

PLUMAS COUNTY 2035 GENERAL PLAN LAND USE ELEMENT



Photo Credit: Town of Quincy by Mike Nellor

LAND USE ELEMENT PLANS and PLANNING

The following local and regional plans, programs, and organizations are among those that affect or can contribute to the implementation of the Land Use Element:

- Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans (2008)
- Regional Transportation Plan (2009)
- Greenville Streetscape and Revitalization Plan (2008)
- Chester Main Street Design Plan (2009)
- Chester Design Review Guidelines (1996)
- Quincy Design Review Guidelines (1992)
- Johnsville Historic Area Guidelines

- La Porte Historic Area Guidelines
- Genesee Valley Special Management Area (1993)
- Plumas County Bicycle Transportation Plan (updated 2001)
- Plumas County Trails Master Plan (under development)
- Feather River Coordinated Resource Management Group
- Feather River Watershed Management Strategy.
- Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (2005)
- Plumas County Emergency Operations Plan (2011)
- Herger-Feinstein Quincy Library Group Forest Recovery Act
- Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Plumas County Fire Safe Council Community Wildfire Protection Plan
- Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District
- Almanor Basin Watershed Advisory Committee



GOAL LU 1.1 – General Land Use

Development within the County is planned in a manner which will provide opportunities for current and future residents to enjoy rural, community-oriented living environments that are similar to those currently found in the County. Encourage higher densities in Town and Community defined areas and their identified expansion areas where appropriate, and promote in-fill development to discourage agricultural and forest lands conversion demands.

1.1.1 Future Development + Implementation Measure #1

The County shall require future residential, commercial and industrial development to be located adjacent to or within existing Planning Areas; areas identified on Plumas County's General Plan Land Use Maps as Towns, Communities, Rural Areas or Master Planned Communities (see Figures 9-15), in order to maintain Plumas County's rural character with compact and walkable communities. Future development may also be approved within areas for which Community Plans or Specific Plans have been prepared. Small, isolated housing tracts in outlying areas shall be discouraged as they disrupt surrounding rural and productive agricultural lands, forests, and ranches and are difficult and costly to provide with services. Land division may be allowed outside of Planning Areas only when the resulting development complies with all applicable General Plan Policies and County Codes.



GOAL LU 1.1 – General Land Use cont.

1.1.2 Infill Development + Implementation Measure #2

The County shall plan to concentrate new growth both within and contiguous to existing Towns and Communities and require expansion of existing infrastructure as needed to efficiently and safely serve the new growth.

1.1.3 Increased Housing Density + Implementation Measure #3

The County shall allow for and promote increased housing densities within existing developed areas where adequate public services are available and community character can be maintained.



GOAL LU 1.1 – General Land Use cont.

1.1.4 Land Divisions + Implementation Measure #4

The County shall ensure that zoning and subdivision regulations protect agricultural and ranching lands, open space, and natural resources which include grazing, forests, and wildlife habitat lands, by not allowing land divisions that convert the primary land use to residential to be developed in areas which are not specifically designated as residential in the General Plan, for which appropriate long-term planning has not been completed as outlined within the General Plan. The County shall require the following findings for land divisions outside of Planning areas:

- The resulting development will have structural fire protection;
- Land division does not result in any conflict with zoning and density standards; and

- Any clustering of parcels does not convert the primary land use to residential and is part of an overall integrated plan for resource protection.

1.1.5 Community Plans + Implementation Measure #5

In order to be responsive to the needs and opportunities of various areas within the County, specific Community Plans may be developed for designated commercial, residential, industrial or recreational areas within a Town, Community or Rural Place boundary. Adopted Plans such as the Genesee Valley Special Management Plan, community plans and specific plans become part of the County's General Plan, and thus, require an amendment to the General Plan to include the plan and any future amendments to a community or specific plan would also require a General Plan amendment.

A Community Plan will develop standards that are equal to or superior to those of the County and, at a minimum, will address the following:

- Design Standards
- Circulation and Parking
- Density
- Public Spaces
- Infrastructure
- Land Uses
- Public Health and Safety



Implementation Measures

GOAL LU 1.1 – General Land Use

Implementation	Implements What Policy	Who is Responsible
1. Encourage all new residential development projects to be located within or adjacent to mapped Planning Areas where basic infrastructure, services, and adequate response times for such services as water, wastewater disposal, utilities, fire protection, police and emergency medical, and commercial services typical for the planning area type, exist or require that the project provide its own internal infrastructure and services that are bonded for long term maintenance.	1.1.1	Planning
2. Establish a database which identifies vacant and underutilized parcels within existing developed areas. Make this information available to the public. The permitting process shall be streamlined for projects meeting in-fill goals.	1.1.2	Planning

Implementation Measures

GOAL LU 1.1 – General Land Use

Implementation	Implements What Policy	Who is Responsible
<p>3. a. In areas where adequate water, sewer and fire protection and emergency medical services exist or can be made available and community character will not be affected, identify suitable locations to designate to accommodate higher density residential use.</p> <p>b. Encourage the use of clustering of residential or non-agricultural land uses away from agriculturally-sensitive areas to minimize impact to agricultural operations, whenever possible. Consider amending existing zoning and subdivision regulations to allow for a reduction of minimum lot sizes when cluster subdivisions are used to minimize impacts on adjacent agricultural uses and/or sensitive environmental areas, and where environmental conditions allow. Consider developing a density bonus or TDR programs that support the stated intent. Consider developing a TDR program that includes Agriculture Preserve, Agriculture & Grazing and Timber Resource Lands as sending parcels.</p>	1.1.3	Planning, Board of Supervisors

Implementation Measures

GOAL LU 1.1 – General Land Use

Implementation	Implements What Policy	Who is Responsible
<p>4. a. Update the Zoning Code to ensure that areas designated for agricultural uses both limit and allow uses that directly relate to agricultural production, support agriculture or compliment agricultural uses and landscapes, such as farm stays, hunting and fishing clubs and other uses compatible with agriculture.</p> <p>b. Minimum lot size requirements for previously existing legal lots do not apply. Existing lawful non-conforming lots will be permitted to develop at a density of at least one dwelling unit per legal lot, provided all life safety-related Land Development, Environmental Health, and Building standards can be met.</p> <p>c. Adopt policies, standards, and guidelines supporting the implementation of an agricultural buffer setback outlining specifics of the setback, including special circumstances for variations in distance and permitted uses within the setback.</p> <p>d. Adopt policies that address building site clustering with creation of permanent open space, restriction of building area on lots that will support building construction, or other means which are consistent with the protection of natural resources and environmental characteristics of the site. Open space created through clustering shall be assured of permanent maintenance as open space by mechanisms such as, but not limited to, dedication, permanent easement, irrevocable trust, deed restrictions, or other mechanism assuring its permanent status.</p>	1.1.4	Planning, Board of Supervisors
<p>5. The County and the City through a joint planning effort may map and develop Community Plans that address future development opportunities and the criteria to be applied to the review of development opportunities.</p>	1.1.5	Board of Supervisors, City of Portola

GOAL LU 1.2 – Range of Land Uses

Recognize and allow for a range of land uses that preserve the qualities of existing communities and rural areas, as well as resource production areas in the County. Provide an appropriate range of land use designations to serve the needs of the residents of the County with an adequate amount of land in each designation to provide a balanced pattern of development.

1.2.1 *Land Use Designations*

To provide for an appropriate range of land use types and densities within the County, the following General Plan land use designations are established:

- Single-Family Residential
- Multiple-Family Residential
- Suburban Residential

- Secondary Suburban Residential
- Rural Residential
- Limited Access Rural Residential
- Commercial
- Resort and Recreation*
- Industrial
- Agriculture and Grazing
- Agricultural Preserve
- Mining Resource
- Timber Resource Lands
- Lake
- Open Space-Significant Wetlands
- Scenic Area
- Scenic Road
- Historic Area
- Historic Building
- Historic Road
- Public Facilities

The location and extent of each of the land use designations is shown on the General Plan Land Use Map(s). Boundary lines for the various land use designations, shown on the General Plan Land Use Maps, are intended to portray the relative location and extent of land use areas, generally following known physical features such as watercourses, roads, and parcel lines.



GOAL LU 1.2 – Range of Land Uses cont.

1.2.2 Land Use Compatibility

The General Plan Land Use Designations shall be implemented through adoption and application of compatible zoning districts of the County Zoning Regulations consistent with the following Land Use Designation Compatibility Matrix and through the adoption of zoning district maps consistent with the land use designations.

1.2.3 Home Business

The County strongly supports home businesses as a means of providing convenient employment opportunities and decreasing dependence on the auto. To ensure home businesses are keeping with the residential or rural character of the neighborhood or area, home businesses shall be subject to an administrative review or other permit processes, as may be lawfully established in the zoning ordinance.



GOAL LU 1.2 – Range of Land Uses cont.

1.2.4 Mixed Use

The County shall allow on-site residential development as an integral part of the primary building or development site for all commercial and industrial development.

1.2.5 Lot Line Adjustments

Notwithstanding other policies, lot line adjustments may be allowed for existing substandard size parcels.

1.2.6 Parceling and Condominiums

Land divisions may be allowed at parcel sizes smaller than the minimum requirements for the respective General Plan Land Use and Zoning Designations where the primary purpose of the division is to allow for the location of legally existing dwellings on one parcel while creating no new building sites. A legally existing dwelling shall be defined as dwelling built in compliance with all applicable laws in effect at the time of construction.



GOAL LU 1.3 – Coordination with City of Portola

Coordinate with the City of Portola in land use planning and development within their sphere of influence and joint planning areas. Plan towards compatibility and coordination of land use designations.

1.3.1 Working with the City of Portola + Implementation Measure #6

The County shall work closely with the City of Portola concerning planning and development of land within the City's adopted sphere of influence. In addition to the City's sphere of influence there may be other areas under the County's jurisdiction that are of planning interest for the City.

1.3.2 County and City of Portola's General Plan Consistency

While recognizing its own responsibilities and obligations, the County will cooperate, to the extent feasible, in the development and/or revision of the City of Portola's General Plan. The County may amend its General Plan within the City of Portola's sphere of influence to reflect said updates and/or revisions, unless there is a compelling land use conflict.



GOAL LU 1.3 – Coordination with City of Portola cont.

1.3.3 Development and Design in City of Portola's Sphere of Influence

Within the City of Portola's sphere of influence, discretionary projects will coordinate design, development standards and funding programs.

1.3.4 Annexation Revenues

Provide for a comprehensive and equitable distribution of revenues for all annexations. The County may amend master tax agreements to share annexation revenues seeking revenue neutrality for costs of providing County and City services with the City of Portola based upon the cost of providing facilities and services to the annexation area.



Implementation Measures

GOAL LU 1.3 – Coordination with City of Portola

Implementation	Implements What Policy	Who is Responsible
6. a. Within the City's Sphere of Influence, discretionary development projects shall first be referred to the City for possible annexation. If the City does not choose to annex, the City's review and comments shall be considered by the County in processing the discretionary development project. b. Should the Plumas Local Agency Formation establish an Area of Concern or interest to the City, applications for discretionary land use projects shall be referred to the City for review and comment.	1.3.1	Board of Supervisors, City of Portola, Plumas LAFCO, Planning

GOAL LU 1.4 – Coordination with the Military

To protect the interests and priorities of the County, create a process to identify, coordinate and assist in resolving land use conflicts within the Military Operations Areas (MOAs) and Military Training Routes (MTRs) in all areas of the County.

1.4.1 Working with the Military + Implementation Measure #7 & #21

Ensure early notification to the military of proposed discretionary development projects within Military Operations Areas (MOAs) and Military Training Routes (MTRs) and facilitate the exchange of project-related information pertinent to military operations within those areas.

1.4.2 Evaluation of Renewable Energy Projects + Implementation Measure #21

Evaluate renewable energy projects proposed within Military Operations Areas (MOAs) and Military Training Routes (MTRs) to ensure that all priorities are given due consideration, including safety, generation and transmission of alternative energy and review comments received by the military.



Implementation Measures

GOAL LU 1.4 – Coordination with the Military

Implementation	Implements What Policy	Who is Responsible
7. Amend the zoning ordinance, including, but not limited to, special use permit and variance provisions, to establish discretionary review of all proposed development projects within the MOAs.	1.4.1	Planning
21. The County shall charter the Plumas County Coordination Council to be the forum responsible for the coordination of planning efforts between the County and other local, state and federal land managers.	1.4.1 1.4.2	Board of Supervisors

GOAL LU 1.5 – Maximize Existing Infrastructure

To promote a development pattern that maximizes the use of existing infrastructure prior to the construction of new infrastructure. Develop a land use pattern to facilitate the delivery of community services in the most cost-effective manner possible for infrastructure construction and maintenance, fire protection, emergency medical and police.

1.5.1 Use of Existing Infrastructure + Implementation Measure #8

The County shall require the use of existing infrastructure for new development whenever feasible

1.5.2 Cost Effective Land Use Pattern + Implementation Measure #9

The County shall develop a land use pattern that, to the maximum extent feasible, will facilitate the delivery of community services in the most cost-effective manner for water, sewer, flood control, public safety services, and road construction and maintenance.



GOAL LU 1.5 – Maximize Existing Infrastructure cont.

1.5.3 Provision for Fire and Life Safety Services + Implementation Measure #10

The County shall require development to be located adjacent to, or within, areas where fire and life safety services exist, or can be efficiently and economically provided.

1.5.4 Maintain Existing Levels of Services

The County shall ensure new growth and developments do not create adverse impacts on existing County-owned and operated facilities.

1.5.5 Fair Share Funding for Public Services and Facilities

The County shall review development proposals for their impacts on infrastructure (for example, sewer, water, fire stations, libraries, streets, etc.). New development shall be required to pay its proportionate share of the costs of infrastructure improvements required to serve the project to the extent permitted by State law.



GOAL LU 1.5 – Maximize Existing Infrastructure cont.

1.5.6 *Coordination with Service Providers*

The County shall work with special districts, community service districts, public utility districts, mutual water companies, private water purveyors, sanitary districts, and sewer maintenance districts to provide adequate levels of public facilities and services.

1.5.7 *Municipal Service Reviews (MSRs)*

The County shall use MSRs adopted by LAFCo, as tools to assess the capacity, condition, and financing of various public utility services provided by special districts and cities, most commonly, domestic water and sanitary sewer.

1.5.8 *Library Services, Facilities, and Programs*

The County shall strive to support the Plumas County Library system and continue to encourage the use of libraries as multi-functional facilities, acting as gathering places, cultural centers, and venues for community events and programs.

1.5.9 *Diverse Health Care Facilities*

The County shall continue to encourage development of a full range of health care-related facilities to meet regional and community needs.



Implementation Measures

GOAL LU 1.5 – Maximize Existing Infrastructure

Implementation	Implements What Policy	Who is Responsible
8. Require the use of existing infrastructure for all new development. If existing infrastructure is not available or adequate, require new development to pay its reasonable fair-share towards the construction or expansion of infrastructure for roads, water, sewer, drainage and other infrastructure necessary for the completion of the development.	1.5.1	Planning
9. Identify existing water, sewer, drainage, public safety services, and roadway facilities and infrastructure, whether private or public, and include this information on the County's Geographic Information Services database making this information readily available for public and/or private inquiries. Use this information to develop a land use pattern that maximizes the use of existing infrastructure.	1.5.2	Planning, GIS, Special Districts
10. Require new developments located in an area not currently served by an organized fire or emergency services provider to be annexed into an existing fire district or establish a funding mechanism appropriate to cover costs associated with the provision of such services at a service level appropriate for the size and scale of the development. Establishment of a funding mechanism may be waived when adequate alternative service levels are provided to the satisfaction of the service district or provider.	1.5.3	Planning

GOAL LU 1.6 – Commercial and Industrial Development

To designate lands for commercial and industrial development appropriate for these uses and facilitate business and industrial opportunities. Encourage compact development contiguous to existing urban centers, active transportation corridors, or resource production areas. Discourage linear and leapfrog development patterns. Facilitate the re-use of abandoned industrial sites as appropriate.

1.6.1 Land for Commercial and Industrial Uses + Implementation Measure #11

The County shall provide adequate amounts of land in and adjacent to identified Towns and Communities and within Rural Places to be designated and zoned to allow for and support commercial and industrial development.

1.6.2 Limited Convenience Commercial Services + Implementation Measure #12

The County shall allow for limited convenience commercial services within Rural Places and Master Planned Communities upon approval of a Special Use Permit or administrative review. The uses are limited to those businesses which serve the needs of the surrounding area or which are part of an overall development plan or specific plan.



GOAL LU 1.6 – Commercial and Industrial Development cont.

1.6.3 *Transportation Support for Commercial and or Industrial Uses + Implementation Measure #13*

The County shall strive to improve access to road, rail, and air transportation in a cost-effective manner in order to facilitate the development of lands deemed appropriate for commercial and industrial uses.

1.6.4 *Transportation Support for Commercial and or Industrial Uses + Implementation Measure #14*

The County shall utilize the Rogers Field Airport in Chester, Gansner Field Airport in Quincy and Nervino Airport in Beckwourth Land Use Compatibility Plans to guide planning efforts near these facilities.



Implementation Measures

GOAL LU 1.6 – Commercial and Industrial Development

Implementation	Implements What Policy	Who is Responsible
11. a. Update the Zoning Code to be consistent with General Plan land use designations allowing for a variety of commercial and industrial uses adjacent to, and/or within, Town and Community areas. b. Support efforts to improve access to public infrastructure to facilitate the efficient economic development of commercial and industrial properties.	1.6.1	Planning
12. Amend the Zoning Code to allow limited convenience commercial services in Rural Places and Master Planned Communities or in other small residential areas upon approval of a Special Use Permit, Planned Development Permit or administrative review to ensure compliance with existing approvals.	1.6.2	Planning
13. Investigate funding opportunities and development agreements, which will provide for access improvements usable by industrial and commercial uses.	1.6.3	Planning
14. a. Ensure that the policies and development standards of the County Zoning Ordinance and similar regulatory documents are consistent with the adopted Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans regarding noise mitigation, land use restrictions, building height, lighting, and other site development standards, by the establishment of an Airport Combining Zone or an Airport Overlay Zone. b. Adopt the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans as part of the General Plan by reference.	1.6.4	Planning, Airport Land Use Commission

GOAL LU 1.7 – Preservation of Rural Lifestyle

To accommodate growth in a manner that preserves the predominate rural lifestyle and unique qualities that make the County an attractive place to live and that recognizes that a rural lifestyle does not always necessitate the provision of the full complement of services normally found in urban communities.

1.7.1 Range of Residential Densities + Implementation Measure #15

The General Plan shall provide for a range of residential density designations and shall distribute these density designations as most appropriate and consistent with other General Plan goals and policies so that future residents have a range of lifestyle opportunities available to them.



Implementation Measures

GOAL LU 1.7 – Preservation of Rural Lifestyle

Implementation	Implements What Policy	Who is Responsible
15. a. Analyze, and where necessary, amend the zoning map to be consistent with the planning area designations; Town, Community, Rural Places, Master Planned Communities. b. Initiate necessary and appropriate zoning code and zoning map amendments to ensure zoning consistency between Land Use and Zoning designations.	1.7.1	Planning

GOAL LU 1.8 – Land Use Patterns that Minimizes Travel

To develop land use patterns which minimize travel to jobs and services.

1.8.1 Land for Large-scale Commercial and Industrial Uses + Implementation Measure #16

The County shall require that sites for moderate-to large-scale industrial and commercial development be located within or near the Town and Community areas; within areas for which Specific Plans or Master Plans have been prepared; or within areas that contain, or are capable of containing, infrastructure adequate to support the use of the property for more intensive non-residential purposes, such as abandoned mill sites. Additionally, the County shall consider the location of such land uses where appropriate to reduce travel and commute times.

1.8.2 Land for Small-scale Commercial and Industrial Uses + Implementation Measure #17

The County shall provide for opportunities for small scale businesses and industrial uses through appropriate zoning.



Implementation Measures

GOAL LU 1.8 – Land Use Patterns that Minimizes Travel

Implementation	Implements What Policy	Who is Responsible
16. Incorporate within the Land Use and Zoning Map appropriate industrial and commercial uses within proximity to residential uses to minimize travel times and trip lengths.	1.8.1	Planning
17. Undertake necessary and appropriate zoning code and zoning map changes to promote and encourage small-scale business and industrial land use growth.	1.8.2	Planning

GOAL LU 1.9 – Communication Infrastructure

To accommodate communication infrastructure facilities while requiring site provisions that protect the visual quality, health and character of the County.

1.9.1 Communication Tower Location Criteria + Implementation Measure #18

The County shall provide site development criteria in the County's Zoning Code.



Implementation Measures

GOAL LU 1.9 – Communication Infrastructure

Implementation	Implements What Policy	Who is Responsible
18. Undertake necessary and appropriate zoning code and zoning map changes to promote and encourage the appropriate location for cellular tower facilities and other communication technology infrastructure within the County, utilizing such measures as co-location.	1.9.1	Planning

GOAL LU 1.10 – Renewable Energy Generation and Transmission

To accommodate renewable energy generation and transmission while requiring site provisions that protect the visual quality and character of the County.

1.10.1 Renewable Energy Generation and Transmission Location Criteria + Implementation Measure #19

The County shall collaborate with stakeholders to create renewable energy generation and transmission criteria for optimal siting in the County's Zoning Code.

1.10.2 Renewable Energy Resources and Military Operations Areas + Implementation Measure #20

The County will evaluate renewable energy projects proposed within Military Operations Areas (MOAs) and Military Training Routes (MTRs) to ensure that all priorities are given due consideration, including safety, generation and transmission of alternative energy, and review comments received by and from the military.



Implementation Measures

GOAL LU 1.10 – Renewable Energy Generation and Transmission

Implementation	Implements What Policy	Who is Responsible
19. The County will make the necessary and appropriate zoning code and zoning map changes to promote and encourage the appropriate renewable energy resources and transmission corridors in the County's Zoning Code. The County will assist stakeholders in resolving generation and transmission siting issues.	1.10.1	Planning
20. The County shall coordinate with the military experts to site renewable energy facilities in a manner that does not significantly impact military necessities. The County will give due consideration to issues including, but not limited to: light and glare, heat generation, smoke, dust, equipment testing and operation, personnel training and flight operations. The County will facilitate collaboration between stakeholders to ensure balanced and compatible land use priorities.	1.10.2	Planning

GOAL LU 1.11 – Land Use and Water Conservation

To promote development patterns that recognize the need to conserve water resources, consistent with other stated goals.

1.11.1 Groundwater Management Plans

The County shall support the development and implementation of a regional groundwater management plan and shall work with water resources agencies, water users, and other affected parties to develop basin-specific plans for high priority groundwater basins to ensure a sustainable, adequate, safe and economically viable groundwater supply for existing and future uses within the County.

