



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Planning Commission

**FROM:** Brian Pedrotti, Community Development Director

**BY:** Andrew Perez, Planning Manager

**SUBJECT:** General Plan Study Session to Discuss Draft Vision Statements and Guiding Principles

**DATE:** July 2, 2024

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

Discuss the draft vision statements and guiding principles for the General Plan Update, receive public comment, and recommend that Council adopt a vision statement and guiding principles for the comprehensive General Plan Update.

**IMPACT ON FINANCIAL AND PERSONNEL RESOURCES:**

The financial and personnel impacts associated with the study session are included in the budget for the comprehensive General Plan Update.

**BACKGROUND:**

On March 28, 2023, Council approved a consultant services agreement with Mintier Harnish, a planning consultant firm based out of Sacramento, to assist City staff with the Comprehensive General Plan Update. The update is anticipated to take three years to complete, and also includes an update to the Climate Action Plan, an Alternatives Report, evaluation of development standards, an East Grand Avenue Corridor Overlay District, objective design standards, development code update, retail market analysis, and market demand study.

The visioning phase represents the fourth phase of the project. The vision statement and guiding principles should reflect what community members value most about their community and the shared aspirations of how they envision their community developing during the lifespan of the General Plan. The vision statement should be inspirational and set the key values and aspirations for the guiding principles. The guiding principles should provide more specific guidance that provides the foundation for the General Plan's goals, policies, and programs.

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A General Plan visioning workshop was held on February 28, 2024, to solicit information from the public about their vision for their community. A series of interactive exercises were designed to obtain community feedback, which was ultimately used to develop the draft vision statements and guiding principles for consideration during the study session. A survey is also currently active on the project website ([www.PlanArroyoGrande.com](http://www.PlanArroyoGrande.com)) to gather specific input on the draft vision statement and guiding principles.

Feedback received from the public from February 2024 through May 2024 highlights the community's values, aspirations, and concerns, and provides a foundation for future planning and development. An evaluation of the public comment revealed six (6) major themes:

1. Preservation of Historic Charm and Community Identity
2. Recreation and Community Spaces
3. Inclusivity and Diversity
4. Infrastructure and Smart Growth
5. Economic Development and Local Business
6. Environmental Sustainability

The guiding principles for this project have been developed around these themes. The input collected from the public workshop, online survey, and Planning Commission study session will be considered by City Council, which will adopt one (1) vision statement and one guiding principle for each of the six (6) major themes.

**ANALYSIS OF ISSUES:**

For the purposes of the study session discussion, the following three (3) vision statements and two (2) guiding principles for each of the six (6) major themes have been provided for the Planning Commission's consideration. Staff is asking the Planning Commission to discuss the draft vision statements and guiding principles and make a recommendation to Council. The Commission is free to recommend revisions to the draft statements, or recommend adoption as currently written.

Draft Vision Statements (3)

A vision statement is an aspirational description of what the community would like to be in the future. It is a summary of high-level goals to be achieved by the updated General Plan. The vision provides the foundation for more specific goals, policies, and programs developed during the update process. The visioning process is valuable in identifying issues important to the community and in providing early direction for alternatives development and analysis.

*Option 1:*

The City of Arroyo Grande is a welcoming and vibrant community situated along California's Central Coast. It is a community that takes pride in its charming character while celebrating the different people that make it unique.

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The City embraces its range of housing choices, diverse local culture and arts, historic Village, and a lively and accessible East Grand Avenue. The City's infrastructure supports reliable public facilities and services, an extensive park system, and active transportation, ensuring that residents of all ages and backgrounds can enjoy healthy and active lifestyles.

*Option 2:*

Arroyo Grande is a vibrant, diverse City with a strong sense of identity that embraces its community spirit, diversity, and inclusivity. Arroyo Grande takes pride in its extensive multi-modal transportation facilities, ample parks, and numerous recreational opportunities. Arroyo Grande's dedication to strategic growth ensures that housing supply complements market demands, embracing people of all ages, incomes, and backgrounds. The city serves as a model for sustainable growth, balancing development with the preservation of surrounding scenic landscapes and natural resources.

*Option 3:*

Arroyo Grande is a remarkable Central Coast community known for its historic Village, vibrant East Grand Avenue, ample housing options, and welcoming community. Arroyo Grande is designed to be walkable and bike-friendly, reducing the need for driving and promoting a healthier lifestyle. Public parks and recreational facilities serve individuals of all ages, cultivating an inclusive setting where both residents and tourists can engage in recreational activities, and the community can connect to one another and their environment in a meaningful way. Arroyo Grande's pride lies in its commitment to safety, sustainability, and celebrating differences.

Guiding Principles

Guiding principles express the key values and aspirations for Arroyo Grande's future and act as guideposts for the goals, policies, and implementation measures contained within the General Plan. These principles expand on the main ideas contained in the vision statement so that important concepts are given more weight. Guiding principles are purposefully broadly stated to guide the city throughout development of the updated General Plan. All General Plan goals, policies, and implementation programs need to be consistent with the Vision and Guiding Principles.

Guiding Principle #1: Preservation of Community Pride and Identity.

- *Option 1:* Prioritize the preservation of historic resources and landmarks to recognize the unique history and character of Arroyo Grande. Promote community events, education, and engagement to foster a strong sense of pride. Encourage quality local businesses, restaurants, and cultural events that balance the City's small-town feel with the need for inclusivity,

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equity, and growth.

- *Option 2:* Maintain an historic charm by preserving and enhancing historic landmarks and fostering a close-knit, welcoming community. Support the development of a lively Village and East Grand Avenue with local businesses, restaurants, and cultural events, creating social gathering places where neighbors can connect and celebrate the City's history.

Guiding Principle #2: Recreation and Community Spaces.

- *Option 1:* Invest in public parks, community gathering spaces, and recreational facilities to provide inclusive spaces for all ages. Expand and maintain safe bike lanes and interconnected walking and biking trails to promote healthy, active lifestyles and reduce car reliance.
- *Option 2:* Support physical activity, social interactions, and events by enhancing and maintaining public parks, recreation trails, and community spaces.

Guiding Principle #3: Inclusivity and Diversity.

- *Option 1:* Foster a welcoming community where all residents feel a sense of belonging and inclusion and can be different together. Promote diversity, equity, and inclusivity, and encourage a community where everyone's voices are considered and valued.
- *Option 2:* Promote diversity and equity across ethnic, cultural, and income levels, and strive to create an inclusive environment where every resident has equal opportunities to thrive.

Guiding Principle 4: Infrastructure and Smart Growth

- *Option 1:* Protect scenic assets, including open space preserves, recreational trails, hillsides, and waterways. Prioritize sustainable infrastructure development, integrating practices and technologies to minimize environmental impacts. Support the development of diverse housing options that cater to different income levels and living situations.
- *Option 2:* Implement strategies to balance economic growth opportunities with the preservation of natural resources. Prioritize infrastructure investment in roads, public transportation, and community facilities to support community growth while enhancing quality of life for all residents. Support diverse housing options, catering to different income levels and family structures.

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Guiding Principle #5: Economic Development and Local Business

- *Option 1:* Prioritize local businesses to enhance the city's economy and create a vibrant hub of community activity through a mixture of commercial and residential uses. Foster economic opportunities aligned with the job and housing market to ensure economic diversity and vitality for all residents.
- *Option 2:* Support the local retail base and revitalize the East Grand Avenue corridor to create a vibrant hub of community activity and diverse housing opportunities, focusing on multi-family and missing middle housing types. Enhance existing retail centers and attract diverse commercial and housing options to ensure financial security for the city and provide residents with access to a broad range of goods and services.

Guiding Principle #6: Environmental Sustainability

- *Option 1:* Protect scenic landscapes and natural resources from urban sprawl to preserve the city's natural beauty and agricultural heritage. Balance resource conservation with economic growth and equity to ensure that meeting today's needs does not compromise the ability of the community to meet future needs.
- *Option 2:* Encourage sustainable practices in all community sectors, including energy efficiency, waste reduction, and renewable energy use. Balance resource conservation with economic growth and equity, ensuring a sustainable future through municipal leadership and policy commitments.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

The following alternatives are provided for the Commission's consideration:

1. Recommend Council adopt one (1) vision statement and one (1) guiding principle from each of the major themes; or
2. Recommend revision of the draft vision statements and guiding principles and recommend Council adopt one (1) vision statement and one (1) guiding principle from each of the major themes; or
3. Provide other direction to staff.

**ADVANTAGES:**

Establishing a vision statement and guiding principles that align with the community's vision will become the overarching policy document that guides the development of the General Plan update.

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**DISADVANTAGES:**

None identified.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:**

No environmental review is required for the study session. The City and Consultant will evaluate potential impacts of the comprehensive General Plan Update in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act, and prepare any appropriate environmental document at that time, if required.

**PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND COMMENTS:**

The Agenda was posted at City Hall and on the City's website in accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2.