

2020 Exeter General Plan

What is the 2020 Exeter General Plan?

The General Plan is Exeter's policy document to guide growth and development of the City through the year 2020. The General Plan is required by State law to include six elements pertaining to the following issues:

- Land Use
- Circulation
- Open Space
- Conservation
- Noise
- Safety
- Housing (note: the Housing Element is updated on a different schedule from the other elements. The Housing Element may be viewed [here](#)).

Each element typically contains a profile of existing conditions in the community, and then a series of goals, policies and action plans to achieve the City's objectives during the life of the General Plan. Some of the elements contain maps that designate future land uses and circulation features. There are three key maps in the General Plan:

The Land Use Map – shows land use designations for all properties within Exeter's city limits and Sphere of Influence (SOI). These designations correspond directly to the zoning of each parcel.

The Circulation Map shows existing and future circulation features – roads, trails, the airport and railroad, among others.

What Does the General Plan Matter to Me?

The General Plan establishes Exeter's vision for the future. If the City adheres to the policies of

Contents of the General Plan

The following files make up the 2020 Exeter General Plan. You may click on the file(s) that you wish to download.

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the General Plan, over time, Exeter can be a city that is characterized by:

- Clean and pleasant residential neighborhoods;
- A variety of housing choices and shopping opportunities;
- A vibrant and attractive downtown;
- A variety of parks and open space facilities and recreational opportunities;
- An effective utility system (water, sewer and storm drainage);
- A city where land use conflicts are minimized;
- A variety of industrial businesses with well-paying jobs;
- A safe and effective street system;
- A city that reduces impacts on the environment, particularly concerning air pollution, water consumption and consumption of farmland, while it continues to grow.
- A city that is safe;
- A city that has an adequate amount of land available for future development;
- A city where property values are stable;
- An effective and efficient city government.
- A city where public participation is invited and encouraged;
- A city that is a source of pride for residents of Exeter.

How Was the General Plan Created?

The City of Exeter awarded a contract for preparation of the General Plan and Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to Collins & Schoettler Planning Consultants in 2000. Collins & Schoettler also retained the services of TPG Consultants to provide traffic and circulation analysis for both the General Plan and the EIR.

The Consultant gathered data in 2000 and submitted a draft of the General Plan to a joint meeting of the Exeter Planning Commission and City Council in the fall of 2001. After a thorough review of the draft General Plan, the joint group recommended changes to the document and accompanying maps. These changes were incorporated into the document.

The Consultant prepared a draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on the General Plan. The EIR was distributed to interested parties, agencies and organizations for review and comment.

The Planning Commission held their public hearing on the General Plan and EIR in November of 2002. The Commission approved the General Plan and EIR and forwarded their recommendation for approval to the Exeter City Council. The City Council considered both documents at their February, 2003, meeting. After holding a public hearing on the two documents, the Council approved the General Plan with amendments and certified the Final EIR.

What Considerations Went Into Preparing the General Plan?

The General Plan was carefully formulated, with a number of (sometimes competing) goals being considered. Some key factors that were considered in creating the General Plan included:

- Growing and improving Exeter's economy through new commercial and industrial development;
- Designating an adequate amount of land for residential, commercial, industrial and public facilities that are expected to occur during the life of the plan (through the year 2020);
- Preserving agricultural land and reducing environmental impacts by fostering more compact and efficient development;
- Protecting the downtown area from competing commercial projects on outlying land;
- Minimizing expensive extensions of utilities by developing close-in land before jumping out to outlying parcels.

Can the General Plan be Changed?

From time to time the City may be requested to amend portions of the General Plan. This occurs most frequently when a property owner or developer wishes to change the zoning of their property. In this instance the applicant is often required to amend the General Plan's Proposed Land Use Map. Such amendments must be reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission and also the City Council.