

## Article No. 1

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### New League Study Guide: Redlined Policies and Programs

*To fully understand the scope and depth of the proposed changes to the General Plan, the League has prepared a reliable redlined version of policies and implementation programs so that county residents can see exactly what County government proposes to add, delete or revise.*

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The Fresno County General Plan is in the process of being updated.

The update is timely. The current plan, adopted in 2000, was developed with a 20-year planning horizon in mind.

The General Plan is not a single document. It is a collection of documents. The document that draws the most interest is the Policy Document. It contains the goals, policies and implementation programs that govern decision-making for just about every issue affecting the quality of our lives, including economic development, land use, water supply and environmental protection. Simply put, the Policy Document both envisions and shapes the future for both rural and urban residents of Fresno County.

The County is updating the entire Policy Document, except for the Housing Element. It was last updated in 2016 and will not need to be updated again until 2023.

Apart from the Housing Element, the current 2000-2020 Policy Document contains 604 policies. And what is the nature and purpose of these policies? According to the General Plan itself, policies are **statements that guide action**, but this definition is only marginally adequate. More precisely, General Plan policies address a wide variety of matters, including development rights, best practices, building standards, procedural requirements, County tasks, criteria for decision-making, and strategies for accomplishing goals.

The current Policy Document (aside from the Housing Element) contains 121 implementation programs. And what are implementation programs? The plan defines implementation programs as **actions, procedures,**

**programs or techniques that carry out general plan policy.** Put more simply, implementation programs are General Plan tasks (unequivocal, mandated directives) that are assigned to various County departments and have estimated completion dates.

The proposed 2020-2040 plan deletes or significantly revises 25% of the policies (153 of 604 policies) and about 70% of the implementation programs (83 of 121 programs). The draft also adds 60 new policies and 19 new implementation programs.

Because it is so very important that county residents fully understand the scope and depth of proposed changes, the County should provide a reliable redlined version of the current 2000-2020 Policy Document (with additions underlined and deletions lined out) so that everyone can easily see exactly what the County is proposing to change. Although there is a redlined version of the General Plan Policy Document on the County's website, at this time, that version is error-filled and difficult to read.

In dedicated support for effective public engagement and transparency, the League of Women Voters of Fresno has taken upon itself the task of preparing a thoroughly accurate and easy-to-read redlined version of the Policy Document showing all proposed changes to policies and implementation programs for the new 2020-2040 plan. The Study Guide is available on the League website.

It's important to note here that the League Study Guide is not a redlined version of the entire 2000-2020 Policy Document. The Study Guide only documents proposed changes to policies and implementation programs. It does not identify proposed changes to General Plan goals or themes, nor does it address proposed changes to the plan's introductory or foundational text.

The planner overseeing the update of the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance is Principal Planner Chris Motta. Should you have questions or wish to submit comments, you can email the County at [gpr@co.fresno.ca.us](mailto:gpr@co.fresno.ca.us).