



General Plan RESIDENT'S GUIDE

2025 SANTA CLARA CITY



General Plan

PURPOSE



GUIDING DOCUMENT FOR LAND USE DECISIONS

Utah Code (10-9a-401) requires that each city adopt a comprehensive, long-range General Plan to identify present and future needs of the city and to guide the physical growth and development of their community. A General Plan may include maps, diagrams, tables, and text setting out community conditions, principles, goals, objectives, and strategies. Utah Code (10-9a-405) states that “the General Plan is an advisory guide for land use decisions”.

General Plan

PURPOSE



ESTABLISHES COMMUNITY & LAND USE POLICIES

The General Plan's focus is on shaping the physical form of the city, yet it includes policies and statements about other aspects of the community as well. The General Plan is used by the Planning Commission when a development action is requested by an applicant.

Furthermore, the City Council uses the plan to evaluate policy changes and to make funding and budget decisions. It is used by city staff to evaluate building and development and to make recommendations on projects.

It is used by residents to understand the city's long-range plans and types of development throughout the city. The plan provides the basis for the city's development regulations and the foundation for its capital improvements program.

General Plan

WHAT IT IS



VISION, POLICIES AND GOALS SPECIFICALLY TAILORED TO THE CITY

General Plans promote the City's vision by establishing policies, goals, and strategies for elements identified and required by state statute, but are also designed to be specific to Santa Clara City. As with any flexible policy document, there is room for interpretation on the policies and goals contained in these elements, and flexibility is needed to meet the overall objectives.

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WHAT IT IS



A DYNAMIC & LIVING DOCUMENT

The General Plan represents goals and policies to guide the community over a 20 to 25 year period. There is a natural tendency to presume that the Plan, as adopted, will be applied in its entirety with minimal change over that period of time. But, such rigid application would not be responsive to the natural changes and unforeseen opportunities that arise in a community as dynamic as Santa Clara City. Making long-range decisions means that issues need to be periodically readdressed to reflect new or emerging circumstances. The General Plan is a key instrument to reflect changing perspectives and attitudes.

The policies in the General Plan are implemented and detailed through ordinances and ongoing formal procedures of the city. A few of the ordinances and written policies that carry out the plan are the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance, Capital Facilities Plans, and Design Guidelines. Over time the General Plan is a living document that is manifested by many specific decisions and events that cause it to respond to the changing conditions, needs and desires of the community.

General Plan

WHAT IT IS NOT



NOT CITY LAWS OR THE SAME
AS "THE ZONING ORDINANCE"

In practice, there is often confusion or blurring of the distinction between the role of the General Plan and the role of the Zoning Ordinance. The Plan is a "general" policy document that guides community growth and development decisions.

The Zoning Ordinance, and associated zoning maps are legal instruments that define with significant precision the permitted land uses and associated performance standards for every property within a municipal jurisdiction.

The confusion between the two very different roles probably has its origin in that Zoning Ordinance amendments and zoning map changes must conform to the policies of the General Plan.

General Plan

WHAT IT IS NOT



NOT JUST A LAND USE MAP

Many people struggle with a common misconception that the General Plan is merely the land use map. For many development decisions, it is true that land use appropriateness is the focal point of dialogue.

However, this view will typically disregard many interrelated issues that can include transportation or other infrastructure concerns, and the community's environmental and economic philosophy. The best community decisions are those that recognize and address these complex interrelationships.

General Plan

WHAT IT IS NOT



NOT A GUARANTEE FOR A REZONING OR SPECIFIC BUSINESSES

A City's General Plan does not determine or guarantee that a certain or specific business will locate within the City or at any given location, or that a future residential development will occur at any specific time. The free enterprise system and private market remain a critical component to City planning and development.

Although, the City does have the ability to provide the anticipated acreage, type of infrastructure, kind of access to a site, and in some instance, incentives, that would attract targeted businesses and uses. However, the City is not and cannot be discriminatory of brands or companies.