



★ C E R E S ★

GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

Drafts of the General Plan and Environmental Impact Report are now available for public review!

The City of Ceres has been working since the fall of 2015 to update its General Plan. With the help of the community, we've reached an important milestone: the Draft Ceres General Plan 2035 and the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on the Plan are both available for review! This newsletter contains information on both documents, as well as next steps for how to stay involved in this process.

What is the General Plan?

The General Plan is the City's guide for development, housing, transportation, environmental quality, public safety and services, and parks and open spaces. It establishes a long-range vision for the community, as well as objectives to achieve this vision. The Plan is the basis for land use decisions made by policymakers such as the Planning Commission and City Council, and is a key tool for guiding new development and influencing quality of life in Ceres.



What is the Draft EIR?

The Draft EIR has been prepared according to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act, and identifies potential environmental impacts associated with adopting the Draft General Plan. The Draft EIR is intended to inform decision-makers and the public, and to assist City officials in reviewing and adopting the Draft General Plan. If approved, future projects that are consistent with the Draft General Plan could use the EIR to streamline and simplify the development process.



Where can I review the Draft General Plan and EIR?

The Public Review Draft General Plan and Draft EIR are available for download as PDF documents at the project website: www.CeresGeneralPlanUpdate.com. Copies of both documents can be reviewed at City Hall (2220 Magnolia Street).

EIR Public Comment Period

The public comment period for the EIR began on February 7, 2018 and end March 26, 2018. To be considered, all comments on the Draft EIR must be submitted in writing by 5:00 pm on March 26, 2018.

The Draft Ceres General Plan 2035

Purpose and Vision

The project's objective is to update the current City of Ceres General Plan, originally adopted in 1997, to reflect current conditions and community priorities, and to achieve the community's vision for the future:

In 2035, Ceres has a continued connection to its agricultural heritage, a balance of housing and retail choices, ample job opportunities, an attractive Downtown, rich cultural and community events and an abundance of recreational opportunities. Ceres is a place where families want to raise their children and businesses want to locate and flourish. In Ceres, people enjoy a safe and healthy city with first-rate community amenities and a clean and sustainable environment.

What's in the General Plan?

The proposed General Plan is organized by topic in six chapters, or elements (the Housing Element is not part of this update due to its State-mandated revision schedule). Each element of the proposed General Plan includes background information to establish the context for policies in the chapter, followed by goals and policies. The main goals of each element are summarized below.

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY DESIGN

- Support growth that improves quality of life for all residents and enhances the qualities of Ceres that residents love.
- Foster a distinctive city identity to support civic pride and promote and support Downtown Ceres as the vibrant heart of the city.
- Support Ceres' neighborly and family-friendly character with complete and well-designed neighborhoods.
- Promote development of commercial and industrial uses compatible with surrounding land uses to meet the present and future needs of the city.
- Ensure that the benefits and burdens of land use planning and public services are distributed fairly.

AGRICULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- Promote the continued viability of agricultural lands surrounding Ceres, and support the preservation of agricultural character.
- Conserve and enhance open space lands for the preservation of natural resources, the managed production of resources, outdoor recreation, and public health and safety.
- Protect and enhance habitats and wildlife corridors; environmentally sensitive lands and species; the natural qualities of rivers, creeks, and groundwater; tree cover; and air quality.
- Preserve and maintain historical, archaeological, paleontological, and tribal resources.

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

- Provide for the long-range planning, development, and maintenance of the city's roadway system and develop a financially sustainable transportation system.
- Maintain acceptable multi-modal travel flow along Ceres' major corridors, balancing safe and convenient use of facilities by non-motorized transportation, transit, and freight movement.
- Protect residential areas from high-volume and high-speed traffic and promote bicycling and walking on residential streets.
- Provide sufficient vehicle and bicycle parking.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Promote public health in Ceres, encourage active lifestyles, and promote social cohesion.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase the community's ability to resist and recover from climate change impacts.
- Reduce risks from seismic and geologic hazards, flood hazards, hazardous materials, airport hazards, and fires, and ensure an efficient and coordinated response to emergencies and disasters.
- Protect the community from exposure to excessive noise and vibration.

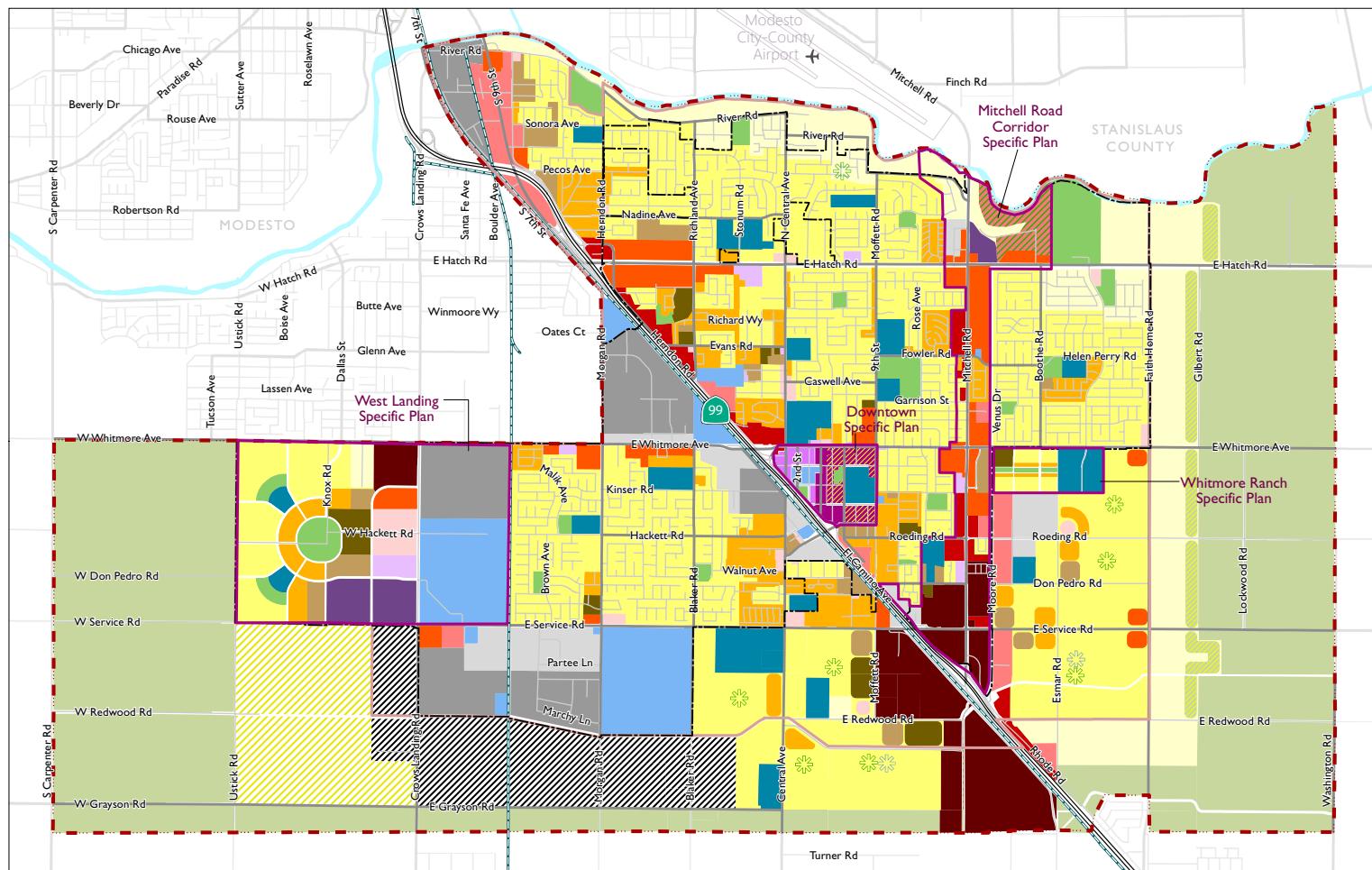
PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- Ensure that adequate school, community, and library facilities are available and appropriately located.
- Maintain a public park and recreation system to meet the exercise, social, and cultural enrichment needs of the community.
- Ensure a safe and reliable water supply, adequate wastewater collection and treatment, comprehensive stormwater management, efficient disposal of solid waste, and reliable information technology.
- Provide adequate police and fire services to ensure public safety.

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Support a wide range of economic activity, including tourism, in Ceres and promote economic development that benefits the entire community.
- Achieve fiscal sustainability.
- Celebrate Ceres' heritage and foster civic pride through community events and public spaces.
- Actively engage the community, especially people who have historically been underrepresented.
- Develop a vibrant downtown and support Downtown businesses.

DRAFT LAND USE DIAGRAM



0 0.25 0.5 1
MILES
Data Source: City of Ceres, 2015; Stanislaus County Geographic Information Systems, 2015; ESRI, 2015; Dyett & Bhatia, 2017.

The Draft Environmental Impact Report

The EIR analyzes the potential environmental impacts of adopting the proposed Ceres General Plan 2035. It discusses how goals, policies, and implementing actions of the proposed General Plan may affect the environment and identifies potentially significant impacts. It also evaluates the cumulative impacts and potential growth-inducing impacts of the proposed General Plan. The EIR considers the environmental impacts of various alternatives developed during the planning process, including the “No Project Alternative” (projected outcomes based on continued implementation of the existing 1997 General Plan), and identifies the environmentally superior alternative.

Members of the public are encouraged to review the Draft EIR and provide comment on the analysis through March 26, 2018. See details below. After the close of the public review period, the City will review and respond to all comments received and determine whether any changes are required before preparing a Final EIR.

The Draft EIR for the proposed General Plan assesses the potential for significant effects in the following issue areas:

- Aesthetics
- Agricultural Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Energy, Greenhouse Gases, and Climate Change
- Geology, Soils, and Seismicity
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Historic and Cultural Resources
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use, Population, and Housing
- Noise
- Public Services and Recreation
- Transportation
- Utilities

How Can I Get Involved?

We want to hear from you! Please visit the project website to view the draft General Plan and Draft EIR and learn more about the planning process. You can also read the full reports on interviews, workshops, the community survey, and background research conducted for the update.

The public comment period for the Draft EIR extends through 5:00 pm on March 26, 2018. All written comments on the Draft EIR's adequacy must be submitted by this date to:

Tom Westbrook, Director of Community Development
City of Ceres Planning Division
2220 Magnolia Street
Ceres, CA 95307
Tom.Westbrook@ci.ceres.ca.us

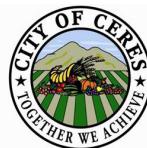
You can also always send comments to the City through the project website: www.CeresGeneralPlanUpdate.com.

What's Next?

Following the public comment period, the City will prepare the Final EIR, which will include a formal response to all comments received on the Draft EIR by March 26, 2018.

An Open House will be held on the Draft Ceres General Plan 2035 and Draft EIR on Thursday, March 8, 2018 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm at the Ceres Community Center, located at 2701, 4th Street in Ceres. Please stop in at any time to ask questions and learn more about the draft plan!

Public hearings for the adoption of the draft General Plan and certification of the Final EIR will begin in late spring 2018.



PLANNING DIVISION 2220 Magnolia St. Ceres, CA 95307