

Proposed General Plan Update Goals, Policies, and Implementation Actions



Land Use – Rural Agriculture

Rural Agriculture provides a wealth of health, social, environmental, and economic benefits for the city’s community. The Envision San Jose 2040 Rural Agriculture Goals, Policies, and Implementation Actions are intended to preserve agricultural land; improve the community’s access to healthful foods; promote local and ecologically sound food production; support the ability of farmers in the region to sell their produce locally; and provide environmental, social, and economic benefits to the community.

Goal AG-1 Provide and protect sufficient agricultural land to facilitate local food production, to provide broad community access to healthful foods, to add to a distinct community image, and to promote environmental and economic benefits of rural agricultural lands.

A-1 Agriculture Policies

- Policy AG-1.1 Protect and preserve the remaining farmlands within San Jose’s sphere of influence that are not planned for urbanization in the timeframe of this general plan through the following means:
- a. Strongly discourage conversion of agricultural lands outside the Urban Growth Boundary to non-agricultural uses.
 - b. Limit residential uses in agricultural areas to those which are incidental to agriculture.
 - c. Strongly discourage subdivision of agricultural lands, unless it can be established that the subdivision would not reduce the overall agricultural productivity of the land and that viable agricultural operations would be sustained.
 - d. Encourage contractual protection for agricultural lands, such as Williamson Act contracts, agricultural conservation easements, transfers of development rights, or other property tax relief measures as incentives for preservation of these lands.
 - e. Restrict land uses within and adjacent to agricultural lands that would compromise the agricultural viability of these lands and require new nearby land uses to mitigate any impacts on the use of agricultural lands. (revised from policy previously presented with Urban Agriculture Policies)
- Policy AG-1.2 Preserve agricultural lands and prime soils in non-urban areas in order to provide local and regional fresh food supplies, reduce dependence on foreign products, conserve energy, and retain the

aquifer recharge capacity of these lands. (San Jose 2020 General Plan, revised & presented with Urban Agriculture Policies).

- Policy AG-1.3 Encourage appropriate agricultural uses in hillside areas. (San Jose 2020 General Plan & presented with Urban Agriculture Policies)
- Policy AG-1.4 Leverage agricultural lands to create and maintain a unique community character, provide open space, link to the region’s history as the Valley of Heart’s Delight, support the area’s tourism industry, contribute to the local economy, and add to the quality of life of the community.
- Policy AG-1.5 Enhance viability and profitability of ongoing use of agricultural lands by supporting ancillary commercial uses such as fruit stands, small-scale environmental and agricultural tourism, and the processing of agricultural products.
- Policy AG-1.6 Encourage agricultural uses which follow ecologically sound agricultural practices and minimize the use of chemicals and pesticides in order to promote healthy soils and ground water, provide healthful local foods, reduce energy use, and reduce the farming industry’s demand for resources.
- Policy AG-1.7 Promote legislation to establish Countywide or Statewide agricultural preservation programs, including identifying sources of funding necessary for implementation of such programs. (San Jose 2020 General Plan & presented with Urban Agriculture Policies)
- Policy AG-1.8 Work with agricultural entities (i.e., farming industry, non-profits, land owners), the County, other Santa Clara County cities, and the Local Area Formation Commission and other stakeholders to promote public education to improve the community’s understanding of the importance of agriculture in creating sustainable communities within Santa Clara County.
- Action AG-1.9 Explore use of agricultural easements, transfer/purchase of development rights, or other options to keep Mid-Coyote Valley as permanent agriculture.