies locations for new businesses and residences, roads, parks, and other public infrastructure. The Plan is a basis for land use decision-making used by policymakers such as the Planning Commission and the City Council. All cities and counties in California are required by law to have General Plans.

The General Plan will be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), as required by State law. The EIR ensures that environmental opportunities and constraints are identified and incorporated into the planning process, and identifies policies that can mitigate any adverse environmental effects of other aspects of the Plan.

Why is Dixon updating its General Plan?

The City of Dixon's existing General Plan dates back to 1993, and new opportunities and challenges have emerged in recent years. Dixon's General Plan needs to be comprehensively reexamined to ensure that it reflects the city's goals and priorities for the next 25 years. Additionally, since 1993, a number of State laws have passed regarding General Plans, changing the requirements and topics that Dixon's General Plan Update must address.

General Plan Requirements

- **Required Elements.** The General Plan must include seven mandated chapters, or "elements": Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise, and Safety.
- **Internal Consistency.** Dixon's updated General Plan must be internally consistent, which means that there must be consistency between and within all of the elements in the General Plan. Each element's data, analyses, goals, policies, and implementation programs must be consistent with and complement one another.
 - *Housing Element.* State law requires Housing Elements to be updated periodically and to be certified by the State. There are numerous requirements that the Housing Element must meet in order to be certified. Dixon's 2015-2023 Housing Element was recently adopted, and it will not be updated in this General Plan Update. The rest of the City's General Plan will be consistent with the 2015-2023 Housing Element.
- **Applicable State Laws.** Dixon's updated General Plan must conform to applicable State laws. Since 1993, a number of State laws have been passed that apply to General Plans, and there are multiple topics that General Plans must now address, including (but not limited to) the following:
 - *Complete Streets.* In accordance with AB (Assembly Bill) 1358, the Circulation Element must plan for a balanced, multimodal transportation network that



meets the needs of all users of streets, roads, and highways for safe and convenient travel in a manner that is suitable to the rural, suburban, or urban context of the General Plan. "Users of streets, roads, and highways" mean bicyclists, children, persons with disabilities, motorists, movers of commercial goods, pedestrians, users of public transportation, and seniors.

- ***Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions.*** In California, climate change and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions have been the subject of a number of State laws and multiple Executive Orders. It is a high priority subject for any General Plan Update. From a planning perspective, the chief statutes at the State level are: AB 32 or the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, which establishes State GHG emissions limits equivalent to the 1990 levels, which are to be achieved by 2020; and Senate Bill (SB) 375 which addresses GHG emissions associated with the transportation sector through development of regional transportation and sustainability plans. Additionally, the Governor's Executive Order S-3-05 establishes a target to reduce GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. Municipal governments must set targets to reduce their GHG emissions by at least 15 percent by 2020 compared with current levels (current levels are defined as 2008 levels or earlier).
- ***Climate Change Adaptation and Resiliency.*** If a local hazard mitigation plan or climate adaptation plan hasn't been adopted by a municipality, the Safety Element must address climate adaptation and resiliency strategies. This must include a vulnerability assessment that identifies risks that climate change poses locally and a set of adaptation and reliance goals, policies, and objectives.
- ***Flooding.*** The Safety Element must identify flood hazard zones and establish goals and policies to avoid or minimize risks of flooding. The Conservation Element must identify rivers, creeks, streams, flood corridors, riparian habitats, and land that may accommodate floodwater for purposes of groundwater recharge and stormwater management.
- ***Fires.*** The Safety Element must address fire hazards, including land classified as very high fire severity zones, and it must establish goals and policies to avoid or minimize risk of fire hazards.
- ***Water.*** The General Plan must rely on the local water agency's urban water management plan, and it must address water supply, demand, and conservation.