



# CHAPTER 7: COMMUNITY AND RESOURCE PROTECTION



## OVERVIEW

One of the City's key responsibilities is to support and protect the community's quality of life. Elk Grove's culture and identity are built on a foundation of natural and cultural assets: history, art, recreational pastimes, and local and surrounding natural resources. Conserving these assets is vital to fortifying Elk Grove's character and livability. Balancing community growth with the desire to maintain natural assets and local institutions that contribute to quality of life requires the City to protect and manage historic and natural resources, ensuring they continue to benefit the community.

Another important strategy for protecting local assets and strengthening local identity is to promote effective governance, including both civic engagement among residents and decisions made by elected and appointed community representatives. The City uses a variety of traditional and nontraditional methods to determine community needs and desires, and strives to ensure that all residents understand the process and feel included in decision-making.

This chapter of the General Plan establishes goals and policies to foster effective governance; to maintain and preserve natural resources, parks and open spaces, trails and other recreational amenities, cultural and historic assets, and the character of neighborhoods and districts; and to promote sustainability and livability. Each of these elements plays an important role in forming the unique identity of Elk Grove and making it a desirable place to live, and ensuring careful management and protection of the City's natural and cultural heritage for current residents and future generations.

The Community and Resource Protection chapter contains goals and policies addressing six topics listed below, which are each assigned a two- or three-letter acronym. Within each topic, the following goals further the Community Vision and Supporting Principles.

### GOVERNMENT OVERANCE (GOV)

- **GOAL GOV-1:** A Transparent and Collaborative Decision-Making Process
- **GOAL GOV-2:** An Engaged and Informed Community

### ARTS AND CULTURE (ART)

- **GOAL ART-1:** Celebrated Arts and Culture
- **GOAL ART-2:** Art That Is Accessible to All Community Members

### HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES (HR)

- **GOAL HR-1:** Preserved and Enhanced Historic Resources



- **GOAL HR-2:** Protected Cultural and Tribal Resources
- **GOAL HR-3:** A Celebrated Heritage and Culture

### PARKS AND TRAILS (PT)

- **GOAL PT-1:** Plentiful Parks and Open Spaces that are Safe, Clean, and High Quality
- **GOAL PT-2:** A Connected Parks and Trails System

### NATURAL RESOURCES(NR)

- **GOAL NR-1:** Protected Natural Open Space Lands that Provide Recreation and Habitat for Native Species
- **GOAL NR-2:** Preserved Trees and Urban Forest
- **GOAL NR-3:** A Clean and Adequate Water Supply
- **GOAL NR-4:** Improved Air Quality
- **GOAL NR-5:** Reduced Greenhouse Gas Emissions that Align with Local, State, and Other Goals
- **GOAL NR-6:** Reduced Energy Demand and Increased Renewable Sources

### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (SD)

- **GOAL SD-1:** Sustainable City Management
- **GOAL SD-2:** Green Building



*Community Outreach on this General Plan*



## RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER CHAPTERS

*The Community and Resource Protection* chapter most closely relates to the *Planning Framework, Mobility, and Services, Health, and Safety* chapters.

The *Planning Framework* chapter (Chapter 3) identifies desired future uses for all lands in the Planning Area. Uses related to the *Community and Resource Protection* chapter include parks, recreational facilities, and public and privately owned open spaces, as well as any uses or design elements that contribute to the culture and heritage of a neighborhood or the City as a whole.

The *Mobility* chapter (Chapter 6) includes goals and policies that identify and ensure access to open spaces and recreational areas, as well as contribute to the overall character of a neighborhood. The *Mobility* chapter also supports key implementation tools such as the *Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan* and the *Climate Action Plan*, which include specific standards, programs, and measures to support alternative transportation investments, such as trail systems for pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians in open spaces.

The *Services, Health, and Safety* chapter (Chapter 8) includes goals and policies addressing services provided by the City such as waste treatment, utilities, and public health and safety, including open space lands such as parks and trails.





## SUPPORTING PRINCIPLES

The *Community and Resource Protection* chapter carries out the following Supporting Principles:

*City Core, Heritage, & Well-Known Neighborhoods.* This principle recognizes that the City has a thriving civic core and a well-preserved Old Town that provide gathering spaces for the community. It also calls for preservation of the quality of Elk Grove’s neighborhoods. Goals and policies in this chapter support the preservation and enhancement of the City’s historic and natural resources that contribute to the character and heritage of the community. Policies in this chapter also support a thriving arts and cultural environment and connected parks and open space system, which emphasize and strengthen these community assets.

*Outdoor Recreation Is Right Outside Our Door.* This principle ensures that Elk Grove continues to enhance and maintain recreational open spaces so that they are safe, connected, and accessible. Goals and policies in this chapter both address the provision of parks and open space and reinforce how these facilities are connected to a larger network of open space amenities, providing access to recreational opportunities both within the City and beyond.

*Clean, Green Practices & Healthy Living.* This principle identifies the City’s desire to be adaptive to and resilient against climate change. It also recognizes the importance of responsible resource use and working together to conserve and wisely use water and energy. Goals and policies in this chapter address preservation and management of natural resources, support healthy living options through a complete and connected parks and open space system, and enhance quality of life through arts, culture, and preservation of the City’s heritage.



*Native Plantings in Elk Grove*



## GOALS AND POLICIES: GOVERNANCE

Governance refers to the process of making and implementing decisions in the public interest. Effective governance requires public participation and decision-making processes that are accountable, transparent, inclusive, and efficient. When governance systems and processes in a community are strong and effective, community members have greater confidence in their elected officials, which provides an ethical basis for local government and leads to better decisions.

A community that actively participates in civic decision-making has greater influence over its quality of life. Without an engaged community, decision-makers must rely on other information when determining a course of action. The public can be involved in and influence local governance by attending public meetings and events, community organizing efforts, and advocating to the City Council and City commissions and committees.

Civic engagement is a right and responsibility of community members, but the City also must provide clear and easy avenues by which the public can be involved. To maximize participation, the City needs to meet the public in places where community members are most comfortable and in ways that correlate to their daily lives.

### **GOAL GOV-1: A TRANSPARENT AND COLLABORATIVE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS**

Transparency in the decision-making process fosters a sense of trust and understanding in the community when issues are being considered by decision-makers. Identifying consistent criteria for the evaluation of proposals can increase predictability, which will build a common community understanding of what considerations are being made in the process, allow for more meaningful community participation, and hold decision-makers accountable.

#### POLICIES: DECISION MAKING PROCESS

- Policy GOV-1-1:** Promote community involvement and public participation.
- Policy GOV-1-2:** Establish a predictable, transparent, and accessible decision-making process for planning determinations that is available to all community members.
- Policy GOV-1-3:** Require that major planning efforts, policies, or projects (for example, General Plan updates, development of specific plans, large commercial development projects) include an outreach effort.
- Policy GOV-1-4:** Encourage and facilitate collaboration between organizations, service districts, schools, and City departments.



**Policy GOV-1-5:** Consider three components of sustainability—the environment, the economy, and the community—in decision-making for new development projects, special projects, and proposed policies and programs.

## GOAL GOV-2: AN ENGAGED AND INFORMED COMMUNITY

The City should ensure decisions are transparent and derived from substantial evidence, with community members given the option to voice their support or concerns in a productive way. Offering a range of outreach forums and venues, reaching out to different segments of the population, and engaging with the community early in a decision-making process will ensure that the many perspectives and priorities of community members are heard, considered, and incorporated as appropriate. The City can also play a role in facilitating conversations and disseminating public information on relevant topics in order to increase community engagement.

### POLICIES: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**Policy GOV-2-1:** Distribute important information on government actions and processes in multiple open data formats using digital and physical venues to reflect diverse community needs and preferences.

**Policy GOV-2-2:** Reach out to segments of the community that could potentially be left out of the decision-making process, including youth, immigrants, minority racial and ethnic groups, nonnative English speakers, and low-income households.

**Policy GOV-2-3:** Provide opportunities for, and actively recruit, diverse representation on City boards, commissions, and advisory committees that contribute to City decision-making.

**Policy GOV-2-4:** Continue to support the use of volunteers and community groups in public safety and community engagement.



*Community Engagement at an Old Town Event*



## GOALS AND POLICIES: ARTS AND CULTURE

Community members cherish the many ways in which art and culture are incorporated into the City. Artistic venues and events offer opportunities for leisure and enjoyment of community life; they contribute to Elk Grove's unique character and sense of place. Supporting artistic and cultural institutions and programming is an important way that the City can enhance community identity and residents' quality of life.

- City Hall
- Civic Center
- Police Service Center
- Special Waste Collection Center

There are also recognizable, permanent art installations in other public places and private developments throughout the City, including utility boxes. Elk Grove hosts arts and culture events, such as festivals and art receptions, throughout the year. Various other arts expositions and events occur throughout the community.

As part of its function, the City's Arts Commission maintains a virtual Citywide Art Guide for the benefit of residents and visitors, which includes a comprehensive inventory of art pieces and art events in Elk Grove.

### GOAL ART-1: CELEBRATED ARTS AND CULTURE

The City sponsors or supports a number of arts and culture programs and events in the community. Building on the success of these events, the City can continue to support and promote expanded arts in Elk Grove that provide amenities for existing and future residents and celebrate the City as a cultural destination in the region.

#### POLICIES: PUBLIC ART

- Policy ART-1-1:** Incorporate artistic considerations, including architecture, public art, and event opportunities, in local decision-making.
- Policy ART-1-2:** Increase public awareness of the arts in Elk Grove through greater promotion of community arts programs and events.



## GOAL ART-2: ART THAT IS ACCESSIBLE TO ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

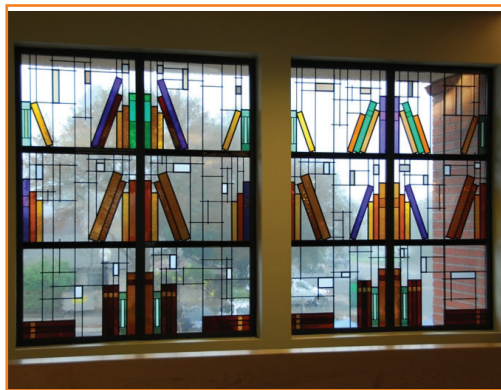
Elk Grove is a diverse community that values arts and culture. The City can showcase the arts community through continued support for existing programs and events and by expanding community members' access to a variety of programs and events.

### POLICIES: ACCESSIBLE ART

- Policy ART-2-1:** Improve access to creative and artistic involvement through events and learning opportunities for all neighborhoods, cultural communities, and socioeconomic segments of the City.
- Policy ART-2-2:** Support and facilitate arts and cultural programs that embrace and represent diverse populations.
- Policy ART-2-3:** Support provision of adequate work spaces, show spaces, publicity, and events for local artists.



*Local Art in Elk Grove*





## GOALS AND POLICIES: HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Historic and cultural resources are physical representations of the City’s history and culture. Elk Grove has cultural roots in Native American life, the rich Delta lands, early ranching settlements, the Gold Rush and the railroad, the American dream of homeownership, and the ongoing tradition of agriculture in California’s Central Valley.

Historic resources exist in and around the City, including ranches, transportation features, burial sites and cemeteries, religious structures, cultural landscapes, and agricultural, residential, educational, commercial, industrial, and civic facilities. These historic places lend a strong sense of character and place to Elk Grove, reinforcing our community’s roots and identity.



*Old Town Elk Grove*

Buildings and ranch holdings in Elk Grove date back to the late 1800s and early 1900s. Some of the first buildings in modern Elk Grove developed along Elk Grove Boulevard and became what is known today as Old Town Elk Grove, which is a federally recognized Historic District. The community also historically had notable neighboring agricultural communities that have been incorporated into Elk Grove proper. The community of Sheldon, in the vicinity of Sheldon Road, Excelsior Road, Grant Line Road, Pleasant School Road, and Wilton Road, evolved as a small farming community and retains its agricultural economy roots and farmstead feel. This agricultural heritage, in Sheldon and beyond, is an integral part of Elk Grove’s identity. Elk Grove is also home to some California Historical Landmarks. (Note: Agricultural resources and related issues are discussed in Chapter 4, Urban and Rural Development.)

Due to its location in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, the area where Elk Grove sits today has been the site of human endeavors for many hundreds of years. More than 35 archaeological sites have been identified in the City, including settlement foundations, pestles, glass and bottle fragments, wells, cisterns, and machinery.

A number of community institutions are dedicated to the preservation of historical and cultural resources, including the California Native American Heritage Commission, the Elk Grove Historical Society, the Old Town Foundation, and the Elk Grove Historic Preservation Committee.

### **GOAL HR-1: PRESERVED AND ENHANCED HISTORIC RESOURCES**

Preservation of local historic resources, including the Old Town historic district, the agricultural heritage community of Sheldon, and the many individual State-designated landmarks in the community, contributes to the ongoing community legacy of Elk Grove and helps to enhance community livability. The City will engage in ongoing efforts to identify and preserve these historic resources.



**POLICIES: HISTORIC RESOURCES**

- Policy HR-1-1:** Encourage the appropriate adaptive reuse of historic resources and buildings.
- Policy HR-1-2:** Strive to preserve historic buildings and resources through adaptive re-use.
- Policy HR-1-3:** Encourage efforts that prevent the misuse, disrepair, and demolition of historic resources and buildings.

**GOAL HR-2: PROTECTED CULTURAL AND TRIBAL RESOURCES**

Preservation of archaeological sites and other cultural resources associated with Native American tribes requires coordination with various institutions, such as the Native American Heritage Commission, dedicated to preserving these resources.

**POLICIES: CULTURAL RESOURCES**

- Policy HR-2-1:** Protect and preserve prehistoric and historic archaeological resources throughout the City.
- Policy HR-2-2:** Consult when appropriate with local Native American tribes, the California Native American Heritage Commission, and any other appropriate organizations and individuals to minimize potential impacts to cultural and tribal resources.
- Policy HR-2-3:** Identify and evaluate local archaeological resources for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.
- Policy HR-2-4:** Ensure that City ordinances, programs, and policies create an environment that fosters the preservation, rehabilitation, and maintenance of historic, archaeological, and tribal resources.



*Open Space near Elk Grove*



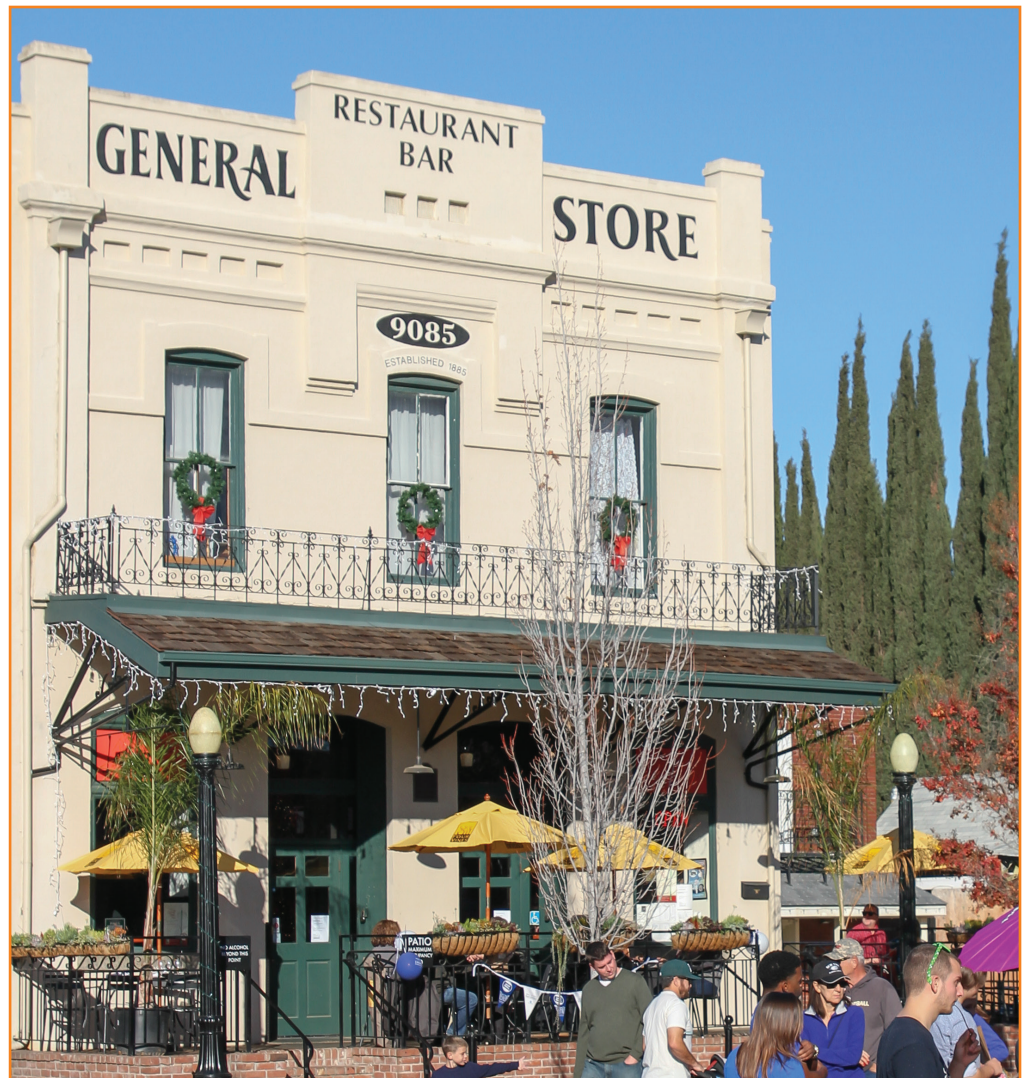
## GOAL HR-3: A CELEBRATED HERITAGE AND CULTURE

Historic resources are physical representations of our history and culture; as such, it is important to identify and protect these resources. In addition to preservation, embracing and emphasizing these historical features is important to maintaining Elk Grove's historical identity. Working with historical societies, displaying informational signage in areas of historic or cultural significance, and facilitating events and participation that highlight the City's historical character are ways to promote these resources and the stories they tell.

### POLICIES: HISTORIC DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

**Policy HR-3-1:** Communicate Elk Grove's history using a variety of methods.

**Policy HR-3-2:** Encourage new development to be compatible with adjacent existing historic structures in terms of scale, massing, building material, and general architectural treatment.



*Historical Building in Old Town Elk Grove*



## GOALS AND POLICIES: PARKS AND TRAILS

Parks and trails in Elk Grove are a significant point of pride for the community and contribute to the health and quality of life of residents and visitors. Access and proximity to recreational facilities is one of the most important ways to foster a livable community. Parks and recreation services in Elk Grove are provided by the Cosumnes Community Services District (CCSD). The City and the CCSD work collaboratively to plan for, fund, design, and construct new park facilities. Together, the CCSD and City maintain a Parks and Recreation Master Plan that identifies standards for maintaining existing parks as well as standards and desired locations for future parks.

Elk Grove has a growing network of trails that connect the developed areas of the community with parks, open space, greenbelts, and wildlife areas. The Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan contains policies and implementation measures for improving and expanding the multimodal network throughout the City.

An important future goal for the City and the CCSD is to expand the existing trails system to make connections to open space resources outside the Planning Area, including the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge and the Cosumnes River Preserve.

### GOAL PT-1: PLENTIFUL PARKS AND OPEN SPACES THAT ARE SAFE, CLEAN, AND HIGH QUALITY

Elk Grove’s parks and open spaces are essential assets that offer residents opportunities for recreation and contact with nature. The City will continue to work with the Cosumnes Community Services District (CCSD) to ensure that there is an adequate amount of open space as Elk Grove grows; to maintain existing parks and recreational facilities in good condition; and to provide high-quality recreational programming.

#### POLICIES: PARK FACILITIES

- Policy PT-1-1:** Work in conjunction with the CCSD to provide parks and recreation services for Elk Grove residents in accordance with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the Park Design Principles, and the Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan and any successor policies or regulations in these or any other documents.
- Policy PT-1-2:** Land use and management of parks and facilities will be provided in conjunction with all other agencies that provide park and trail facilities.
- Policy PT-1-3:** Require the provision of park land at a minimum of 5 acres per 1,000 residents, consistent with the Quimby Act.



- Policy PT-1-4:** Promote investment in and upgrades to park infrastructure and services within the City’s limited role under the Memorandum of Understanding with the CCSD.
- Policy PT-1-5:** Funding for maintenance of parks and/or trails shall be assured to the City’s satisfaction prior to approval of any Final Subdivision Map which contains or contributes to the need for public parks and facilities.
- Policy PT-1-6:** Work with the CCSD to provide accessible designated park and open space areas in growth areas, and require developers to incorporate open space where appropriate as a condition of project approval.
- Policy PT-1-7:** Coordinate with the CCSD to prioritize the development of new parks and other recreational services, including low-impact facilities and equipment for older adults and the disabled, in underserved neighborhoods.
- Policy PT-1-8:** To the extent appropriate and mutually agreed, partner with CCSD on programs and activities that benefit residents and/or improve services.

#### POLICIES: RECREATION PROGRAMS

- Policy PT-1-9:** Work with the CCSD, Wilton Rancheria, and other local organizations to promote equitable recreation programs that engage underserved communities and people with health concerns in a culturally sensitive manner.

#### POLICIES: OPEN SPACE IN NEW DEVELOPMENT

- Policy PT-1-10:** Design projects adjacent to open space areas in a manner that protects the integrity and function of the open space area.
- Policy PT-1-11:** In land uses adjacent to natural open space areas, provide on-site landscaping as a transition to natural habitats to the extent feasible.
- Policy PT-1-12:** Where feasible, provide accessible multi-use trails in open space areas, with an emphasis on trail connections to area-wide systems.
- Standard PT-1-12.a:** Require the provision of pedestrian and bicycle access between the industrial properties and trail systems in adjacent open space areas.



- Policy PT-1-13:** Locate streets and other public infrastructure improvements so as to minimize intrusion into and, to the extent feasible, preserve open space areas, particularly wetlands and areas of cultural significance.
- Policy PT-1-14:** Restrict wetland preserves to passive recreation activities compatible with the natural communities.
- Policy PT-1-15:** Acquire or designate new wildlife and wetland preservation areas.

## GOAL PT-2: A CONNECTED PARKS AND TRAILS SYSTEM

Continuing to provide plentiful parks and connected trails that are accessible to all community members, and expanding locations to accommodate future growth, are top priorities for the City. A park system that is connected by a complete system of multiuse trails will require coordination with those agencies involved in the planning and maintenance of open space facilities.

### POLICIES: PARK AND TRAIL CONNECTIONS

Trails are also discussed in Mobility (Chapter 6) under the policies titled Complete Streets Design and Improvements to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Network and Overall Experience.

- Policy PT-2-1:** Work with nearby jurisdictions to plan for a connected network of trails and parks throughout the region that link to housing, employment and commercial centers, public transit, and community facilities.
- Policy PT-2-2:** Explore additional trail and path connections between parks, greenbelts, waterways, and regional open spaces to both enhance access and recreational opportunities for the community, in addition to serving as a wildlife corridor. Consider stream corridors, floodways, electrical transmission corridors, and similar features as possible opportunity sites.
- Policy PT-2-3:** Continue to implement the adopted Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan and complete regular updates to the plan as necessary.
- Policy PT-2-4:** Encourage the creation of a regional trail/open space system that links the Cosumnes River with the Sacramento River and provides for trail connections between Elk Grove and these open space areas.
- Policy PT-2-5:** Increase and improve access points and connections to open space areas from local and regional trails.



- Policy PT-2-6:** Locate trails which parallel streams beyond riparian corridors and wetlands to minimize wildlife impacts and serve as a wildlife linkage. Restrict such trails to nonmotorized traffic.
- Policy PT-2-7:** Avoid placing recreational trails adjacent to or on farmland if feasible alternative routes exist elsewhere in the vicinity. However, if no other feasible routes exist, design trail facilities in cooperation with adjacent property owners to minimize adverse impacts on farming practices.
- Policy PT-2-8:** Investigate opportunities to establish new parks, open space areas, greenways, and trail networks to connect existing green spaces and ensure all residents have access to nature. Explore participation in the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) programs administered through California State Parks, which support the acquisition and development of public parks and other outdoor recreation sites.

## GOALS AND POLICIES: NATURAL RESOURCES

### NATURAL RESOURCE PRESERVATION

Elk Grove is located in a natural ecosystem that includes underlying soils and geology, habitat for plant species and wildlife, and waterways such as rivers and streams that form part of the larger Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Conservation and stewardship of these natural resources are essential to ensure the long-term health and viability of the human community that depends on the surrounding ecosystem. Similarly, maintaining good air quality by reducing harmful pollutants in the air, including greenhouse gas emissions, is critical to support both human and ecological health.

*Elk Grove Park*





## OPEN SPACE AND HABITAT CONSERVATION

Open space is defined as lands that are undeveloped and maintained in their natural state. Although no natural open spaces exist within the Planning Area, there are several notable open spaces in adjacent jurisdictions, such as the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge and the Cosumnes River Preserve. Access to nearby open spaces for recreation and enjoyment of nature is important to Elk Grove residents. The City recognizes that future development in Elk Grove could have impacts on these areas, since an increase in the local population would result in higher and more intensive use of nearby open space lands. Therefore, the City has policies designed to protect, enhance, and access these nearby open spaces.

Some streams and creeks in Elk Grove are surrounded by dense riparian vegetation, and these areas provide wildlife habitat as well as recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. Maintenance in these areas is often necessary for flood protection and fire prevention, to limit homeless activity, and to address other unsafe conditions. In addition, there are plant and animal species in the Planning Area that are listed as threatened or endangered at the State and/or national level, including Swainson's hawk and the valley elderberry longhorn beetle. These special-status species require special consideration when planning future development.

Some jurisdictions elect to adopt Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs), a tool for the management and preservation of lands providing valuable natural habitat that seek to balance the needs of endangered or threatened species with the needs and desired uses of the property owner. The adoption and implementation of HCPs is provided under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). An HCP is a voluntary agreement between the federal government and a landowner (private or state/local government) that allows development projects to obtain an incidental take permit under the ESA in exchange for establishing protections and management strategies for endangered and threatened species. A local example of an HCP is the South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan (SSHCP), adopted by the County of Sacramento and other public agency partners (including the City of Rancho Cordova, City of Galt, Sacramento County Water Agency, and others) in October 2018. The City may consider adopting a Habitat Conservation Plan to enhance management and protection of lands within the Planning Area that are known to contain habitat for threatened or endangered species. With any such HCP, rewilding opportunities should be addressed. Rewilding focuses on returning ecosystems to their former states as close as possible while allowing for plant, animal, and other ecosystem substitutions to account for changing future conditions. Identifying opportunities for rewilding would provide a nature-based solution that supports sustainability, enhances quality of life, and builds long-term environmental and social resilience.

In seeking to balance development pressures with the need to conserve open space in and around Elk Grove, clustered development is a valuable tool that can be applied in the planning and design of new subdivisions. Clustered development, an alternative approach to conventional subdivision development, is when residential lots in a proposed subdivision are grouped or clustered closer together in order to preserve the rest of the land for open space.



As noted in previous chapters, there are also large amounts of agricultural land in and around Elk Grove. The General Plan addresses policies related to agricultural land in Chapter 4, Urban and Rural Development.

### TREES AND URBAN FORESTRY

Trees are a natural resource that contribute to the ecological health of Elk Grove and the surrounding area. Trees provide habitat for birds and other animals, produce oxygen and improve air quality, absorb carbon dioxide that is emitted from the burning of fossil fuels, provide shade and reduce temperatures in urban areas, and absorb and filter stormwater.

In addition to their numerous environmental benefits, trees are a scenic resource and enhance Elk Grove’s visual character, aesthetic quality, and livability. The City has made a commitment to preserve existing trees by establishing protections for trees designated as landmark trees, trees of local significance, secured trees, or trees in the right-of-way. Title 19 of the Elk Grove Municipal Code includes definitions of each classification of tree. These protections apply to mature trees as well as to trees planted in the course of development. Under this classification system, older trees that have historical significance as well as unusual or unique trees are considered historic resources (see Historic and Cultural Resources section on page 7). The City has regulations related to trees and urban forestry located in Chapter 19.12 (Tree Preservation and Protection) of the Municipal Code.

### WATERWAYS AND WATER QUALITY

#### Surface Waterways

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is California’s most complex waterway in terms of social, economic, and ecological factors. Water in the Delta has essential agricultural applications in California’s Central Valley, provides clean water for cities across the State, and is necessary to maintain the region’s rich aquatic habitats.

Elk Grove is located in the Sacramento River watershed, which covers 27,000 square miles from Lake Shasta to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Surface water resources in Elk Grove are part of the Morrison Creek Stream Group and include Elder, Elk Grove, Laguna, Morrison, Strawberry, and Whitehouse Creeks. Florin, Gerber, and Unionhouse Creeks are located close to the City. Deer Creek is located in the eastern portion of the City, parallel to the Cosumnes River, which forms the City’s eastern border. All of the creeks in the area drain into the Morrison Creek Stream Group, then into the Sacramento River.

#### Water Quality

With a potential increase in developed land in and around Elk Grove, increases in impervious surface area have the potential to increase the flow (volume and speed) of stormwater runoff. This can exacerbate erosion, and the amount of pollutants picked up from roadways, which can diminish water quality in nearby streams. Incorporation



of low-impact development (LID) and water quality features (e.g., bioswales, rain gardens, and permeable pavements) into development projects can reduce the impacts of stormwater on water bodies in and around the Planning Area.

Elk Grove's standards for water quality are guided by the Sacramento County National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit, under which the City is a co-permittee. The permit allows the City to discharge urban runoff from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s) in its jurisdiction. Urban stormwater is a primary source of diazinon and chlorpyrifos in Sacramento County's urban creeks. These chemicals were banned for nonagricultural uses in the early 2000s, significantly reducing pesticide contamination in local water bodies. In the Sacramento County NPDES region, exceedance of diazinon and chlorpyrifos since 2007 has been observed outside of the Planning Area.

Pollutants in stormwater that runs over Elk Grove's streets and is carried into neighboring water bodies can exacerbate water quality issues. The City has developed and implements a Stormwater Quality Improvement Plan that includes details on how to reduce runoff from construction, commercial and industrial uses, municipal operations, illicit discharges, and new development.

### **Air Quality**

Elk Grove is located in the Sacramento Valley Air Basin. This portion of the Sacramento Valley Air Basin is designated as a nonattainment area for air quality standards for ozone and particulate matter (i.e., the levels of these contaminants exceed the air quality standards established under State and federal regulations). Specifically, 8-hour and 1-hour ozone levels in Elk Grove fail to meet State standards, and particulate matter fails to attain several State and national standards.

The primary source of air pollution in the region is emissions from the transportation sector. As development in Elk Grove continues, new vehicle trips and activities will contribute to reduced air quality. As a result, growth will pose further challenges for air quality to attain and maintain State and national pollutant standards. Additional growth could exacerbate the conditions that degrade air quality, as well as cause increased levels of exposure to air pollutants as more people live and work in the community.

The City's efforts toward State and federal air quality compliance occur through implementation of policies that encourage cleaner, alternative modes of travel such as public transit, walking, and bicycling, as outlined in Chapter 6: Mobility. In addition, the land use policies in Chapter 4: Urban and Rural Development aim to improve the accessibility of services by placing them in closer proximity to where people live and work, which will help improve local air quality.



Other sources of air pollution in the Sacramento Valley include heavy construction equipment and wood burning in residential fireplaces and woodstoves.

### **Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions contribute to local air quality concerns. The Global Warming Solutions Act (Assembly Bill [AB] 32) requires that California significantly reduce its emissions of GHGs in order to minimize the impacts of climate change. To ensure the City is taking steps to meet its fair share of the State’s GHG reduction goals, Elk Grove has completed an inventory of GHG emissions and adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP). Table 7-1 categorizes Citywide GHG emissions by sector as of 2013 (listed as metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents, or MTCO<sub>2e</sub>) the most recent year for which an inventory has been completed.

The CAP and the General Plan outline GHG emissions reduction targets for

**TABLE 7-1:  
2013 CITYWIDE EMISSIONS BY SECTOR**

SECTOR	2005 MTCO <sub>2E</sub>	PERCENT OF TOTAL	2013 MTCO <sub>2E</sub>	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Residential built environment	225,190	28%	231,400	25%
Nonresidential built environment	103,170	13%	129,860	14%
Transportation (on-road vehicles)	348,370	43%	430,340	47%
Off-road equipment	83,800	10%	93,340	10%
Solid waste	36,380	5%	26,260	3%
Water and wastewater	3,070	<1%	6,562	<1%
Agriculture	5,450	<1%	1,030	<1%
Total	808,410	100%	918,790	100%

*Source: Compiled by Ascent Environmental 2018*

future years that are designed to reduce emissions within the Elk Grove community in a manner consistent with State regulations and guidelines. Because GHGs are generated by a variety of sources, a varied approach to reducing GHG emissions is most effective. The CAP inventory of GHG emissions indicate that major emissions sources in the city include residential and commercial/industrial building energy use, on-road vehicles, off-road vehicles, solid waste, and wastewater. The CAP establishes that emissions in the baseline year, 2013, were 5.6 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> per capita and community equaled 918,790 MTCO<sub>2e</sub>.

If all community activities were to continue under a business-as-usual scenario with no reduction measures they would reach 1,523,936 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> by 2030, a 65 percent increase over 2013. However, the CAP estimates that with measures taken as a result of the State’s legislative actions emission would reduce those emissions to 4.5 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> per capita by 2030 and 4.3 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> per capita by 2050, resulting in community emissions of 888,509 and 978,881 respectively for those years. Measures



outlined in the General Plan and CAP would further reduce the community’s emissions to 3.8 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per capita by 2030 and 3.0 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per capita by 2050. These reductions are projected results of twenty-one reduction measures contained in the CAP in three broad policy areas: built environment, resource conservation, and transportation. The greatest percentage of these reductions, 56%, would be achieved through efficiency and renewable energy improvements to the built environment, while resource conservation measures would result in a 12% reduction, and transportation alternatives and congestion management measures would result in a 32% reduction.

**Co-Benefits**

Preserving natural resources offers a wide range of co-benefits that extend beyond environmental protection. Co-benefits can be additional social, economic, or environmental benefits derived from a program, policy, or intervention. For example, expanding the urban tree canopy will reduce greenhouse gases by absorbing carbon dioxide, reduce the urban heat island by providing more natural shade and evapotranspiration, and can improve public health and quality of life by encouraging walking, cycling, and other physical activities. Intact natural systems improve public health through better air and water quality, support greater community resilience through providing natural flood control, help reduce greenhouse gas emissions by supporting carbon storage, and create greater local food production through improved soil health. Additionally, protecting natural resources may help advance social equity by ensuring that all communities have access to the environmental, cultural, and health benefits nature provides.

**NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

In addition to conserving and protecting the natural ecosystem in and around Elk Grove, long-term planning requires careful management of elements of the natural environment that provide resources which residents of Elk Grove use to meet their daily needs. These include the local water supply as well as the generation of energy to power homes and businesses.



*Creek in Elk Grove*

**WATER RESOURCES**

Important water resource issues to consider in Elk Grove include water supply, groundwater recharge, recycled water, and water conservation.

**Water Supply**

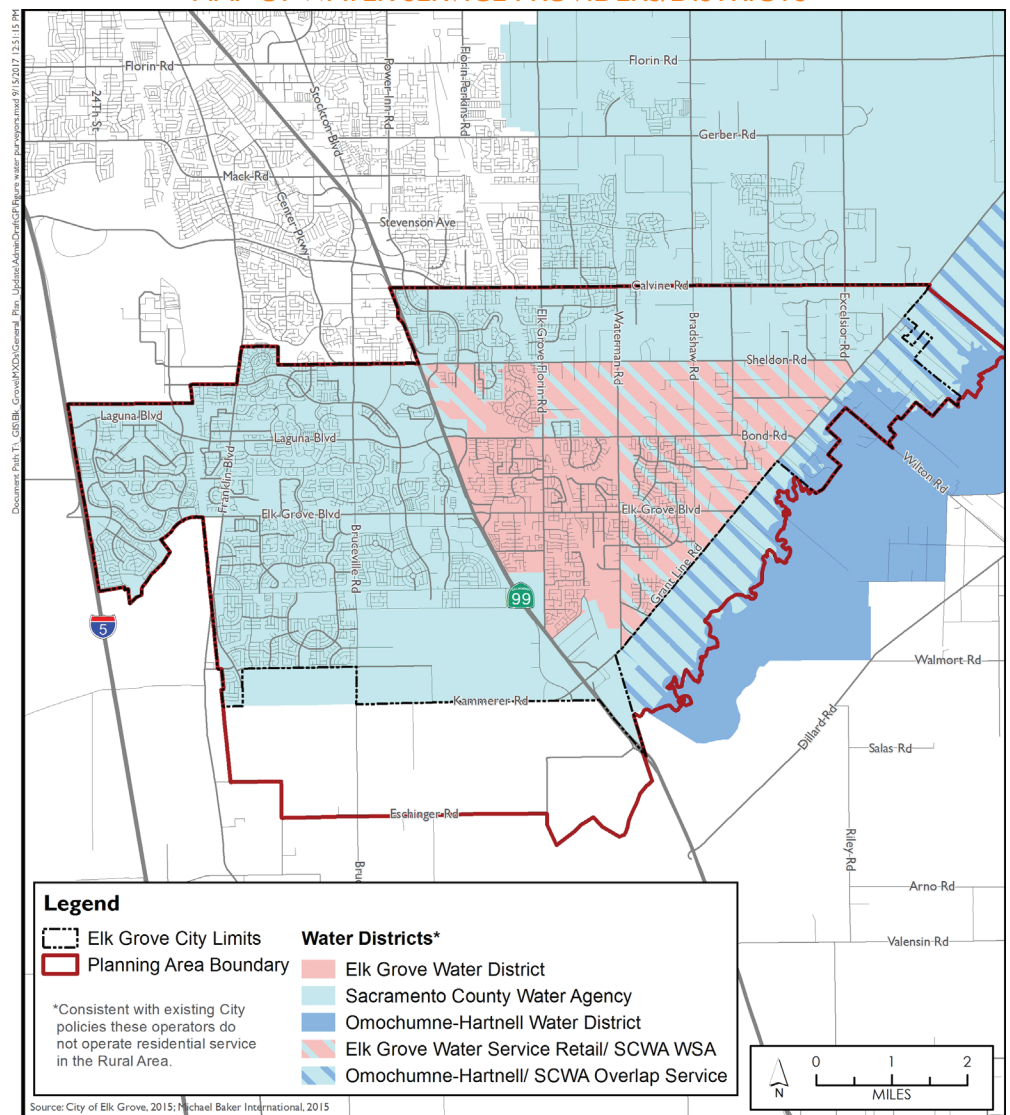
Water supply in Elk Grove consists of both surface water and groundwater sources. Runoff from precipitation and snowmelt from the Sierra Nevada are the main sources of surface water supply in the City. However, a majority of the City’s water supply comes from groundwater. The South American Subbasin of the Sacramento Valley Groundwater Basin is the hydrologic basin underlying this area.

There are three water service providers in the Planning Area: the Elk Grove Water District (EGWD), which is managed by the Florin Resource Conservation District;



the Omochumne-Hartnell Water District (OHWD); and the Sacramento County Water Agency (SCWA) (see Figure 7-1). The EGWD serves residents and businesses in a triangular area of approximately 13 square miles within the 2018 City limits. The service area is bounded to the north by Sheldon Road, to the east by Grant Line Road, to the south by Union Industrial Park, and to the west by State Route (SR) 99. The SCWA's South Service Area provides water service to all other portions of incorporated Elk Grove, as well as to the area to the north and east of the City boundaries. The OHWD, which expands across the eastern portion of the Planning Area, overlaps with parts of the SCWA. The OHWD serves only agricultural users while the SCWA serves customers in both the incorporated City and the Planning Area. The notable exception is the Rural Area, which is located within the service territory of these water agencies but, consistent with City policies, is not provided service for residential hookups where water is provided from individual wells. There are no water providers to the south of the City past Kammerer Road; this portion of the Planning Area is occupied primarily by agriculture and properties utilize water from on-site wells.

**FIGURE 7-1:  
MAP OF WATER SERVICE PROVIDERS/DISTRICTS**





The State of California’s Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), signed into law in 2014, requires governments and water agencies of high and medium priority basins to stop the practice of overdrawing groundwater and to balance levels of groundwater pumping and recharge. Under the SGMA local Groundwater Sustainability Agencies that manage critical groundwater basins in California are required to adopt Groundwater Sustainability Plans.

The California Department of Water Resources has classified the South American Subbasin as high priority under the draft 2018 SGMA Basin Prioritization framework. In 2018 the Sacramento Central Groundwater Authority initiated development of a Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the South American Subbasin, which is expected to be completed in 2022.

**Groundwater Recharge**

The Sacramento Valley subregion of the Central Valley aquifer system is the source of groundwater in the Planning Area. Elk Grove is situated above the Central Basin, in the middle of the Sacramento Valley subregion. A majority of the Planning Area is located within the service area of the SCWA. The southern portion of the Planning Area is managed by the Sacramento Central Groundwater Authority. Groundwater in Elk Grove is generally classified as occurring in a shallow aquifer zone or in an underlying deeper aquifer zone extending approximately 200 to 300 feet below the ground surface. Groundwater used in the Central Basin is supplied from both the shallow and deeper aquifer systems.

**Recycled Water**

In 2003, the SCWA, in partnership with the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (Regional San), developed a recycled water system that treats and delivers up to 5 million gallons per day of recycled water to the Elk Grove neighborhoods of Laguna West, Lakeside, and Stonelake. Specifically, recycled water is used to irrigate street medians, commercial landscaping, parks, and school sites. The recycled water begins as treated wastewater processed at the regional wastewater treatment plant, operated by Regional San. It then undergoes further treatment to disinfect the water via chemical treatment and filtration. The water can then be recycled back to the community for use in nonpotable water systems, such as landscaping and irrigation. This recycled water is clean, clear, and safe for the purposes for which it is used. It is guided under different rules and regulations than potable water for use



*Agriculture near Elk Grove*



in the Planning Area and is not safe for human consumption. The SCWA and the City intend to extend this system to include the East Franklin, Laguna Ridge, and Southeast Policy Areas of Elk Grove once additional treated water is available from Regional San after 2023.

Additionally, Regional San is developing the South County Agriculture Program, which would offer multiple benefits, including providing a safe and reliable supply of tertiary-treated water for agricultural uses, reducing groundwater pumping, supporting habitat restoration efforts, and providing near-term benefits to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The South County Agriculture Program will serve agricultural operations in the South and West Study Areas and could be adapted into backbone recycled water infrastructure when these areas convert to urban uses in the future.

### Water Conservation

Conservation is a key part of the strategy for maintaining an adequate water supply. While Elk Grove is not a water service provider, the City works closely with local water purveyors to support water conservation efforts. These efforts include water

conservation activities, such as water restriction schedules, and incentive programs, such as rebate programs for water conservation improvements and home water audits. As a water user, the City has taken steps to conserve water Citywide through the use of reclaimed water for irrigation when available, and installation of water-efficient upgrades at City facilities. As a regulatory agency, the City has adopted and implements a modified version of the State Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance, which requires public and private facilities to incorporate drought-resistant landscaping and water-efficient irrigation systems into new development projects. These efforts have reduced water use Citywide; however, Elk Grove should continue to eliminate water use inefficiencies and maintain ongoing communication with its water suppliers to ensure a sustainable supply.



*LED Stop Sign in Elk Grove*

### ENERGY RESOURCES

As Elk Grove continues to grow, it is anticipated that energy use in the community will increase proportionately. Gas and electricity use contribute to the consumption of land for power plants and powerlines, with resulting impacts on air quality and GHG emissions. While aggressive State standards for buildings and utilities will continue to help Elk Grove achieve more efficient energy use and reduce impacts, the City has an opportunity to develop additional appropriate local solutions for energy efficiency and conservation. While community-wide energy use may increase due to population growth and new development, the City aims to ensure that per capita energy use decreases. Given that Elk Grove is still growing and developing, perhaps the greatest opportunity to reduce future energy use will come from new development. All new construction is required to comply with the energy efficiency standards in the California Building Standards Code (Title 24).



In addition to addressing energy efficiency and conservation efforts, the feasibility of small-scale renewable energy systems such as rooftop solar panels has improved in recent years because of reduced costs, multiple incentive and education programs, and rapid technological improvements. Rooftop solar panels and other forms of small-scale renewable energy ultimately save money, reduce dependence on utility companies and large-scale power plants, help increase the value of buildings, and improve community livability through cleaner energy sources. Elk Grove has an opportunity to extend these benefits to community residents by promoting the installation of rooftop solar panels, particularly on new homes.

**Mineral Resources**

There are no mineral deposits or mineral extraction activities located within the Planning Area.

**GOAL NR-1: PROTECTED NATURAL OPEN SPACE LANDS THAT PROVIDE RECREATION AND HABITAT FOR NATIVE SPECIES**

The City shall work to ensure that natural, undeveloped lands in the Planning Area and the surrounding region are protected and responsibly managed, balancing the recreational needs of residents with the well-being of natural ecosystems. Open space areas will be made accessible for recreational activities such as hiking, walking, and bird-watching, when such activities are compatible with the ecological health of plant and animal communities. In more ecologically sensitive natural areas, such as those where special-status species are present, appropriate measures will be taken to protect these communities.



*Open Fields near Elk Grove*

Protection of other natural features and open space resources, including agricultural, historic, or cultural resources, continues to be a priority for the City. Clustering development is a method to facilitate the preservation and protection of open space resources. When development is clustered, density is determined for an entire specified area, rather than on a lot-by-lot basis. Within the specified area, a developer can exercise greater flexibility in designing and placing structures, as long as the total density requirement is not exceeded.

**POLICIES: OPRN SPACE**

Additional policies relating to open space as dictated by land use are found in Chapter 4: Urban and Rural Development in the Open Space/Conservation District General Components policies section and each of the Study Areas’ policy sections.

**Policy NR-1-1:** Facilitate access to and use of open space areas located in and near Elk Grove.

**Policy NR-1-2:** Preserve and enhance natural areas that serve, or may potentially serve, as habitat for special-status species.



Where preservation is not possible, require that appropriate mitigation be included in the project.

Standard NR-1.2a: Require a biological resources evaluation for private and public development projects in areas identified to contain or possibly contain special-status plant and animal species.

Standard NR-1.2b: Require development projects to retain movement corridor(s) adequate (both in size and in habitat quality) to allow for the continued wildlife use based on the species anticipated in the corridor.

Standard NR-1.2c: Development adjacent to a natural stream(s) shall provide a “stream buffer zone” along the stream. “Natural streams” shall be generally considered to consist of the following, subject to site-specific review by the City:

- Deer Creek • Elk Grove Creek • Laguna Creek and its tributaries • Morrison Creek • Strawberry Creek • White House Creek

The following are examples of desired features for this transition zone; the specific design for each transition zone shall be approved on a case-by-case basis by the City.

Stream buffer zones shall measure at least 50 (fifty) feet from the stream centerline (total width of 100) feet or more, depending on the characteristics of the stream, and shall include:

1. Sufficient width for a mowed fire-break (where necessary), access for channel maintenance and flood control, and for planned passive recreation uses.
2. Sufficient width to provide for:
  - a. Quality and quantity of existing and created habitat,
  - b. Presence of species as well as species sensitivity to human disturbance,
  - c. Areas for regeneration of vegetation,
  - d. Vegetative filtration for water quality,
  - e. Corridor for wildlife habitat linkage,



f. Protection from runoff and other impacts of urban uses adjacent to the corridor

g. Trails and greenbelts.

3. The stream buffer zone shall not include above ground water quality treatment structures designed to meet pollutant discharge requirements.

Standard NR-1.2d: Completed activities (including roads) shall be maintained to avoid the spread of invasive species into natural areas.

**Policy NR-1-3:** Support the establishment of multipurpose open space areas to address a variety of needs, including but not limited to maintenance of agricultural uses, wildlife habitat, passive recreational open space, aesthetic benefits, flood control, cultural resources and culturally sensitive areas, and other climate co-benefits relevant to the City (such as heat mitigation and improved air quality). To the extent possible, lands protected in accordance with this policy should be in proximity to Elk Grove to facilitate use of these areas by Elk Grove residents, assist in mitigation of habitat loss within the City, and provide an open space resource close to the urbanized areas of Elk Grove.

**Policy NR-1-4:** Avoid impacts to wetlands, vernal pools, marshland, and riparian (streamside) areas unless shown to be technically infeasible. Ensure that no net loss of wetland areas occurs, which may be accomplished by avoidance, revegetation, restoration on-site or through creation of riparian habitat corridors, or purchase of credits from a qualified mitigation bank.



*Trail Along Franklin Channel*



*Cluster Development in Elk Grove*

**Policy NR 1-5:** Recognize the value of naturally vegetated stream corridors, commensurate with flood control and public desire for open space, to assist in removal of pollutants, protect native and endangered species habitats, slow stormwater flood flows, and provide community amenities.

**Policy NR-1-6:** Encourage the retention of natural stream corridors, and the creation of natural stream channels where improvements to drainage capacity are required.

Standard NR 1-6a: Stream crossings shall be minimized and be aesthetically compatible with the natural appearance of the stream channel. The use of bridges and other stream crossings with natural (unpaved) bottoms shall be encouraged to minimize impacts to natural habitat.

Standard NR 1-6b: Uses in the stream corridors shall be limited to recreation and agricultural uses compatible with resource protection and flood control measures. Roads, parking, and associated fill slopes shall be located outside of the stream corridor, except at stream crossings.

Standard NR 1-6c: Open space lands within a stream corridor shall be required to be retained as open space as a condition of development approval for projects that include a stream corridor. Unencumbered maintenance access to the stream shall be provided.

Standard NR 1-6d: To the extent possible, retain natural drainage courses in all cases where preservation of natural drainage is physically feasible and consistent with the need to provide flood protection. Where a stream channel is to be created, such man-made channels shall be designed and maintained such that they attain functional and aesthetic attributes comparable to natural channels.

**Policy NR-1-7:** Consider the adoption of Habitat Conservation Plans to protect rare, threatened, or endangered species.

**Policy NR-1-8:** Within the Primary Zone of the Legal Delta (as defined by the State of California in the State Water Code, Section 12220), the City's land use and other policies shall conform with the "Land Use and Resource Management Plan for the Primary Zone of the Delta" developed by the Delta Protection Commission.



**Policy NR-1-9:** Promote opportunities to work with Wilton Rancheria on the alignment of open space opportunities with culturally sensitive areas.

**POLICIES: CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT**

**Policy NR-1-10:** Encourage development clustering where it would facilitate on-site protection of woodlands, grasslands, wetlands, stream corridors, scenic areas, or other appropriate features such as active agricultural uses and historic or cultural resources under the following conditions and requirements. Clustering shall not be allowed in the Rural Area.

- Urban infrastructure capacity is available for urban use.
- On-site resource protection is appropriate and consistent with other General Plan policies.
- The architecture and scale of development are appropriate for and consistent with the intended character of the area.
- Development rights for the open space area are permanently dedicated and appropriate long-term management, with funding in perpetuity, is provided for by a public agency or another appropriate entity.

**GOAL NR-2: PRESERVED TREES AND URBAN FOREST**

Trees serve an important function in the aesthetic and environmental quality of the community. In addition to contributing to the City’s visual character, large oak and other tree species can help filter pollutants from the air, furnish shade, reduce energy use for cooling, facilitate natural storm drainage, mitigate the heat island effect of the built environment, and provide places for relaxation and refuge from busy city life. The City will continue its commitment to preserving trees, recognizing the many benefits of maintaining these resources.

**POLICIES: TREES PRESERVATION AND CANOPY EXPANSION**

**Policy NR-2-1:** Preserve large native oak and other native tree species as well as large nonnative tree species that are an important part of the City’s historic and aesthetic character. When reviewing native or non-native trees for preservation, consider the following criteria:



*Elk Grove Park*



- Health of the tree
- Safety hazards posed by the tree
- Suitability for preservation in place
- Biological value
- Aesthetic value
- Shade benefits
- Water quality benefits
- Runoff reduction benefits
- Air quality benefits (pollutant reduction)

**Policy NR-2-2:** Maximize tree canopy coverage on public lands and in open spaces by continuing to plant new trees and ensuring sufficient right-of-way width for new developments to provide tree plantings. Prioritize planting trees in areas that will address equity and provide overall benefit to all residents, taking into consideration canopy coverage. New trees shall be appropriate for the site location to reduce maintenance costs and reduce unnecessary tree removals due to poor plant selection.

**Policy NR-2-3:** Maintain tree health and canopy coverage throughout Elk Grove by managing and caring for all trees on public lands, as well as implementing best practices in watering.

**Policy NR-2-4:** Preserve and plant trees in appropriate densities and locations to maximize energy conservation and air quality benefits.

**Policy NR-2-5:** Ensure that trees that function as an important part of the City's or a neighborhood's aesthetic character or as natural habitat on public and private land are retained or replaced to the extent possible during the development of new structures, roadways (public and private, including roadway widening), parks, drainage channels, and other uses and structures.

**Policy NR-2-6:** Promote the planting of drought-resistant shade



trees, appropriate for the planting site, with substantial canopies as part of private development projects and require, where feasible, site design that uses trees to shade rooftops, parking facilities, streets, and other facilities, except where tree canopy may conflict with solar photovoltaic systems.

**Policy NR-2-7:** Support regional and community-led arborization efforts, including the joint annual campaign by the Sheldon Community Association and the Greater Sheldon Road Estates Homeowners Association to increase native oak tree cover in the Rural Area.

### GOAL NR-3: A CLEAN AND ADEQUATE WATER SUPPLY

After several years of low precipitation and drought conditions throughout California, there is a statewide mandate to adopt and implement new policies related to water use and conservation. In addition, as the demand for water resources increases to support agricultural production and a growing population, it is important to protect the quality of the water supply. The City will take actions to encourage water conservation and the efficient use of water resources and to ensure that the water supply is clean and safe.

#### POLICIES: WATER QUALITY

**Policy NR-3-1:** Ensure that the quality of water resources (e.g., groundwater, surface water) is protected to the extent possible.

**Policy NR-3-2:** Integrate sustainable stormwater management techniques in site design to reduce stormwater runoff and control erosion.

**Standard NR-3-2.a:** Where feasible, employ on-site natural systems such as vegetated bioswales, living roofs, and rain gardens in the treatment of stormwater to encourage infiltration, detention, retention, groundwater recharge, and/or on-site water reuse.

**Standard NR-3-2.b:** Roads and structures shall be designed, built and landscaped so as to minimize erosion during and after construction.

**Standard NR-3-2.c:** Post-development peak storm water run-off discharge rates and velocities shall be designed to prevent or reduce downstream erosion, and to protect stream habitat.



**Policy NR-3-3:** Implement the City’s National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit through the review and approval of development projects and other activities regulated by the permit.

## **POLICIES: WATER SUPPLY AND CONSERVATION**

**Policy NR-3-4:** Ensure adequate water supply is available to the community by working with water providers on facilities, infrastructure, and appropriate allocation.

**Policy NR-3-5:** Continue to coordinate with public and private water users, including users of private wells, to maintain and implement a comprehensive groundwater management plan.

**Policy NR-3-6:** Support and coordinate with the efforts of the Sacramento Central Groundwater Authority in the development, adoption and ongoing implementation of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the South American Subbasin.

**Policy NR-3-7:** Continue interagency partnerships to support water conservation.

**Policy NR-3-8:** Continue to eliminate water use inefficiencies and maintain ongoing communication with water suppliers to ensure sustainable supply.

**Policy NR-3-9:** Reduce the amount of water used by residential and nonresidential uses by requiring compliance with adopted water conservation measures.

**Policy NR-3-10:** Promote the use of greywater systems and recycled water for irrigation purposes.

**Policy NR-3-11:** Improve the efficiency of water use at City facilities through retrofits and employee education.

**Policy NR-3-12:** Promote upgrades to existing buildings to support water conservation.

**Policy NR-3-13:** Advocate for native and/or drought-tolerant landscaping in public and private projects.

**Standard NR-3-13.a:** Require the planting of native and/or drought-tolerant landscaping in landscaped medians and parkway strips to reduce water use and maintenance costs.



**Policy NR-3-14:** Encourage water supply service providers and Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District and Sacramento Area Sewer District to design water supply and recycled water supply facilities in a manner that avoids and/or minimizes significant environmental effects. The City shall specifically encourage the Sacramento County Water Agency to design well facilities and operation to minimize surface flow effects to the Cosumnes River.

### GOAL NR-4: IMPROVED AIR QUALITY

Improving air quality is a key challenge for the Sacramento Valley region and is one of the City’s top policy priorities. Because vehicle emissions are the major source of air pollution in Elk Grove and the surrounding area, promoting clean, sustainable transportation options—including public transit, bicycling, and walking—as alternatives to motorized vehicles is an important strategy for reducing air pollution and improving air quality. Other strategies include measures to control dust and reduce construction emissions, and standards for locating sensitive land uses (such as hospitals, schools, day care facilities, and senior housing) away from sources of air pollution.

#### POLICIES: AIR POLLUTANT EMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

Also consult Chapter 4: Urban and Rural Development for other Development Pattern policies and Chapter 8: Services, Health and Safety for Hazardous Facilities and Acceptable Risks policies both of which are linked to land use and project siting requirements identified here.

**Policy NR-4-1:** Require all new development projects which have the potential to result in substantial air quality impacts to incorporate design, and/or operational features that result in a reduction in emissions equal to 15 percent compared to an “unmitigated baseline project.” An unmitigated baseline project is a development project which is built and/or operated without the implementation of trip reduction, energy conservation, or similar features, including any such features which may be required by the Zoning Code or other applicable codes.

**Standard-4-1a:** As part of the environmental review of projects that are not exempt, the City shall identify the air quality impacts of development proposals to avoid significant adverse impacts and require appropriate mitigation measures to the extent feasible and appropriate, potentially



*Promote Pedestrian and Bicycle Access and Circulation*



*Public Transit in Elk Grove*

including—in the case of projects which may conflict with applicable air quality plans—emission reductions in addition to those required by Policy NR-4-1.

- Policy NR-4-2:** Minimize air pollutant emissions from all City facilities and operations (including in-house and contracted) to the extent feasible and consistent with the City’s need to provide a high level of public service.
- Policy NR-4-3:** Implement and support programs that reduce mobile source emissions.
- Policy NR-4-4:** Promote pedestrian/bicycle access and circulation to encourage residents to use alternative modes of transportation in order to minimize direct and indirect emissions of air contaminants.
- Policy NR-4-5:** Emphasize demand management strategies that seek to reduce single-occupant vehicle use in order to achieve State and federal air quality plan objectives.
- Policy NR-4-6:** Offer a public transit system that is an attractive alternative to the use of private motor vehicles.
- Policy NR-4-7:** Support intergovernmental efforts directed at stringent tailpipe emission standards and inspection and maintenance programs for all feasible vehicle classes, as well as revisions to the Air Quality Attainment Plan.
- Policy NR-4-8:** Require that development projects incorporate best management practices during construction activities to reduce emissions of criteria pollutants.
  - Standard NR-4-8.a:** Require all future projects with construction emissions to incorporate the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District’s (SMAQMD) Basic Construction Emission Control Practices as identified in the most current version of the SMAQMD CEQA Guide in effect at the time of construction.
  - Standard NR-4-8.b:** All projects with construction emissions exceeding the SMAQMD ozone precursors thresholds shall implement enhanced exhaust control practices as identified in the most current version of the SMAQMD CEQA Guide in effect at the time of construction.



- Standard NR-4-8.c:** All projects with construction emissions exceeding the SMAQMD fugitive particulate matter (PM) thresholds shall implement enhanced fugitive PM dust control practices as identified in the most current version of the SMAQMD CEQA Guide in effect at the time of construction.
- Standard NR-4-8.d:** For projects exceeding the SMAQMD NO<sub>x</sub> and PM construction emissions thresholds that cannot be mitigated to less than significant with implementation of Standards NR-4-8.a, NR- 4-8.b, and NR-4-8.c, the project shall pay a mitigation fee into the SMAQMD's off-site mitigation program.
- Policy NR-4-9:** Prohibit the future siting of sensitive land uses, such as hospitals, schools, day care facilities, elderly housing, convalescent facilities, and all residential facilities within the distances recommended by the California Air Resources Board and applicable guidance from SMAQMD for air pollutant emission sources, unless adequate mitigation measures are adopted and implemented.
- Policy NR-4-10:** Require new air pollution point sources, such as industrial, manufacturing, and processing facilities, to be located an adequate distance from residential areas and other sensitive land uses.
- Standard NR-4-10.a:** Require the provision of buffers between sensitive land uses and sources of odor and toxic air contaminants. The City shall implement this policy when siting future sensitive land uses within the proximity of existing odor and toxic air contaminant sources or when siting new odor-producing or toxic air contaminant generating land uses within the proximity of existing sensitive land uses.
- Policy NR-4-11:** Work with Sacramento County and the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District to address cross-jurisdictional and regional transportation and air quality issues.
- Policy NR-4-12:** Coordinate with the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District on the review of proposed development projects, specifically projects that could conflict with any applicable air quality plans and/or the State Implementation Plan.



**Policy NR-4-13:** Minimize the exposure of sensitive land uses to objectionable odors.

**Standard NR-4-13.a:** Future sensitive land uses, such as hospitals, schools, day care facilities, elderly housing, convalescent facilities, and all residential uses shall not be sited within the distance from odor sources recommended in the SMAQMD's most current CEQA Guide - Recommended Odor Screening Distance Table unless documentation is provided that the proposed site would not expose a substantial number of people to objectionable odors.

### **GOAL NR-5: REDUCED GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS THAT ALIGN WITH LOCAL, STATE, AND OTHER GOALS**

In accordance with State law aimed at combatting climate change, the City will take steps to reduce local GHG emissions, as set forth in Elk Grove's adopted CAP. This includes working to achieve GHG reduction targets related to transportation and energy usage in buildings, as well as coordinating with regional and State agencies to reduce GHG emissions from other stationary sources.

#### **POLICIES: GREEN HOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**

**Policy NR-5-1:** By 2030, reduce per capita emissions greenhouse gas emissions to 4.1 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e. By 2050, reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions 1.4 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e to meet the State's 2050 greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.

**Policy NR-5-2:** Improve the health and sustainability of the community through improved regional air quality and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change.

**Policy NR-5-3:** Support efforts by the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District and the California Air Resources Board to decrease greenhouse gas emissions from stationary sources.

**Policy NR-5-4:** Preserve, protect, and enhance, as appropriate, the community's carbon sequestration resources to improve air quality and reduce net carbon emissions.

### **GOAL NR-6: REDUCED ENERGY DEMAND AND INCREASED RENEWABLE SOURCES**

The City seeks to promote sustainable energy in Elk Grove through



an integrated approach that addresses both the demand and supply sides of the energy equation. This includes steps to reduce energy consumption through energy conservation and efficiency and to encourage the use of energy derived from renewable sources, particularly solar energy.

Elk Grove will need to continue increasing available renewable energy options to meet rising State standards and consumer demands. Investing in renewable energy technologies, incentivizing private clean energy projects, and ensuring ease of installation and use of renewable energy infrastructure will help the City meet or exceed these goals.

### POLICIES: ENERGY CONSERVATION

- Policy NR-6-1:** Promote energy efficiency and conservation strategies to help residents and businesses save money and conserve valuable resources.
- Policy NR-6-2:** Improve energy efficiency by identifying savings measures for City facilities in building materials and operations.
  - Standard-6-2.a:** Design new municipal facilities to meet at a minimum the baseline Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification criteria.
- Policy NR-6-3:** Promote innovation in energy efficiency.
- Policy NR-6-4:** Explore public-private partnerships to upgrade existing buildings for energy efficiency.
- Policy NR-6-5:** Promote energy conservation measures in new development to reduce on-site emissions and seek to reduce the energy impacts from new residential and commercial projects through investigation and implementation of energy efficiency measures during all phases of design and development.

### POLICIES: RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCES

- Policy NR-6-6:** Encourage renewable energy options that are affordable and benefit all community members.
- Policy NR-6-7:** Encourage the use of solar energy systems in homes, commercial businesses, and City facilities as a form of renewable energy.



## GOALS AND POLICIES: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainability in Elk Grove is the ability to live responsibly within available means and to manage finite natural resources, meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is the capacity to endure, and therefore applies to everything done now and in the future. The challenge is to incorporate the three components of sustainability “the environment, the economy, and the community” into City policies and actions. All three components work together as an integrated system to achieve a sustainable and livable community.

The General Plan contains numerous policies and actions related to sustainability that fall under various topics, including land use and urban development, transportation, public services, waste management, community health, and economic development. In addition to the sustainability policies discussed in other chapters, the policies presented throughout this chapter are intended to promote sustainability as it relates to open space, habitat preservation, and the conservation and management of natural resources.

Another way the City can further sustainability goals is by requiring development projects to comply with State green building standards related to energy and water efficiency, sustainable building materials, and similar requirements. The City also has an important role to play in achieving sustainability through strategic partnerships with other public agencies and the private sector, and through ongoing municipal operations and management.

### GOAL SD-1: SUSTAINABLE CITY MANAGEMENT

The City of Elk Grove will seek to establish partnerships and integrate the components of sustainability into the day-to-day management of City affairs. These connections help the City work toward its sustainability goals. In addition, the City is committed to purchasing local and environmentally responsible products and services to improve the health of the environment, its people, and local businesses.





POLICIES: SUSTAINABILITY

- Policy SD-1-1:** Participate in local, regional, and Statewide sustainability efforts and programs that further the goals and policies outlined in the General Plan.
- Policy SD-1-2:** Assess the City’s progress toward achieving its sustainability objectives.
- Policy SD-1-3:** Promote the use of local and environmentally friendly products and services for municipal purchases and contracts.
- Policy SD-1-4:** Use funding and financing mechanisms to support sustainability and environmentally friendly government programs.

**GOAL SD-2: GREEN BUILDING**

Green building techniques are an effective way of reducing the environmental impacts created by development, and green buildings have been shown to use significantly less energy than traditional buildings. These policies demonstrate the City’s leadership in promoting green development in Elk Grove.

POLICIES: GREEN BUILDING

- Policy SD-2-1:** Incorporate green building techniques and best management practices in the site design, construction, and renovation of all public projects.
- Standard SD-2-1.a:** Require all new municipal developments to exceed State Title 24 Energy Efficiency Standards by 15 percent, to the extent such efficiencies are possible.
- Policy SD-2-2:** Support innovation and green building best management practices for all new private development.



*Trail in Elk Grove*

