



# Stanislaus County

Department of Planning and  
Community Development

1100 H STREET

MODESTO, CALIFORNIA 95354

PHONE: (209) 525-6330

FAX: (209) 525-5911

October 19, 1995

Department of Housing and Community Development  
Division of Housing Policy Development  
P.O. Box 952053  
Sacramento, CA 94252-2053

ATTN: Kimberley L. Dellinger, Deputy Director

RE: Annual Report on General Plan

Dear Ms. Dellinger:

Pursuant to Section 65400(b) of the California Government Code, I am enclosing the 1995 Annual Report on the Stanislaus County General Plan.

The report includes the County's progress in implementing the General Plan during Fiscal Year 1994-95, particularly the County's progress in meeting its share of regional housing needs and local efforts to remove governmental constraints to the maintenance, improvement and development of housing.

The Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors received the report and authorized its submittal to the State at their meeting on October 17, 1995.

Please contact me if you have questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ron E. Freitas".

Ron E. Freitas,  
Director of Planning and Community Development

enc.

cc: Board of Supervisors

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# ANNUAL REPORT ON THE STANISLAUS COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

July 1, 1994 - June 30, 1995

## 1. Status of the General Plan

On October 11, 1994, the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors adopted a revised General Plan, thereby concluding a two-year project to review and update the 1987 General Plan.

The 1994 General Plan complies with California Planning and Zoning Law and the General Plan Guidelines adopted pursuant to Government Code Section 65040.2. In addition to the seven elements required by state law, the General Plan includes an optional element (the Agricultural Element) that addresses agricultural land use issues. The Agricultural Element was adopted April 23, 1992 and amended October 20, 1992.

Pursuant to Government Code Section 65588(b), the County adopted an updated Housing Element in July, 1992. Initial review by the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) identified some state requirements that they felt were not satisfied by the new element. To correct those deficiencies, a package of proposed amendments to the Housing Element was prepared and submitted May 18, 1994 to HCD for review. Staff continues to work towards resolving the one or two remaining issues identified by HCD. Once those issues are resolved and the proposed amendments are adopted, the 1992 Housing Element will be certified by HCD.

## 2. Progress in Implementation

**Zoning.** To encourage direct marketing of local agricultural products, the County undertook a major revision of its zoning regulations regarding produce stands and produce markets in the A-2 (General Agriculture) zoning district. Working with Farm Bureau representatives, the County developed more realistic regulations and a streamlined permitting procedure for produce stands. Adopted on April 11, 1995, the new zoning regulations allow staff approval of produce stands rather than a use permit as was formerly required. To complement the streamlined permitting process, the Board of Supervisors established a \$45.00 fee for site plan review, which significantly reduces the cost of obtaining zoning approval for produce stands.

The County developed another package of amendments to the zoning ordinance to streamline the permitting process for communication towers, address new state requirements regarding lands under Williamson Act contracts, and eliminate homesite divisions in the A-2 zone after a certain date. Those amendments were approved by the Board of Supervisors on September 19, 1995.

The Planning Commission Advisory Committee is currently in the process of prioritizing implementation projects to work on through June 30, 1996.

**Housing needs.** Stanislaus County's progress in meeting its share of regional housing needs includes the following:

- **Down payment assistance programs.**

Three single-family homes (two moderate-income and one low-income) have been purchased through the down payment assistance program established in the unincorporated community of Salida. A similar program in Empire has had no activity due to a downturn in the market. The programs are funded by Redevelopment Agency set-aside monies. Based on the increased number of applications received since June 30, 1995, the Salida program is likely to be more active in 1995-96.

- **Housing rehabilitation programs.**

During Fiscal Year 1994-95, the County administered housing rehabilitation programs under two \$500,000 Community Development Block Grants (CDBGs). One grant financed the rehabilitation of 8 housing units in the unincorporated communities of Grayson, Crows Landing, Monterey Park and Keyes. This grant is still active and is projected to assist five additional units. The other is promoting rehabilitation efforts in the unincorporated communities of Salida, Empire, LaGrange and Shackelford. To date, three units are undergoing rehabilitation. It is projected that 12 additional units will be assisted. Stanislaus County rehabilitation programs are implemented by the Housing Authority of Stanislaus County.

- **Migrant housing project.**

The County received a \$360,000 Community Development Block Grant for improvement of the migrant housing centers in Empire and Westley. Part of the grant money was used to rehabilitate approximately 25 housing units, including repair or replacement of roofs and floors, as well as installation of new kitchen ranges. The grant was also used to construct a Healthy Start clinic at the Westley center and a child care facility at the Empire migrant center. This grant has been fully expended.

- **Deferral or waiver of Public Facilities Fees.**

Pursuant to guidelines adopted July, 1992, the County waived Public Facilities Fees for very low-income single-family residences and deferred fees for low- and

moderate-income homes as follows:

Very low:	12	single-family residences
Low:	-22	
Moderate:	<u>1</u>	

TOTAL: 35 single-family residences

In addition to the single-family residences reported above, 38 apartment units were assisted by fee waiver and/or deferral. Located in Modesto, this project included 17 units dedicated to low-income households and 21 units dedicated to very-low households. Altogether, the County waived and/or deferred public facilities fees for a total of 73 housing units.

- **Bret Harte sewer project.**

The Stanislaus County Redevelopment Agency began construction of a sewer collection and transfer system in the Bret Harte neighborhood of unincorporated Modesto. This project will remedy a serious health and safety problem and will promote the conservation of approximately 1,200 existing units of very low-, low- and moderate-income housing. The project is expected to be completed by the end of 1995.

Stanislaus County has received a \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant to assist homeowners with payment of the costs associated with connection to the new sewer system. This assistance will be in the form of low-interest loans. Connections will commence in early 1996.

- **Crows Landing water project.**

This \$80,000 project was funded by the Redevelopment Agency. It involved the repair and replacement of portions of the public water distribution system in the unincorporated community of Crows Landing. The project improved water quality for existing residents, as well as ensuring an adequate supply of water for fire protection. The project will enable the development of 16 new housing units identified in the 1991 Residential Potential Study of Stanislaus County.

- **Mortgage Credit Certificate Program.**

The Mortgage Credit Certificate (MCC) Program is a countywide program that assists qualified low- and moderate-income home buyers by providing an income tax credit for interest paid on the borrower's mortgage. Started in 1994, the program is administered by the Housing Authority of Stanislaus County under a cooperative agreement with Stanislaus County and the nine cities in the county.

Last year, 30 mortgage certificates totalling an estimated \$3 million were issued in the first few months of the program's operation. This year, the program was crippled by the California Debt Limit Allocation Committee, which substantially reduced funding for local MCC programs. Housing Authorities throughout the state are currently lobbying the Legislature to provide increased funding for MCC programs, which are generally considered to be an effective and cost-efficient means of providing affordable housing.

- **First-time Homebuyers Program.**

The Stanislaus County Redevelopment Agency allocated \$30,000 to the Stanislaus County Affordable Housing Corporation (STANCO) to assist first-time homebuyers with the purchase of resale homes in existing neighborhoods. Implementation of the program will begin in 1995-96.

**Governmental Constraints.** In an effort to reduce governmental constraints to community development, the County established a Red Tape Task Force to study planning and building permit systems and recommend ways to increase their efficiency. Established in March, 1993, the Task Force studied all phases of County permit processing procedures for more than a year before making its recommendations.

In response to Task Force recommendations, the Planning Department developed a strategic plan, which was presented to the Board of Supervisors on March 14, 1995. The Planning Department is currently in the process of implementing strategic plan programs for improving planning and zoning procedures. For example, staff is developing a flow chart that will be included in application packets to help applicants better understand the permit review process.

### 3. Compliance with State General Plan Guidelines

The Stanislaus County General Plan substantially complies with all aspects of the State General Plan Guidelines, including the content and format of the seven required elements, the process for preparing and amending the General Plan, and implementation of the General Plan and the environmental review process under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Throughout the process of preparing and amending the General Plan, the County has made a special effort to encourage public participation. By providing extended review periods, conducting well publicized workshops and meeting informally with interested organizations in the community, the County has ensured that citizens have ample opportunity to review and comment on proposed actions.

The County also has encouraged intergovernmental coordination by referring these projects to all appropriate agencies at the local, state and federal levels, and by meeting with agency representatives to address concerns and resolve conflicts.

In compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the County has conducted environmental analysis and prepared the appropriate environmental documents prior to adopting and amending the General Plan.

#### 4. Revision of the General Plan

On October 11, 1994, the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors adopted a revised General Plan, thereby concluding a two-year project to review and update the 1987 General Plan.

Under the direction of the General Plan Update Committee, a package of amendments was prepared to refine, clarify and update existing goals, policies and implementation measures. After a series of public workshops in May and June of 1994, the Planning Commission held a hearing on the revised plan September 1, 1994, and unanimously recommended approval to the Board of Supervisors.

This was the first comprehensive revision of the 1987 General Plan.

*Prepared by Leslie Hopper, Associate Planner  
September 7, 1995*

