

# COUNTY CHARTING GROWTH FOR THE NEXT 20 YEARS

## UNINCORPORATED AREAS FOCUS OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

By **Zachary K. Johnson**

February 19, 2013

Record Staff Writer

February 19, 2013 12:00 AM

STOCKTON - The blueprint for how San Joaquin County will look as it grows through 2030 is taking shape now, continuing today at the first of two hearings scheduled before the Board of Supervisors.

The board will decide how to direct the specific policies that will become the updated General Plan when it considers a proposed direction built on a years-long process of research and outreach.

When it's done, the General Plan will determine where commercial, residential and other development is allowed outside the county's seven incorporated cities.

### How to get involved

The San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors will consider a preferred alternative for an updated General Plan at two hearings at the Board Chambers, on the Sixth Floor of the County Administration Building, 44 N. San Joaquin Street in downtown Stockton. They are:

- Today at 1:30 p.m.
- Feb. 26 at 9 a.m.

For more information, or to read the preferred alternative, go to [sjcgpu.com](http://sjcgpu.com). Those who can't attend the hearings can weigh in by contacting the county Community Development Department at 1810 East Hazelton Ave., Stockton, CA 95205 or by calling (209) 468-3164.

"It really sets the growth pattern for the unincorporated parts of the county for the next 20 years," Community Development Director Kerry Sullivan said.

The recommended plan, as it stands now, states goals to protect agricultural lands and encourage compact, city-centered growth.

Kicking off with focus groups and community meetings in 2008, the county and Mintier Harnish consulting firm narrowed potential options of growth down to four alternatives in March 2011.

County officials and the public kicked around the alternatives before the county Planning Commission reviewed a single, recommended alternative last summer.

Planning Commission tweaks pushed open the door wider on where development could happen, with recommended modifications to not limit commercial and industrial development to major highways and to not exclude new residential development in rural areas.

Compared with the tack set by the current General Plan, last updated in 1992, the alternative recommended by the Planning Commission means less development on farmland and open space because it directs most new residential growth to existing urban areas, according to a staff report.

The alternative also requires that new development, both residential and nonresidential, have adequate infrastructure.

A second public hearing is set for Feb. 26, when the board will take a look at land-use changes for individual pieces of land submitted by property owners. More hearings can be scheduled, if needed.

From there, staff and consultants will take the direction and craft new policies, where needed, while undertaking an environmental impact report on the proposed plan.

There will be more community workshops before the draft goes to the Planning Commission, then the Board of Supervisors, for final approval. That could happen later this year.

Contact reporter Zachary K. Johnson at (209) 546-8258 or [zjohnson@recordnet.com](mailto:zjohnson@recordnet.com). Visit his blog at [recordnet.com/johnsonblog](http://recordnet.com/johnsonblog).

[http://www.recordnet.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20130219/A\\_NEWS/302190313/1/A\\_NEWS](http://www.recordnet.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20130219/A_NEWS/302190313/1/A_NEWS)