



CITY OF SANTA MARIA
PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT
MARCH 4, 2026

5.a

Attachment J. Planning Commission Staff Report 3-4-26.docx

Property Location: Citywide

The City of Santa Maria Planning Commission will review and consider for recommendation to City Council, certification of the Final Environmental Impact Report, adoption of the Santa Maria 2045 General Plan including initiation of proceedings to amend the City's Sphere of Influence and annex the territory designated "Planned Annexation", and approval of a Zoning Map Amendment repealing and reenacting the City of Santa Maria Official Zoning Map for consistency with the General Plan.

Environmental: Environmental review for this project was completed through the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (SCH# 2025020584) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and State Guidelines.

Planner Contact: Dana Eady, 805-925-0951 ext. 2444; deady@cityofsantamaria.org

RECOMMENDATION:

Take the following actions:

1. By resolution, recommend that the City Council adopt a resolution certifying the Final Environmental Impact Report prepared for the Santa Maria 2045 General Plan Update; and
2. By resolution, recommend that the City Council adopt a resolution adopting the City of Santa Maria 2045 General Plan, replacing the existing adopted General Plan; and
3. By resolution, recommend that the City Council adopt an ordinance approving a Zoning Map Amendment (Z2026-0001) repealing and reenacting the City of Santa Maria Official Zoning Map.

DISCUSSION

The City of Santa Maria's General Plan is a comprehensive document that establishes the community's vision and provides a framework that will guide decisions on topics such as growth, economic development, and land use through the planning horizon year of 2045. The plan includes goals, policies, and implementation actions in chapters called Elements. The Santa Maria 2045 General Plan supersedes and replaces the City's

Attachment J

current General Plan and has been substantially updated to address local conditions, community priorities and goals, and State law.

This item was reviewed by the Planning Commission at the February 18, 2026, public hearing where it was continued to March 4, 2026, with direction to staff to respond to the items raised in the following public comment letters:

1. Grower Shipper Association, dated February 18, 2026
2. Urban Planning Concepts, Inc., dated February 13, 2026
3. Urban Planning Concepts, Inc., dated February 16, 2026
4. Urban Planning Concepts, Inc., PowerPoint comments, February 18, 2026
5. Dignity Health Marian Regional Medical Center, dated February 17, 2026

The following table includes a summary of the comments provided in each letter, a staff response, and any recommended changes to be incorporated into the Final General Plan.

Letter 1: Grower Shipper Association, dated February 16, 2026	
Comment Summary	Staff Response
<p><u>Circulation Element</u></p> <p>1. <i>Page 10-Roundabouts. "It is important for the City to collaborate with local communities to be engaged and involved in the design and implementation of local roundabouts where appropriate." We have commented extensively that roundabouts are not always the appropriate solution for areas frequented by agricultural vehicles and equipment.</i></p> <p>2. "Action CIR-4.2-2: Maintain a truck route plan identifying streets to be posted as designated truck routes to avoid sensitive uses, and to be posted with weight limit restrictions and accompanied with street design elements where possible to discourage their use by heavy vehicles." <i>Appropriate and efficient agricultural transportation corridors must remain open to avoid irreparable harm to highly perishable fresh produce. Please refer to the comments submitted by Somach Simmons & Dunn on behalf of the Association for additional information.</i></p>	<p>Revise as follows: "It is important for the City to collaborate with local communities and to be engaged and involved in the design and implementation of local roundabouts <u>to ensure that they are sited and designed appropriately.</u></p> <p>Action CIR-4.2-2 is required per Assembly Bill (AB) 98, requiring the City to update its Circulation Element by January 1, 2028, identifying and establishing specific travel routes for the transport of goods, materials, or freight for storage, transfer, or redistribution to safely accommodate additional truck traffic and avoid residential areas and concentrations of sensitive noise receptors.</p>

Attachment J

<p>3. <i>“Policy CIR-7.1: Reduce VMT. Reduce VMT below regional averages on a “per resident” and “per employee” basis <u>where required...</u>” We are concerned that going above and beyond already-stringent State requirements could reduce job and economic opportunities for residents and businesses. As a regulatory requirement, it should instead conform with State mandates without creating additional undue burdens. Additional incentives could be considered but should not be a mandatory reduction.</i></p>	<p>In accordance with SB 743 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.7(c), Thresholds of Significance, the City of Santa Maria has elected to adopt the VMT reduction target set by CARB for the SBCAG region as the threshold of significance for VMT impact determination. Using this threshold, VMT impacts would be considered potentially significant if the forecasted rate of residential VMT per household or VMT per employee for the project were to exceed 83 percent of the existing rate of VMT in each category (i.e., at least a 17 percent reduction in per-unit VMT would be required for an impact to be considered less than significant).</p> <p>Recommend the following changes to Policy CIR-7.1: Reduce VMT. Reduce VMT <u>in accordance with the reduction target set by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) for the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) region below regional averages</u> on a “per resident” and “per employee” basis.</p>
<p><u>Conservation and Open Space Element</u></p> <p>1. <i>“Action COS-1.3.1: ... • Reduce mowing in targeted areas (i.e., within agricultural and habitat buffers and in City open spaces) to promote natural plant growth and habitat for pollinators.” This change is needed to protect agricultural resources from damaging pests and diseases that can be harbored in unmanaged lands.</i></p> <p>2. <i>“Policy COS-2.1: Agricultural preservation. Collaborate with Santa Barbara County and local landowners to preserve existing agricultural uses on lands not proposed for future development, including croplands and rangelands. Action COS-2.1.1: During review of projects that would alter or convert existing agricultural uses, balance state and regional efforts to preserve existing agricultural uses, including the Santa Barbara County Right to Farm Ordinance, clustering of urban land uses/development, and transfer of development rights —with</i></p>	<p>Recommend changes to Action COS1.3.1 as proposed.</p> <p>Policy COS-2.1 and Action COS-2.1.1 both include direction regarding the potential future development of areas that are adjacent to agricultural uses. These would apply to the future Planned Annexation area (PA) as well as areas within City limits that are adjacent to agricultural uses and are planned for future development. No changes to these policies are recommended as additional planning would be required to implement the policy and action to ensure that future development takes into account the location of agricultural uses and provides sufficient buffers.</p>

Attachment J

<p><i>other factors. These include providing adequate housing, achieving a jobs-housing balance, supporting economic sustainability, and advancing other City interests.” Inducing or placing incompatible uses, such as sensitives sites, residential uses, and DACs into and near agricultural production and support areas will result in predictable land use conflicts and cascading impacts to both agricultural operations and residents. Please refer to the comments submitted by Somach Simmons & Dunn on behalf of the Association for additional information.</i></p> <p>3. <i>“Action COS-2.1.2: To the extent feasible, support the establishment of agricultural conservation easements on land within the City’s Sphere of Influence that is zoned for agriculture and designated as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland by initiating discussions with property owners on eligible sites and providing education and technical assistance to interested owners.” A compact urban footprint and prudent land use planning would be most beneficial to agricultural resources, conservation, and open space, rather than conservation easements or technical assistance from the City for agricultural lands within the City’s Sphere of Influence.</i></p> <p>4. <i>“Policy COS-2.2: Sustainable agriculture. Encourage the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices to preserve productivity while protecting natural environments.”</i> While we also support various forms of sustainable agriculture, this Policy is beyond the scope of the City, overly prescriptive, and outside of its area of expertise.</p> <p>5. <i>“Action COS-2.2.1: Support local agricultural operators to encourage the continued use and adoption of best management practices that enhance soil</i></p>	<p>Recommend deleting Action COS-2.1.2. Area within the City’s limits and SOI is not zoned for agriculture and there are no proposed changes to land use designations or zoning to add agricultural zoning designations to property within the City’s limits or in the SOI.</p> <p>While Policy COS-2.2 is broad in scope, the intent is to provide direction for the City to generally support sustainable agricultural practices. No changes to this policy are recommended.</p> <p>Recommend making the changes to Action COS-2.2.1 as recommended in item #5.</p>
--	---

<p>quality, <u>protect plant health</u>, <u>conserve water</u>, and <u>reduce soil erosion</u>, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated pest management and reduction of chemical pesticide use • Rotational grazing and crop rotation to enhance soil health and biodiversity • Agroforestry • Composting <p>While we also support the advancement of best management practices, these comments are overly prescriptive, not reasonably feasible for the City to support, not applicable to agriculture in Santa Maria, and/or would compromise the food safety and marketability of the fresh produce grown in and near the City.</p> <p>6. “Policy COS-5.2: Agricultural air pollutant emissions. Reduce air pollutant emissions associated with agricultural uses. Action COS-5.2.1: Work with agricultural operators located within City limits and in adjacent unincorporated areas to encourage the adoption of farming practices that minimize dust, consistent with the Santa Barbara County’s dust control measures. These practices include limiting plowing, disking, mowing, and tilling when soil is dry and winds are high, and using surface coverings or cover crops to reduce wind erosion and stabilize soil. Action COS-5.2.2: Coordinate with SBCAPCD to report illegal burnings and enforce SBCAPCD regulations pertaining to agricultural burnings. Action COS-5.2.3: Collaborate with SBCAPCD to monitor pesticide residues in the air and enforce pesticide use and storage regulations. These Policies and Actions are overly prescriptive, already regulated by various agencies, and beyond the City’s jurisdiction. Please refer to the comments submitted by Somach Simmons & Dunn on behalf of the Association for additional information.</p>	<p>Recommend deleting Action COS-5.2.3 as these activities are monitored by Santa Barbara County. No other changes are recommended to be made as this policy and action address agricultural operations that could impact properties within City limits and within the Planned Annexation (PA) area should it be annexed and developed in the future.</p>
---	---

Attachment J

<p>7. <i>“Action COS-5.2.4: Update the Municipal Code to establish a minimum buffer requirement between agricultural uses, including agricultural supply businesses, and development based on the type of use. Sensitive land uses, including residential uses, schools, day cares, senior homes, and hospitals, shall require the largest buffer distance from agricultural and related uses.” Buffers must be placed on the new use, rather than the existing agricultural use, and are not a substitute for good land use planning. Please refer to the comments submitted by Somach Simmons & Dunn on behalf of the Association for additional information.</i></p> <p>8. <i>“Action COS-5.2.5: Update the Municipal Code to require the use of green walls or vegetation barriers in combination with minimum buffers to provide a physical barrier between agricultural and sensitive uses.” Industrial and commercial uses would be the most beneficial buffers. We are concerned about ongoing maintenance of the vegetative areas, and the potential for these spaces near agricultural areas to be reservoirs for agricultural pests, diseases, and food safety threats, which would be detrimental to agricultural uses.</i></p>	<p>The buffer ordinance would be developed through a public review process, and the focus would be placed on the new use and how far that use could be located to agricultural uses.</p> <p>Recommend the following changes to Action COS-5.2.4: Update the Municipal Code to establish a minimum buffer requirement between <u>existing</u> agricultural uses, including agricultural supply businesses, and <u>new</u> development based on the type of use. Sensitive land uses, including residential uses, schools, day cares, senior homes, and hospitals, require the largest buffer distance from agricultural and related uses.</p> <p>Recommend deleting Action COS-5.2.5. The buffers are addressed in Action COS-5.2.4.</p>
<p><u>Economic Development Element</u></p> <p>1. <i>“Policy ECON-2.8: Annexation lands. Support efforts for the annexation of land into the city to promote business expansion and residential growth. Leverage annexation as a tool to accommodate economic development, enhance infrastructure, and create opportunities for sustainable urban growth.” Please refer to the comments submitted by Somach Simmons & Dunn on behalf of the Association for additional information.</i></p>	<p>No changes to Policy ECON-2.8 are recommended. The 2045 General Plan includes an area that is designated as Planned Annexation (PA). This policy would directly apply to the future development of this area should it be annexed by LAFCO.</p>

Attachment J

<p><u>Health and Environmental Justice Element</u></p> <p>1. Page 3. “(DACs) are areas identified by the California Environmental Protection Agency or low-income areas that are <u>may be</u> disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation.” Page 5. “Below are summaries of environmental health factors that <u>may</u> affect DACs in Santa Maria.” We have exhaustively commented that potential risk does not equal exposure and these inaccuracies must be corrected.</p> <p>2. Page 5. “Relative to other communities in California, Santa Maria experiences higher rates of pesticide exposure, as the majority of census tracts in the city are above the 80th percentile for pesticide use in CalEnviroScreen 4.0. Pesticide use during agricultural production poses significant public health risks since both short-term and long-term Exposure to certain pesticides are linked to serious illnesses such as cancers, pregnancy complications, and developmental issues—especially for children, pregnant women, older adults, and agricultural workers. DACs that are located near agricultural fields, including farmworker communities in and around Santa Maria, could face heightened exposure risks. We have exhaustively commented that potential risk does not equal exposure and these inaccuracies must be corrected.</p> <p>3. HEJ Page 7. “H-2A Housing. The increasing number of H-2A Visa workers in agricultural jobs and the associated requirements for employers to supply worker housing have heightened the need for increasing the amount of safe and affordable housing in the city.” We appreciate the appropriate deletions elsewhere from the Policy Frameworks Draft; this final reference needs to be deleted to conform with the City’s dedication to fair housing.</p>	<p>No changes to this section are recommended. DACs are defined by the Cal EPA as described in the General Plan.</p> <p>Recommend revising as follows: <i>Relative to other communities in California, Santa Maria experiences higher rates of pesticide exposure, as the majority of census tracts in the city are above the 80th percentile for pesticide use in CalEnviroScreen 4.0. Pesticide use during agricultural production poses significant public health risks since both short-term and long-term Exposure to certain pesticides are linked to serious illnesses such as cancers, pregnancy complications, and developmental issues—especially for children, pregnant women, older adults, and agricultural workers. DACs that are located near agricultural fields, including farmworker communities in and around Santa Maria, could face heightened exposure risks.</i></p> <p>Recommend revising as follows: <i>“H-2A Housing. The increasing number of H-2A Visa workers in agricultural jobs and The associated requirements for employers to supply worker housing have heightened the need for increasing the amount of safe and affordable housing in the city.</i></p>
--	--

Attachment J

<p>4. “Policy HEJ-1.1: Protect against industrial pollution. Prevent industrial and commercial facilities from exposing sensitive land uses (e.g., schools, playgrounds, housing, hospitals, senior centers, and daycare centers) to harmful air pollution and toxic chemicals, especially in DACs that have experienced disproportionate pollution burdens, by carefully analyzing proposed development and the expansion of industrial and commercial uses.” Please refer to the comments submitted by Somach Simmons & Dunn on behalf of the Association for additional information.</p> <p>5. “Policy HEJ-1.2: Enforce truck routes. Ensure local adherence to the City’s most recent truck routes map and regulations that aim to reduce significant traffic and pollution impacts on homes, schools, childcare centers, senior centers, and other sensitive land uses.” Please refer to the comments submitted by Somach Simmons & Dunn on behalf of the Association for additional information.</p> <p>6. “Policy HEJ-1.4: Promote healthy farming techniques. Support sustainable agricultural practices in and around the City of Santa Maria. Action HEJ-1.4.1: Support the Santa Barbara County Agriculture/Weights & Measures Department’s efforts to identify communities that should be prioritized for education and interventions to reduce farms’ pesticide use, limit pesticide drift onto communities, protect farm workers against pesticide exposure, ensure compliance with pesticide spraying time blocks, and support the use of Integrated Pest Management practices. Action HEJ-1.4.2: Work collaboratively with Santa Barbara County’s Agricultural</p>	<p>It is important to consider incompatible uses and impacts to sensitive land uses from proposed and expanded development. Therefore, staff recommends the following changes to Policy HEJ-1.1:</p> <p>Protect against <u>potential exposure to industrial pollution. Avoid siting new sensitive land uses (e.g., schools, senior centers, and daycare centers) near existing industrial, commercial, and agricultural uses which have the potential to</u> Prevent industrial and commercial facilities from exposing sensitive land uses (e.g., schools, playgrounds, housing, hospitals, senior centers, and daycare centers) to <u>result in exposure to</u> harmful air pollution and toxic chemicals, especially in DACs that have experienced disproportionate pollution burdens, by carefully analyzing proposed development. and the expansion of industrial and commercial uses</p> <p>Policy HEJ-1.2 is required per Assembly Bill (AB) 98, requiring the City to identify and establish specific travel routes for the transport of goods, materials, or freight for storage, transfer, or redistribution to safely accommodate additional truck traffic and avoid residential areas and concentrations of sensitive noise receptors.</p> <p>In accordance with SB 1000, the environmental justice element, or related environmental justice goals, policies, and objectives integrated in other elements, shall do all of the following: (A) Identify objectives and policies to reduce the unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities by means that include, but are not limited to, the reduction of pollution exposure, including the improvement of air quality, and the promotion of public facilities, food access, safe and sanitary homes, and physical activity. (B) Identify objectives and policies to promote civic engagement in the public decision-making process. (C) Identify objectives and policies that prioritize improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities. This policy and action items were</p>
---	---

Attachment J

<p><i>Commissioner's Office and the California Department of Pesticide Regulation to enforce the County's agricultural buffer zones and the installation of vegetative barriers to minimize land use conflicts; determine buffers for proposed projects; limit pesticide drift; and protect farmers, workers, and residents from harms related to agricultural uses." Please refer to the comments submitted by Somach Simmons & Dunn on behalf of the Association for additional information.</i></p> <p>7. <i>"Policy HEJ-1.8: Preserve water quality. Continue to ensure that Santa Maria residents have access to clean, safe, affordable, and accessible water for drinking, cooking, and sanitation, by working with the County, State, and Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board to guard against potential contamination from fertilizer-related impacts and surface stormwater impacts." Please refer to the comments submitted by Somach Simmons & Dunn on behalf of the Association for additional information."</i></p>	<p>developed through the public process to address the SB1000 requirements noted above for Santa Maria. No changes are recommended.</p> <p>Recommend revising Policy HEJ-1.8 as proposed.</p>
<p><u>Land Use Element</u></p> <p>1. <i>"Action LU-1.1.3: Amend the Area 9 Specific Plan to allow low-density residential uses along A Street, consistent with the LMDR designation." We oppose amending the Area 9 Specific Plan to allow low-density residential uses along A Street that are unrelated to the surrounding agricultural and industrial uses. This action is counter to many of the other pillars in the Draft General Plan and EIR. To maintain compatibility for agricultural, residential, and sensitive uses, we oppose inducing residential and sensitive uses into and near spaces intended for agricultural, industrial, and commercial uses.</i></p>	<p>The preferred land use alternative selected by the City of Santa Maria City Council in 2023 included amending the general plan land use designation and zoning of the CPO designated and zoned area in Area 9 to single-family residential. A future Specific Plan Amendment would be required prior to any single-family residential development in this area. No changes to this Action are recommended.</p>

Attachment J

<p>2. <i>Policy LU-1.2 regarding Infill Development. This draft falls short in fulfilling opportunities to revitalize key areas of the City without impacting immediate and adjacent agricultural resources. The prior draft language should be restored.</i></p> <p>3. <i>“Policy LU-2.1: Planned Annexation area. Expand Sphere of Influence and annex the Planned Annexation areas identified on the General Plan Land Use Map to meet housing and jobs development goals.” Please refer to the comments submitted by Somach Simmons & Dunn on behalf of the Association for additional information.</i></p> <p>4. <i>Policy LU-2.3: Future Specific Plans.... • Buffer schools, parks, and homes from infrastructure, major roadways, the Santa Maria regional landfill, industrial land uses, <u>agricultural land uses</u>, and other land uses that may produce odor or noise or negatively impact air quality <u>generate land use conflicts</u>.” Please refer to the comments submitted by Somach Simmons & Dunn on behalf of the Association for additional information.</i></p> <p>5. <i>“Policy LU-4.2: Industrial on major corridors. Prohibit new industrial, manufacturing, and heavy polluting uses in the Main Street and Broadway Corridor Mixed-use designated areas, as they detract from creating a walkable mixed-use environment. Policy LU-4.3: Mixed-use development. Support vertical and horizontal mixed-use development, integrating residential uses along Broadway and Main Street to promote a pedestrian-focused environment in the core of the city and reduce vehicle trips.” We oppose the prohibition of industrial and other uses west of Blosser Road. We oppose changing the land use designation <u>west</u> of Blosser Rd from Commercial and Industrial to Corridor-Mixed Use. We are concerned that these changes would induce residential, other</i></p>	<p>The proposed land use designations and increased land use densities were included in the preferred land use alternative that was selected by the City Council as a basis for the planned growth in the City. No changes are recommended.</p> <p>No changes to Policy LU-2.1 are recommended. The preferred land use alternative selected by the City Council included the SOI expansion and future annexation of land as described in the Final General Plan.</p> <p>No changes to Policy LU-2.3 are recommended. Implementing appropriate buffers in future Specific Plans, specifically within the Planned Annexation (PA) area will be necessary. The policy states “other land uses”, which may include a range of uses.</p> <p>The Corridor Mixed Use (CMU) designation was developed through the Preferred Land Use Alternative phase of the project and was reviewed and selected by the City Council in 2023. This area is zoned PD/C-2, General Commercial. Mixed-use developments are currently allowed under the City’s mixed-use Ordinance in the PD/C-2 zone. No changes to the zoning are currently proposed. New Industrial, Manufacturing, and heavy polluting uses within the City are required to be located within the appropriate industrial zones in the City and outside of areas that are zoned for mixed-use residential types of developments. No changes to Policy LU-4.2 are recommended.</p>
---	---

Attachment J

<p><i>sensitive uses, and potentially DACs into and near working spaces, including industries that support agriculture, and result in predictable land use conflicts.</i></p> <p>6. <i>“Policy LU-5.3: Location of new housing. Discourage single-family housing production directly adjacent to high-intensity commercial, <u>agricultural</u>, and industrial uses, in favor of land use transitions and buffers between differing intensities of development.” Please refer to the comments submitted by Somach Simmons & Dunn on behalf of the Association for additional information.</i></p> <p>7. <i>This draft of the Land Use Element had introduced inconsistencies in its description and treatment of agricultural lands. For example, LU 9.1 says “Preserve agricultural resources in the city on land not proposed for future development; and LU-9.3 calls out “lands designated for agricultural uses” while page 6 states “No land within City limits is designated or zoned specifically for agriculture; agricultural uses operate as transitional uses until development is planned for an area.” It would be important to have clarification and consistency before finalizing the plan.</i></p> <p>8. <i>Policy 9.1: “...Preserve agricultural resources in the city on land not proposed for future development, specifically those with State or local importance....” The draft of this policy is inconsistent and undermines the future vitality of agriculture both within and adjacent to the City. The prior draft language should be reinstated.</i></p> <p>9. <i>“Policy LU-9.3: Agricultural buffers. Update the Municipal Code to require buffers between new development and lands designated for agricultural uses. Examples of buffers include but are not limited to roadways, stormwater basins, and landscaped or open space areas.”</i></p>	<p>Recommend revising Policy LU-5.3 as proposed. It is feasible for new housing to be located near agricultural areas provided that adequate buffers are planned and implemented as a part of future specific plans and development plans.</p> <p>Policy LU-9.3, requires the Municipal Code to be updated to require buffers between new development and lands designated for agricultural use. This policy is intended to apply to areas that may be utilized for agriculture that are in existing city limits and within the unincorporated area of Santa Barbara County. The final General Plan was completed in accordance with direction from the City Council through selection of the Preferred Land Use Alternative which included the Planned Annexation (PA) area of 985-acres located east of Highway 101. Should this area be annexed into City limits and developed, agricultural buffers would need to be considered and implemented where required. No changes to Policy LU-9.1 or 9.3 are recommended.</p> <p>See response to #7, above. The agricultural buffer ordinance would be developed through a future effort with public input and required approval by the City Council. Policy LU-9.3 does not limit the types of buffers that could be included within the ordinance, it only provides an example of types of buffers that could be considered. No changes are recommended.</p>
---	--

Attachment J

<p>As stated previously, the uses allowed in the buffer and the total distance will determine whether buffers would be helpful or make land use conflicts even worse. For example, active recreational uses and unmanaged reservoirs for pests and diseases would not be helpful mitigation measures. The most useful approach is to exercise good land use planning. This includes industrial and commercial uses as potential buffers between agriculture and residential and sensitive uses.</p> <p>10. “Policy LU-12.4: Walking paths as buffers. Utilize walking paths and linear parks as a transition and/or buffer between non-compatible uses or noticeable changes in building scale or density.” Active recreational uses are not compatible as an agricultural buffer.</p> <p>11. “Policy LU-13.1: Land use buffers. Require the use of buffers between incompatible land uses by using context-appropriate buffers such as berms, walls, landscaping, <u>walking and bike paths</u>, and arterial streets, where appropriate and depending on neighboring use, to avoid adverse impacts to either use. Action LU-13.1.1: Update the City’s municipal code to protect sensitive land uses by, for example, requiring a buffer between sensitive uses and local sources of air pollution such as industrial and commercial facilities (e.g., warehouses, processing plants, factories, landfills, hazardous waste facilities) and <u>avoid locating new sensitive land uses near existing agricultural, commercial, and industrial facilities</u>. Developments should incorporate appropriate mitigation measures that reduce potential pollution exposure.” Good land use planning is mutually beneficial to both types of uses.</p>	<p>See response to #7 and # 9, above. This policy addresses many types of uses that could be noncompatible. Agricultural buffers will be developed that are specific to that use. No changes are recommended.</p> <p>No changes to Policy-13.1 are recommended. This policy provides examples of buffers but does not limit the types of buffers that could be utilized. Action LU-13.1.1 addresses the development of a buffer ordinance within the municipal code which will be a future City effort through a public hearing process. Avoiding siting incompatible uses from each other is discussed in other policies in the Land Use Element (such as Policy LU-5.3). No changes are recommended.</p>
--	--

Attachment J

<p>12. <i>“Policy LU-13.2: Residential encroachment. Protect residential neighborhoods and schools from encroachment by incompatible nonresidential uses such as light industrial, general industrial, and heavy commercial/manufacturing, and the impacts associated with adjacent nonresidential activities. <u>Protect existing agricultural, industrial, and commercial operations from residential encroachment, resulting in impacts to nonresidential activities.</u>” Good land use planning is mutually beneficial to both types of uses.</i></p> <p><u>Noise Element</u></p> <p>1. <i>“Policy N-2.2: Industrial and agricultural traffic noise reduction measures. Evaluate and identify measures and strategies to reduce traffic noise from industrial and agricultural truck traffic, and coordinate with local businesses to implement the measures and strategies as needed. Action N-2.2.1: Coordinate with businesses to identify possible limitations on local truck traffic, including loading and unloading, specific routes, times, and speed limits appropriate for each zoning district, while ensuring compatibility with essential business operations. Action N-2.2.2: Work with local businesses and law enforcement to minimize traffic noise by encouraging the use of preferred routes and delivery times.” Limitations on transportation options would adversely impact agricultural resources and are also counter to the emergency evacuation and response infrastructure goals outlined in the Safety Element. Please refer to the comments submitted by Somach Simmons & Dunn on behalf of the Association for additional information.</i></p>	<p>No changes to Policy LU-13.2 are recommended. This Policy focuses on protecting sensitive land uses (residences and schools) from incompatible industrial, commercial, and manufacturing land uses. The protection of Agricultural resources from future residential types of development would occur through the establishment of buffers as described above.</p> <p>Emergency response and evacuation planning would be considered through the implementation of Action N-2.2.2. The language in this Policy and Actions directs the city to look at possible traffic noise reduction measures that would be feasible to local businesses and law enforcement. Future work on this item would be required through thoughtful collaboration with local businesses, the City’s Police and Fire Departments, and public input. No changes are recommended.</p>
---	--

Attachment J

<u>Safety Element</u>	
<p>1. Page 7. <i>“Agricultural practices exacerbate local flood issues by causing pooling, reducing ground absorption, and blocking drainage systems.” Agricultural discharges are regulated by the Water Quality Control Board. It is inappropriate to generalize agricultural practices or single out one industry. This reference must be removed. Furthermore, there are major technical flaws in this argument.</i></p>	<p>Recommend making the changes outlined in item #1.</p>
<p>2. <i>“Figure S-7: Oil and Natural Gas Network.” The Association has previously encouraged consideration of potential annexation of the Bradley Lands as a preferable alternative to annexation of prime agricultural lands on the Santa Maria Valley floor. Some argued this was not feasible due current or former oil and gas locations in Bradley Lands. Figure S-7 illustrates similar intensity of Oil and Gas in the southern portion of the proposed annexation alternative parallel to Highway 101.</i></p>	<p>The area proposed for annexation in the General Plan was selected by the City Council through the preferred land use alternative. No changes are recommended.</p>
<p>3. “Policy S-3.2: Agricultural runoff reduction. Work with the County of Santa Barbara to reduce off-site and urban flooding caused by agricultural runoff. Action S-3.2.1: Work with the County of Santa Barbara to educate agricultural operators on best management practices to address runoff and irrigation control and the implementation of efficient onsite drainage systems. Action S-3.2.2: Collaborate with local agricultural operators and the Cachuma Resource Conservation District to implement and enforce agricultural runoff control measures.” Please refer to the comments submitted by Somach Simmons & Dunn on behalf of the Association for additional information.</p>	<p>Policy S-3.2, Action S-3.2.1, and Action S-3.2.2 provide direction for the City to coordinate with the County of Santa Barbara regarding any potential agricultural related runoff issues. No changes to this policy or action items are recommended.</p>
<p>4. <i>“Policy S-3.6: Dam and levee inundation safety.” <u>Action S-3.6.4: Support legal and technical efforts to retain the essential functions of</u></i></p>	<p>Action S-3.6.4 was previously deleted.</p>

Attachment J

<p><i>Twitchell Reservoir for flood control and groundwater recharge purposes.</i></p> <p>5. <i>“Policy S-8.2, Climate resilient design. Require new development and redevelopment to incorporate climate-resilient design to mitigate the impacts of climate change. Action 8.2.1: Adopt regulatory standards such as CALGreen Tier 1 and 2 to encourage energy efficiency and climate-smart design for new development and redevelopment.” We are concerned with the impacts to economic viability of going above and beyond California regulatory requirements, including the CA Building Code; voluntary incentives should be reinstated.</i></p> <p>6. <i>Limitations to transportation options identified elsewhere are counter to the emergency evacuation and response infrastructure goals outlined in the Safety Element.</i></p>	<p>Recommend the following revision to Policy S-8.2: Climate resilient design. Require <u>Encourage</u> new development and redevelopment to incorporate climate-resilient design to mitigate the impacts of climate change.</p> <p>Action 8.2.1 directs the City to adopt regulatory standards to encourage energy efficiency and climate-smart design for new development and redevelopment. The Action provides an example of CALGreen Tier 1 and Tier 2 but does not limit or require these standards specifically. The regulatory standards ultimately adopted by the city will be developed through a public hearing process with input from the public and decision makers.</p> <p>See response above regarding Noise Element #1.</p>
<p><u>Draft EIR and Alternatives</u> <i>“Agricultural Resources-Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures</i> <i>“DEIR 4.1-10: “As such, future development adjacent to agricultural land would not lead to farmland loss due to potential conflicts between existing farming operations and new urban or non-agricultural uses. The 2045 General Plan Update would result in less than significant impacts as it would not result in the conversion of farmland to non—agricultural uses that have not already been evaluated in previous environmental documents and would not result in conflicting uses introduced adjacent to existing farmland.”</i> <i>“DEIR 4.1-13. A majority of development facilitated by the plan would likely not create significant impacts, particularly for development that would be located in urbanized areas of the city. However, because implementation of the plan would allow for future conversion of Important Farmland and conflict with agricultural zoning</i></p>	<p>Page 4.1-10 of the Final EIR states: The California Department of Conservation currently lists several sites within the city as either Grazing Land, Prime Farmland, or Unique Farmland. However, these sites have previously undergone environmental review for the conversion of agricultural land. For example, the area west of A street and north of Betteravia Road was evaluated within the Sphere of Influence Expansion Environmental Impact Report (SCH #90010930) in 1994 and the Area 9 Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report (SCH #2008071018) in 2011 wherein impacts to agricultural resources were determined to be less than significant. The Environmental Impact Report for the City’s Sphere of Influence Expansion (SCH#90010930) documented the conversion of these agricultural resources to non-agricultural uses, and the City Council Resolution No. 92-136 presented a Statement of Overriding Considerations, which the Council adopted on September 15, 1994. Santa Barbara LAFCO approved annexation of</p>

Attachment J

within the annexation area, impacts would be significant and unavoidable.”

These statements are patently false. Please refer to the comments submitted by Somach Simmons & Dunn on behalf of the Association for additional information. The Draft EIR is woefully inadequate in its analysis of potential impacts to and mitigation measures to lessen potential impacts to agriculture under the Agricultural Resources and many other potential impact categories as listed throughout this letter and the comment letter submitted by Somach Simmons & Dunn on behalf of the Association. The individual and cumulative impacts to agriculture-related impact categories have not been properly identified, analyzed, or mitigated as required by CEQA, and must be adequately corrected in future drafts. Although analysis of the Bradley Lands annexation would have been preferred by the Association, it might also prove useful to analyze an alternative that prioritizes infill and annexes only the portion of lands north of Main Street and the block immediately east of Marian Regional Medical Center, both in the EIR and General Plan Land Use Alternatives.

the project area to Santa Maria on November 23, 2004.

Furthermore, to mitigate the conversion of these agricultural resources, the City adopted a “Greenbelt and Urban Buffer” resolution in 1994 (Resolution 94-9). The Greenbelt and Urban Buffer resolution established that the City would preserve agricultural and open space areas immediately adjacent to the City’s Urban Boundary Limit. This resolution protects agricultural and open space areas adjacent to the city by prohibiting the city from expanding its Urban Boundary Limit into such areas. Because the impacts of the conversion of these agricultural resources on the site were previously offset by the establishment of the City’s Greenbelt and Urban Buffer, impacts were found not to be significant (City of Santa Maria 2011). As such, conversion of the area known as Area 9 would not result in a significant impact to agricultural resources. Similarly, the area south of Main Street between Blosser Road and Hanson Way was evaluated within the Sphere of Influence Expansion Environmental Impact Report (SCH #90010930) in 1994. As part of the Sphere of Influence Expansion project, this area was assigned urban growth potential as part of the West Main Specific Plan and did not include area identified for future agricultural use. Conversion of this area would not result in significant impacts as the area has been previously evaluated and slated for urban growth in previous environmental analyses.

The area east of South Blosser Road, south of West Stowell Road, and north of Battles Road was evaluated within the Blosser-Southeast Specific Plan Amendment Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SCH #1994107909) in 2020 wherein impacts to agricultural resources were determined to be less than significant. The Supplemental Environmental Impact Report determined that the Blosser-Southeast Specific Plan area has been anticipated for non-agricultural use, including residential development, since the evaluation of the City’s Sphere of Influence Boundary Amendment and Concurrent Annexation Program in 1992. As part of the

Attachment J

	<p>Sphere of Influence Boundary Amendment and Concurrent Annexation Program, this area was assigned residential growth potentials and did not include area identified for future agricultural use. As such, conversion of this area would not result in a significant impact to agricultural resources.</p> <p>The area east of Blosser Road and south of Battles Road was evaluated within the Betteravia Plaza General Plan Amendment, Land Use and Zone Change and Development Agreement Environmental Impact Report (SCH #2015011029) in 2015. Impacts to agricultural resources within this Environmental Impact Report were determined to be less than significant as this area was identified an infill site located within the urbanized city, surrounded by urban development and is planned and zoned for future urban development. Prior to the preparation of the Betteravia Plaza General Plan Amendment, Land Use and Zone Change and Development Agreement Environmental Impact Report (SCH #2015011029), an Initial Study – Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared for this area indicating the site had a land use designation of Light Industrial and a zoning designation of Light Manufacturing that has since been changed to allow for retail commercial and professional office uses. As the area has been designated for development and has been previously evaluated in previous environmental documents, impacts related to the conversion of agricultural land would be less than significant.</p> <p>The Final EIR fully analyzes the 2045 General Plan Update’s impacts to Agricultural Resources and discloses that while the 2045 General Plan Update includes policies which are intended to minimize future impacts to agricultural lands in and around Santa Maria, there is no set of General Plan policies or mitigation measures that could feasibly reduce the identified impact to agricultural lands in the Planned Annexation area, should that be annexed and developed in the future. Although the Infill Only Alternative would be the Environmentally Superior Alternative, this alternative would not fulfill the primary</p>
--	---

Attachment J

	<p>objectives of the 2045 General Plan Update, including the provision of housing quality and various housing choices or improving opportunities for connected growth. Further, the Infill Only Alternative would not enhance new and existing neighborhoods such that each neighborhood would be a Complete Neighborhood or provide innovative housing and may result in the City failing to meeting its RHNA obligations in accordance with State law as it would significantly reduce the affordable housing options and limit new housing to infill only and redevelopment. A Statement of Overriding Considerations addressing this impact has been provided as Attachment E to this report.</p>
<p>Letter 2: Urban Planning Concepts, Inc. dated February 13, 2026</p>	
<p><i>The purpose of this letter is to provide information regarding the Guggia/DeBernardi property, that we refer to as Planned Annexation Area #1, which is located within the east side Planned Annexation Area addressed in the General Plan Update. This letter documents the planning work completed to date, demonstrates consistency with the vision and policies of the Draft General Plan, and requests that the Conceptual Land Use Plan and Project Description for this property be included in the General Plan and Draft EIR record as an example of how the properties could be developed in the future. However, this submittal is not a request for project approval, annexation, or entitlement at this stage. We respectfully request that the Planning Commission, as part of its recommendation on the General Plan Update and Draft EIR, acknowledge the Conceptual Land Use Plan and Project Description for the Guggia/DeBernardi property as consistent with the Draft General Plan as an appropriate implementation framework within the Planned Annexation Area.</i></p>	<p>This area is included within the area that is identified as the Planned Annexation (PA) area on the Land Use Policy Map. Any future development of this area will not be able to occur until after the City's SOI has been changed and the area annexed through the LAFCO process. A specific plan and additional environmental review will also be required. This letter is noted as a part of the record for the General Plan Update.</p>

Letter 3: Urban Planning Concepts, Inc., dated February 16, 2026

Introduction

Pictures There are too many pictures that take up at least 80 pages of this 290-page GP document. As suggested before, these pictures could have been reduced and made into a collage page. Pictures are not required This collage for each element could replace the repeated generic aerial photo that looks like any city. The Goals and Policies section are the most important part of the GP Element. Request the Planning Commission direct staff to work with the community and consultants to revise the cover page of each element.

Fig INT-2. All of the regional maps in this GP must include the 1500-acre city owned Los Flores Park and future Landfill. It is referred to many times, so people need to know where it is located. All city maps should clearly note the SMAPD boundaries. This will make it clear to LAFCO that 2,500 acres are not available for housing.

Fig INT-3, Page 11 - We requested that on this map that includes the PA areas be Identified as

PA 1 Guggia and DeBarnerdi

PA 2 Cal Giant

PA 3 the rest of the PA areas.

As noted on Page 11, We had asked that this paragraph bullet these Planning Areas and provide more information about each one and what is being proposed as Pre-zoning. This will help refer future PA's and Specific Plans maps that go along with them.

Page 13 - Project History should have been expanded to include a summary of the 1993 Sphere of Influence and Annexation Study that planned the annexation of 3,000 acres and helped the City grow from 65,000 people to 110,000.

Page 15 - Delete word Implementation as it is not used in the rest of the General Plan. Only use the ACTION.

The photos were included in the draft General Plan that was circulated for public review and the City received one comment from this commenter regarding a concern with the number and placement of photos within the plan. No other specific comments or concerns regarding the photos were noted. It is common for current General Plans to include photos throughout, based on the element topic. No changes are recommended.

Los Flores Park is not located within City limits and is not identified by the City as a city park. The Land Use Policy Map depicts the Santa Maria Airport area. The Santa Maria Airport Specific Plan identifies the type and density of any future development in that area and is the document to refer to regarding development in that area.

The Land Use Policy Map identifies the Planned Annexation Area for future development. The phases for build-out of this area and the names of the areas will be determined/developed through future review, including through pre-zoning for the LAFCO annexation application and process.

Information on the prior 1993 SOI and Annexation Study is available in those specific documents for reference and is not required to be included in the 2045 General Plan.

Recommend change to delete the word implementation.

Attachment J

<p><u>Land Use Element</u></p> <p><i>Page 11 - The last sentence refers to the Entrada Specific Plan (1976). This plan needs to be retired as it is inconsistent with the Objective Desing Standards, and the city has not used this SP in years.</i></p> <p><i>Page 12 - We will be asking that all reference to the old FAR standards be deleted.</i></p> <p><i>Page 13 - The third PAR needs to be changed to SOI and annexation.</i></p> <p><i>Page 14 - This is an old planning method that most cities are retiring. It is not consistent with the ODS, and most high density /mixed use projects will not meet this standard. Delete all references in the LUE to FAR's</i></p> <p><i>Delete Residential Agricultural (RA) designation. It has never been used in the city. Include in all the residential Designations JADU's and ADU's.</i></p> <p><i>Page 16-17 - Delete all reference to FAR as this is no longer a valid Planning Tool.</i></p> <p><i>Page 21 - Bullet 7 needs to be revised to require 2.5 aces per 1,000 in order to be consistent with the current park land standard.</i></p> <p><i>Page 21 - Policy LU-2.2 Deleted this provision as it does not make sense. What kind of Connection and what core of Santa Maria? Are you asking to have pedestrian bridges over 101???</i></p>	<p>The Entrada Specific Plan is not proposed to be retired at this time. This is an action that the City Council could consider in the future through updates to the Municipal Code following the adoption of the General Plan.</p> <p>Government Code Section 65302 states that the land use element shall include a statement of the standards of population density and building intensity recommended for the various districts and other territory covered by the plan. Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is a current planning practice that is used in General Plans to designate the appropriate building intensity for Commercial, Industrial and Professional Office zones. No changes are recommended.</p> <p>Recommend adding SOI to this paragraph.</p> <p>See comment above regarding FAR.</p> <p>The RA zone designation was not recommended to be deleted as a part of the Preferred Land Use Alternative selection. No changes are recommended.</p> <p>See comment above regarding FAR.</p> <p>The City Council has adopted the standard of 5-acres of parks per 1,000 people. No changes are recommended.</p> <p>Policy LU-2.2 would ensure that future developments located within the Planned Annexation (PA) area are planned as complete neighborhoods with multi-modal access to adjacent developed areas that allow for multi-modal access to the developed core area of the City (bike paths, roads, sidewalks, for example). This policy is flexible and intended to allow for creativity in the design of future developed areas.</p>
---	---

Attachment J

<p><i>Page 22 – Policy 4.1.1 retire Estrada Specific Plan and delete this Policy or revise it to refer to the Objective Design Standards (2025)</i></p> <p><i>Page 23 - Policy LU-3.5 this policy should be revised to support the parking structures as it exists.</i></p> <p><i>Policy LU 3.6 is in conflict with 3.5. need to delete one of them.</i></p> <p><i>Page 24 - Action LU-4.12 This action is conflicting with the main and Broadway being designated State highway Truck Routes. Suggest deleting it.</i></p> <p><i>Page 24 - Policy LU 5.2 it is important to note that 10,000= infill units will not be close to parks, schools, etc. Suggest deleting the last part of this sentence to be honest.</i></p> <p><i>Page 24 - Action LU 6.5-1 and Action LU-6.6-1 we agree with these actions but also need to make sure to delete FAR requirements.</i></p> <p><i>Page 28 - Policy Lu-12.1 add this phrase...gathering places should be placed to be protected by the wind.</i></p>	<p>See comment above regarding the Entrada Specific Plan.</p> <p>Future parking solutions within the Downtown Specific Plan area may be considered. No changes to Policy LU-3.5 are recommended.</p> <p>Policy LU-3.5 directs the City to support parking solutions that reduce surface parking lots within the Downtown area to better utilize land and promote pedestrian walkability. Policy LU-3.6 directs the City to continue to identify and develop shared parking facilities within the Downtown Specific Plan area to support future mixed-use developments in the area. Shared parking facilities are a method of reducing the number of surface parking lots in the City which is consistent with the direction in Policy LU-3.5. No changes are recommended.</p> <p>Caltrans is currently in the process of reviewing truck routes on Main Street and Broadway and looking at strategies with the City to implement the Downtown Multi-modal streetscape plan. This Action is appropriate to include in the General Plan which is a visionary document to the year 2045.</p> <p>Policy LU-5.2: Siting of infill development. Promote new infill housing in areas that are underutilized and in close proximity to parks, recreation, public amenities, and local goods and services. This policy is consistent with the land use density changes that were included in the Preferred Land Use Alternative selected by the City Council and also applies to any future redevelopment of areas within the City. Do not recommend deleting this policy.</p> <p>See comment above regarding FAR.</p> <p>No changes recommended. The placement of outdoor seating areas and gathering places can be determined through the Planned Development process when projects are being developed.</p>
--	---

Attachment J

<p><i>Page 12 - We will be asking that all reference to the old FAR standards be deleted.</i></p>	<p>See comment above regarding FAR.</p>
<p><u>pes Circulation Element</u> <i>Page 5 - There is only one heliport in Santa Maria at Marian Hospital, The other three listed here are located on the oil platform over 3 miles off the coast.</i></p> <p><i>Page 10 - There is no comment on parking in local streets and neighborhood because of ADU's. This is a huge challenge for the future.</i></p> <p><i>Short- and long-Term transit This paragraph should include SMOOTH and other local transits operations besides SMRT. Uber. Lyft. Etc.</i></p> <p><i>Figs CIRC-1, CIRC-2 - This figure shows no road patterns for the Planning Area on the east side of Santa Maria. There should be something planned for these annexation areas. Fig CIR 2 shows no bike trails in the annexation areas.</i></p> <p><i>Page 16 - Multi-Use Paths Class 1 are in the Specific Plans of street trails add to this paragraph The class III bike trails are becoming more of a problem because fo the parking demand for ADU's Is there a need for charging stations for these micro bikes?</i></p> <p><i>Page 21 - Again no plan on CIR -4 for the east side of the freeway for pedestrian trails.</i></p> <p><i>Page 22 - CIRC 1.1 What is a Complete Street??? need to have exhibits. Action CIR 1.1.1 Delete Too costly to convert exiting streets to complete streets. CIR 1.3 Delete as there is not enough space to do this design in private projects. CIRC 1.2 delete reference to private streets. There is not enough road width to do complete street designs.</i></p>	<p>Recommend making this change.</p> <p>The regulation of parking for ADUs and JADUs is per State law and addressed in the City's Municipal Code (Title 12). No changes are recommended.</p> <p>Private local transit operations are not operated by or controlled by the City. No changes recommended.</p> <p>Future roadway planning will be completed through the development of Specific Plans for the Planned Annexation (PA) area. The plan does show how existing roadways would connect to this area. No changes recommended.</p> <p>No changes to the Class III bike trails are recommended by the Public Works Department at this time.</p> <p>Future planning for pedestrian trails will be completed through the development of Specific Plans for the Planned Annexation (PA) area. The plan does show how existing roadways would connect to this area. No changes recommended.</p> <p>The Complete Streets Act and Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI) <i>Update to the General Plan Guidelines: Complete Streets and the Circulation Element</i> emphasize planning for a balanced multimodal network that meets the needs of all users in a manner suitable to local context, implemented through adopted policies, standards, and prioritized projects. The Circulation Element follows this framework by:</p>

Attachment J

<p><i>Page 26 - Delete the last sentence. Projects are already overtaxed and this would need the vote of the city.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) establishing complete streets goals and policies (Goal CIR-1), (2) mapping the multimodal system through the Street Network, Bikeway Network, and Pedestrian Priority Improvement Network diagrams, and (3) providing implementable actions including pursuing retrofit funding, updating street standards, and conditioning new development to provide multimodal amenities to the extent feasible. <p>Consistent with a context-sensitive, network-based approach, the City also plans for the safe and efficient movement of freight, emergency response vehicles, transit vehicles, and other large vehicles primarily on designated arterials and collectors, while local residential streets are designed and managed primarily for neighborhood access, lower speeds, and safe walking/rolling and bicycle compatibility. Local streets therefore contribute to complete streets through ADA-compliant pedestrian facilities, safe crossings and connections to the designated bicycle and transit corridors, and appropriate speed management rather than requiring every corridor to accommodate every mode, including freight or high-capacity transit, on every block. No changes to Policies are recommended.</p>
<p><u><i>Conservation and Open Space Element</i></u> <i>Page 12 - Correct the last paragraph the groundwater basin is NOT in overdraft. This has been determined by the courts.</i></p> <p><i>Page 13 - The percentages do not add up right... Correct this paragraph.</i></p> <p><i>Page 14 - Historic District ...the city needs to change the 50-year standard to ...a year. anything before 1960 may need to have a historic review report</i></p>	<p>Will include a change on Page 12 to delete the statement regarding potential overdraft of the Santa Maria Valley Groundwater Basin.</p> <p>This section is discussing the overall decrease in emissions for commercial/industrial, residential, and transportation sectors. These percentages are not intended to add up to 100 percent, it is just noting the overall decrease in each area. No changes recommended.</p> <p>Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), structures that are typically 50 years old or older are considered potential historical resources. While 50 years is the general threshold for evaluating significance, structures younger than 50 years can also be designated if they possess exceptional historical significance. No changes recommended.</p>

Attachment J

<p><i>Page 20 - What mining operations ???are you talking about the riverbed? Is that in the SLO county?</i></p>	<p>While "mining" often refers to hard-rock extraction, in regulatory and economic contexts, it is an umbrella term for the extraction of all non-renewable, naturally occurring resources, including oil and gas uses.</p>
<p><i>Page 19 - Delete reference to "NO NET LOSS" this is very bad wording delete Action COS 1.1.2</i></p>	<p>Action COS 1.1.2 applies only to areas that are identified as sensitive habitat or a wildlife corridor area. It requires new development to be located outside of these areas. Future projects would be subject to the mitigation measures in the Final EIR for the General Plan (should the project use this document for CEQA), or other mitigation developed through a CEQA document specifically developed for that project. No changes are recommended.</p>
<p><i>Page 20 - Delete the words "coordinate with the county" Delete COS 1.2 and Action 1.2.1 give county too much control over annexations.</i></p>	<p>Recommend revising Policy COS 1.2 as follows: Policy COS-1.2: City greenbelt. Coordinate with Santa Barbara County to Develop a continuous system of greenbelts and natural corridors. No changes to Action 1.2.1 are recommended.</p>
<p><i>Page 20 - Policy COS 1.3 and Action COS 1.3.1 the city does not have money to do this, and the priority should be on active recreation.</i></p>	<p>This policy and action would provide the City with the direction to facilitate/implement these actions in the future should the City elect to do that. No changes are recommended.</p>
<p><i>Page 21 - Delete all of COS 1.-4 and the action items Urban wilding the city does not have money to do this. Delete all of COS 2.1 Why would the city collaborate with the county on ag land in the city???</i> <i>Delete Action COS 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 This whole action item needs to be deleted</i></p>	<p>Policies addressing urban rewilding are required to be included in General Plans due to Senate Bill 1425 (SB 1425), which requires cities and counties to update their local open-space elements by January 1, 2026. The update must include plans for rewilding opportunities, climate resilience, and equitable access to open space. See responses to Letter number 1 above regarding COS 2.1 and related actions.</p>
<p><i>Page 22 - Delete COS 2-3 and all the action items as there is no mining in the city of Santa Maria. Policy COS 3.1 the urban canopy only applies to the developed parts of the city. Not SMAPCD or area 7 or 9 until they are developed</i></p>	<p>While "mining" often refers to hard-rock extraction, in regulatory and economic contexts, it is an umbrella term for the extraction of all non-renewable, naturally occurring resources, including oil and gas uses and infrastructure.</p>

Attachment J

<p><u>Noise Element</u> <i>Fig N-1 - Insert the new ALUC noise maps from 2023</i> smx_alucp_v2_final.pdf</p> <p><i>Page 9 - This section should make it clear that the Railroad and the SMAP do not run at night</i></p> <p><i>Fig N-3 - Replace this map with the Noise contour map from the EIR Fig..._____</i></p> <p><i>Page 13 - Action N 1.2.1 The way this action is written every project would be required to have a noise study? Revise to only apply to those projects with noise generating uses.</i></p> <p><i>Page 15 - Action N-2.1.4 revised this action to state that exterior noise levels are allowed to be at 75dB along major corridors (Ord 12-7.14a)</i></p>	<p>The Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan contains the most updated maps. The General Plan references this document. No changes are recommended.</p> <p>While they do not currently operate overnight, this could change in the future. No changes are recommended.</p> <p>Figure 4.6-3 - Existing Traffic Noise Contours in the EIR is the same figure that is included in the Noise Element (Figure N-3). No changes are recommended.</p> <p>Action N-1.2.1 requires discretionary projects that would be located adjacent to sensitive noise receptors to complete a noise study to determine if they will generate noise that would exceed the allowable noise levels for adjacent noise-sensitive land uses. This requirement does not apply to ministerial permits.</p> <p>Municipal Code Section 12-7.14a applies to properties that are zoned R-2, medium density residential. It states that outdoor living areas such as patios and balconies may be incorporated into multifamily development projects in areas which experience elevated noise levels. These noise levels may not exceed the "Normally Unacceptable" Community Noise Exposure levels (75dB and above) specified in Figure 2 of the "Noise Element Guidelines" (Appendix C of the California General Plan Guidelines).</p> <p>Action N-2.1.4 directs the City to update the Municipal Code to require new residential and mixed-use development within the 60 dBA CNEL noise contours or higher of transportation corridors to submit an acoustical analysis and incorporate noise reduction strategies, such as vegetation buffers and physical sound barriers, as necessary to meet the requirements of the Noise Ordinance. The incorporation of balconies and patios into multifamily projects in the R-2 zone would not be impacted by this Action. Therefore, no changes are recommended.</p>
---	---

Attachment J

<p><u>Safety Element</u> <i>There should be a paragraphs and references in this Element of the Safety support agencies. Highway Patrol, sheriff, county fire, AMR, Marian Hospital, Heliport, etc. this is so important to know what the resources are in this region.</i></p> <p><i>Page 14 - Solid Waste. This paragraph needs to include a sentence on the future landfill site at Los Flores. The city purchased this ranch about 15 years ago for a new landfill stie after the existing one closes.</i></p> <p><i>Page 7 - Flood and Dam...It paragraph and other sections and policies should clearly note who is responsible for the Dam. TMA, SMWCD, BLM. And then FCD</i></p> <p><i>Page 26 - Goals and Policies on this page related to the Twitchell Dam should list Twitchell Management Authority (TMA) and Santa Maria Water Conservation District (SMWCD) and BLM. Flood Control does not have authority on the Dam. These policies should be corrected.</i></p> <p><i>Page 31 - These policies S-6.6 to S-6.9 should include reference to all other local support services listed above.</i></p>	<p>A discussion of the Fire Department and Police Department operations is included in the Public Facilities and Services Element. Marian Medical Center is discussed in the Environmental Health and Justice Element. No changes are recommended.</p> <p>The Public Facilities and Services Element includes a summary of solid waste facilities and the landfill. No changes are recommended.</p> <p>This information is included in the Public Facilities and Services Element. No changes are recommended.</p> <p>Policy S-3.6 and Action S-3.6.2 reference coordination with Santa Barbara County Flood Control and other local and State agencies as required. The General Plan is a long-term comprehensive planning document through 2045, and responsible agencies could change in the future. No changes are recommended.</p> <p>Local support services would inherently be involved with the development of the programs noted in these policies. The General Plan is a long-term comprehensive planning document through 2045, and responsible agencies could change in the future. No changes are recommended.</p>
<p><u>Health and Environmental Justice Element</u> <i>Page 7 - There is now an added sentence in the H2 A paragraph about ADU's. It would seem that ADU's and their known benefits and impacts to the community warrant a separate paragraph The city has issued over 2,000 ADU permits. There is no comment on parking in local streets and neighborhood because of ADU's. This is a huge challenge for the future and no of these neighborhood streets will ever be Complete Streets.</i></p>	<p>Recommend revising as follows: H-2A Housing. The increasing number of H-2A Visa workers in agricultural jobs and The associated requirements for employers to supply worker housing have heightened the need for increasing the amount of safe and affordable housing in the city. No other changes are recommended.</p>

Attachment J

<p><i>Page 17 - Goal HEJ -3, Policy HEJ 3.1 and 3,2 Remove reference to “Complete Streets”. There is no definition of what that means and the city does not have funds to make this happen. Also, many existing streets are now impacted by ADU Parking so there is no space to add amenities. Also, these Complete Street Policies do not apply to private driveways or internal roads.</i></p> <p><i>Page 23 – Delete this policy and action item: Policy HEJ-8.6 and Action HEJ – 8.6.1, Develop Community Benefit Agreements.</i></p> <p><i>All of the DAC areas are located in the existing city and not near the Planning Areas. The PA will not be impacting those areas. This is just adding another layer of costs on future housing and development projects</i></p> <p><i>Also, what about large city projects that might be in these areas. DELETE this Policy and Action item</i></p>	<p>See response regarding Complete Streets policies and ADU regulations above.</p> <p>This policy and action is included in the General Plan to provide the City Council with the opportunity to develop this type of program in the future should they elect to do so. No changes to this Policy and Action are recommended.</p> <p>Disadvantaged communities (DACs) are areas identified by the California Environmental Protection Agency or low-income areas that are disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards identified in CalEnviroScreen 4.0 that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation. A multistep process, including extensive community engagement, was used to identify Santa Maria’s DACs. This is required per SB 1000 to be included in Environmental Health and Justice Elements. No changes are recommended.</p>
<p><u><i>Public Facilities and Services Element</i></u> <i>Page 3 - Why did this section include facts? How much state water is the city relying on and how much groundwater. It is critical that this information be in this document.</i></p> <p><i>Page 4 - Need to include a full discussion Green Canyon drainage through the middle of the city of Santa Maria</i></p> <p><i>Page 7 - Should add AHC that has 4 years college degree.</i></p>	<p>The most updated information regarding groundwater can be found in the Utilities Department annual reports such as the Urban Water Management Plan and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Referring to these reports for the most updated information allows the General Plan to remain relevant and avoid frequent updates to this Element.</p> <p>This section provides a general overview of stormwater infrastructure in the city. No additional changes are recommended.</p> <p>Recommend including this information.</p>

Attachment J

<p><i>Page 7, PFS-2 "...future school site" There are no future school sites on the map. with 50,000 people there will need to be 10 more schools and two more high schools. Where are they going to be located?</i></p>	<p>The Land Use Policy Map identifies a potential location for a future High School on the west side of North Broadway, just south of Preisker Rd. This Element notes that as educational services and facilities are not directly provided by the City of Santa Maria, the City's role and responsibility are limited.</p> <p>However, the City recognizes that to grow properly, adequate school sites must be planned for. The continued coordination and input from the area's school districts will be imperative to identify the appropriate location for new schools as a part of planning efforts. For more information on the location and distribution of existing and future school sites, please see the Community Facility land use designation in the General Plan Land Use Map in the Land Use Element. Additional information on existing schools and plans for the future development of schools in the Santa Maria Bonita School District and Santa Maria Joint Union High School District can be found at www.smbds.org and www.smjuhsd.org. No changes are recommended.</p>
<p><i>Page 9 - Need to show the number of officers per 1,000 and the number of fire fighters per 1,000.</i></p>	<p>Annual updated information regarding staffing is provided by the Police and Fire Departments. Rather than include specific numbers which change and would necessitate frequent updates to the General Plan, this Element references these reports. No changes are recommended.</p>
<p><i>Fig PFS-3 - Need to amend the map to include the Orcutt Fire stations and proposed fire stations in Orcutt And Santa Maria. Need to add the Sheriffs Office on foster road. what about police station on the east side of the freeway. This is for the future not just what is there today.</i></p>	<p>Figure PFS-3 includes police and fire stations within the City limits. A future fire station is proposed adjacent to Blosser Rd. in the Blosser Southeast Area 5B Specific Plan. The number and location of future police and fire stations will be determined through future planning efforts, including Specific Plans, once more information is available regarding the type and intensity of developments proposed. No changes are recommended.</p>
<p><i>Page 12 - Solid Waste Chapter needs to include a discussion on Los Flores landfill. What is the schedule for this landfill to be constructed?</i></p>	<p>The Public Facilities and Services Element of the General Plan includes Goals and policies addressing solid waste. Specifically, Policy PFS-9.3: Regional cooperation, states: collaborate with other agencies to develop coordinated waste management solutions,</p>

Attachment J

<p><i>Page 12, Page 3 - Annexation talks about WWTP capacity is sufficient for present needs projected flows at full buildout will exceed that capacity????</i></p> <p><i>There is nothing in the General Plan that details what is the current capacity, current design and what is needed for future 16,000 units. Is the current plant able to serve all of the future 160,000 people??? Give us some facts???</i></p> <p><i>Page 17 - Delete Action PFS 3.1.2 . we do not need additional fees for development Policy PFS- 4.3 Schools....How many schools has the city determined will be needed and where will they be located for the infill development and the annexation areas?</i></p> <p><i>Page 18 - Library standards are listed on Page 15 and then again in Policy PFS S-1 Why maintain this old ratio when the libraries are being used 30-40 % less? Need to update these standards in light of the internet.</i></p> <p><i>Page 18 - Goal PFS-6 and Policy PFS-1. All of these Public Facilities policies need to be revised as most public buildings are not open to the public anymore and they have security, cameras and locked spaces. These policies should reflect what is happening now.</i></p>	<p>supporting a unified approach to recycling, waste diversion, and sustainable practices. According to the Final EIR, the Santa Maria Regional Landfill has a maximum permitted daily throughput of 8,820 tons per week and a remaining capacity of approximately 2,845,000 cubic yards and is estimated to remain operational through 2034 (California Department of Resources, Recycling, and Recovery [CalRecycle] 2025a). Beyond 2034, solid waste generated by the city may be diverted to other nearby landfills, such as the Cold Canyon Landfill. The City's Utilities Department will continue monitoring the remaining capacity of the landfill and the General Plan provides flexibility in options regarding waste management solutions if/when the existing landfill reaches capacity.</p> <p>This information is included in Section 4.8, Utilities and Service Systems, of the Final EIR prepared for the General Plan Update. Policy PFS-1.2: Wastewater system, states the following: Maintain a wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal system capable of meeting the daily and peak demand of existing and future residents and businesses. The Utility Capacity Study is currently in the process of being updated and is the best/most current source to obtain information regarding projected sewer flows.</p> <p>No changes to these Policies and Actions are recommended. Action PFS-3.1.2 provides the City Council with the option to direct staff to study a potential assessment district for funding regional stormwater programs. See response above regarding future school sites. The library standards were reviewed by the library director and city staff and were determined to be correct for use in the General Plan.</p> <p>The General Plan is a long-term planning document that includes Goals, Policies and Actions to facilitate future use of public facilities should this be directed by the City Council. This provides an opportunity for future consideration. No changes are recommended.</p>
---	---

Attachment J

<p><i>Page 19 - Policy PFS 6.5 this is not allowed by State law. All school sites are fences, secured, and have cameras to monitor the public. Delete this provision.</i></p> <p><i>Page 19 - No information on how many Fire fighters are needed for now and at full build out? How many fire stations will be needed on the east side of town and to added infill development.</i></p> <p><i>Page 20 - No mention on the Los Flores Landfill. When is that going to be needed.</i></p> <p><i>Page 26 - Schools. All of the school policies should have already been done with this plan. Policy PFS-10.1 does not list Santa Maria High School District? Do they have enough high schools for the full build out of the city.?</i></p>	<p>See response to Goal PFS-6 and Policy PFS-1 above.</p> <p>See response regarding Figure PFS-3 above.</p> <p>See response above.</p> <p>See response above regarding future school sites.</p>
<p><u><i>Economic Development Element</i></u></p> <p><i>Page 3 - It should include employment opportunities in VSFB and the growing medical and educational opportunities in the region.</i></p> <p><i>Page 7 – Include HBACC, Marian Hospital and VSFB and the SM Airport. This section should refer to the 4-year programs at AHC that have just started.</i></p> <p><i>Econ 2-3– Change this policy to start with the word “Encourage “not “Prioritize.” We do not want this policy to be used against the annexation application.</i></p> <p><i>Policy Econ 2.8 - This Needs to be a GOAL for the SOI and annexations.</i></p>	<p>VSFB and Marian medical center are discussed on page 7 of this Element. A reference to the 4-year program at AHC can be added to the Public Facilities and Services Element and this Element as well. No changes to Policy Econ-2.3 are recommended as this is consistent with direction provided in the selected Preferred Land Use Alternative. Policy Econ-2.8 is clear regarding direction for SOI and annexations. No changes are recommended.</p>
<p><u><i>Recreation and Parks Element</i></u></p> <p><i>Page 7 - Now the total is 30 parks instead of 27...how much acreage is now maintained by the city.</i></p> <p><i>Page 11 - Please include the total acreage for the city parks.</i></p> <p><i>Page 13 - Delete bullet 4 as there are now two parks Acquistapace and Carmen lane and another under construction</i></p> <p><i>Page 13 - We agree that for consistent and equity that the city standard be 2.5 acre per 1,000. Also the city can barely afford to maintain the parks that they have.</i></p>	<p>Rather than list all parks and recreational facilities together by acreage, the Element includes a separate map and table listing Recreational Facilities and a separate map and table for Parks Facilities. The leisure needs assessment that is completed by the Recreation and Parks Department includes the full acreage of existing parks in the City and this document is updated every 5 years. No changes are recommended.</p> <p>No changes to this policy are recommended. The City Council has adopted 5 park acres per 1,000 as the current standard.</p>

Attachment J

<p><i>Paragraph 4 Park Quality is poorly written. The sentence should state that at 5 acres per 1,000 the city should currently have 550 acres but only have 270. At full build out, the city at 5 acres per 1,000 would need to have 800 acres of parkland to acquire and maintain. If the ratio is 2.5 acres per 1,000 the city would have 400 acres.</i></p>	<p>No changes to this policy are recommended. The City Council has adopted 5 park acres per 1,000 as the current standard.</p>
<p><i>Page 14 - The table REC- 3 provided is not complete as it does not give the PC and CC information on what is the current level of service for each of these categories and what the city should plan for in the future. Park standard needs to be changed to 2.5 acres per 1,000. Or the city needs to change their inventory and include Los Flores Ranch, school playgrounds including AHC, and the many private cub houses, pools, and play areas.</i></p>	<p>No changes to this policy are recommended. The City Council has adopted 5 park acres per 1,000 as the current standard. Los Flores Ranch is not located within City limits and is not a designated City park. Private amenities that are not accessible to the general public cannot be included as a city park. However, developers may include open spaces in project design that could be designated for public use.</p>
<p><i>Page 17 - Policy REC-2.1 Revise this policy to only have 2.5 acres per 1,000. Action REC 2.1.1 add to this that the park classification should include schools and private amenities.</i></p>	<p>No changes to this policy are recommended. The City Council has adopted 5 park acres per 1,000 as the current standard. Private amenities that are not accessible to the general public cannot be included as a city park. However, developers may include open spaces in project design that could be designated for public use.</p>
<p><i>Page 18 - Action REC 2.2.1 this provision or add another that describe the Landscaping and Lighting District Tax that is paid for by new residents.</i></p>	<p>Action REC-2.2.1 states: Regularly review and update park mitigation fees to reflect current needs and construction costs. No changes to this Action are recommended.</p>
<p><i>Policy REC 3.3 and 3.4 3.5 it is too bad that this was not discussed in the body of this element. Could include PCPA, High School program orchestra, Civic theater, etc. also referred to OASIS, and other senior centers</i></p>	<p>No changes are recommended.</p>

Letter 4: Urban Planning Concepts, Inc. PowerPoint, February 18, 2026	
<p>Requested Policy Changes: <u>Land Use Element</u> Page 12, 14, 16-17 Delete all references to the old Floor Area Ratio (FAR) as this standard no longer applies in the planning profession based on new Housing Laws that require High Density Housing and Mixed-Use projects to be much higher than 1 or 2 FAR.</p> <p><i>Action LU-2.1.1 In collaboration with the County of Santa Barbara. As soon as possible the city shall submit a LAFCO application to modify the city's Sphere of Influence to include the Planned Annexation Areas.</i> <i>The city is the lead agency on these applications not the county. The county does not support the Planning Area application as noted in their comment letter.</i></p> <p><i>Delete all of Policy LU- 2.2</i> <i>Policy LU-2.2: Connections to annexed area. Require new development within future annexation areas to provide infrastructure, multimodal, and public realm connections to the developed core of Santa Maria There is no explanation as to what the city is looking for to connect PA 1 to the downtown four miles away?</i></p> <p><i>Policy LU -2.3 Revise Bullet – Provide 2.5 acres per 5 acres of parks per 1,000 residents, per the City's park service standard, and plan for new public and recreational facilities. Throughout the whole General Plan elements all references to 5 acres per 1,000 needs to be revised to the current actual standard of 2.5 acres</i></p>	<p>See comments above regarding FAR. No changes are recommended.</p> <p>Recommend revising as follows: Action LU-2.1.1: In collaboration with the County of Santa Barbara, The city shall submit a LAFCO application to modify the city's Sphere of Influence to include the Planned Annexation Areas.</p> <p>Policy LU-2.2 would ensure that future developments located within the Planned Annexation (PA) area are planned as complete neighborhoods with multi-modal access to adjacent developed areas that allow for multi-modal access to the developed core area of the City (bike paths, roads, sidewalks, for example). This policy is flexible and intended to allow for creativity in the design of future developed areas.</p> <p>No changes to this policy are recommended. The City Council has adopted 5 park acres per 1,000 as the current standard.</p>
<p><u>Circulation Element</u> CIRC 1.1, CIRC 1.2, 1.3 Delete reference to "Complete Street???" The city has not provided an example of what a Complete street? It should have been included in this Element so that future landowners know what they are being required to do. These standards do not apply to private driveways and roads</p>	<p>See response above regarding these comments. No changes are recommended.</p>

Attachment J

<p>Policy CIR 1.2 Complete Streets Construction: Complete City street and private streets to be constructed and maintained to the extent feasible</p> <p>Policy CIR-1.3: Complete Streets in new development. Condition approvals of new development with street improvements and access provisions, to the extent feasible, that would be necessary to maintain multimodal operating standards and require complete street amenities consistent with the General Plan and accepted standards for new public and private streets</p>	
<p><u>Conservation Element</u></p> <p>Page 12 Revise the last paragraph</p> <p>Subsurface groundwater flows to the ocean are required to prevent seawater intrusion into the Basin. Overdraft of the Santa Maria Groundwater Basin could lead to the reduction of available quality groundwater. It could also reduce the natural subsurface flow towards the ocean, leading to an increased</p> <p>The courts have ruled that the SMV groundwater basin is not in overdraft and the TMA is responsible to reporting each year on the health of the basin. This information should have been detailed in this element.</p> <p><i>Historic Review – The City needs to add an action item. Action ____ City will change the city ordinance so that historic value review may apply to buildings built before 1960 or earlier as the benchmark date instead of referring to 50 years old (1975)</i></p> <p>Action COS-1.1.1: Prevent the loss of natural land area and/or the reduction of the quality of natural lands through the establishment of a no net loss land use management policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site new development outside of sensitive habitat and wildlife corridor areas. • Prohibit redevelopment that would encroach upon sensitive habitat and wildlife corridor areas. 	<p>Recommend revising as follows:</p> <p>Subsurface groundwater flows to the ocean are required to prevent seawater intrusion into the Basin. Overdraft of the Santa Maria Groundwater Basin could lead to the reduction of available quality groundwater. It could also reduce the natural subsurface flow towards the ocean, leading to an increased potential of saltwater intrusion on the western edge of the Basin.</p> <p>Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), structures that are typically 50 years old or older are considered potential historical resources. While 50 years is the general threshold for evaluating significance, structures younger than 50 years can also be designated if they possess exceptional historical significance. No changes recommended.</p> <p>Action COS 1.1.2 applies only to areas that are identified as sensitive habitat or a wildlife corridor area. It requires new development to be located outside of these areas. Future projects would be subject to the mitigation measures in the Final EIR for the General Plan (should the project use this document for CEQA), or other mitigation developed through a CEQA document specifically developed for that project. No changes are recommended.</p>

Attachment J

<p><i>Action COS-1.1.2: If impacts to natural resources are identified during environmental review, require the applicant to adjust site design and/or incorporate additional mitigation measures to minimize the identified impacts</i></p> <p><i>Delete these policies that state “ Coordinate with the county ...” and references to green belt. The city can not commit to a greenbelt around the city.</i></p> <p><i>Policy COS-1.2: City greenbelt. Coordinate with Santa Barbara County to develop a continuous system of greenbelts and natural corridors.</i></p> <p><i>Action COS-1.2.1: Define the purpose and desired outcomes for a system of greenbelts and collaborate with Santa Barbara County to develop designation criteria and standards for the design, implementation, and use of greenbelt areas.</i></p> <p><i>Action COS-1.2.2: Assess existing land use patterns to designate areas that will comprise the City’s greenbelt. Design the greenbelt to ensure connectivity to existing and planned parks, trails, and open spaces to facilitate wildlife movement</i></p> <p><i>Policy COS-2.1: Agricultural preservation. Collaborate with Santa Barbara County and local landowners to preserve existing agricultural uses on lands not proposed for future development, including croplands and rangelands.</i></p> <p><i>Action COS-2.1.1: During review of projects that would alter or convert existing agricultural uses, balance State and regional efforts to preserve existing agricultural uses, including the Santa Barbara County Right to Farm Ordinance, clustering of urban land uses/development, and transfer of development rights with other factors. These include providing adequate housing, achieving a jobs-housing balance, supporting economic sustainability, and advancing other City interests.</i></p>	<p>See response above. No changes are recommended.</p> <p>Recommend revising Policy COS 1.2 as follows: Policy COS-1.2: City greenbelt.—Coordinate with Santa Barbara County to Develop a continuous system of greenbelts and natural corridors. No other changes are recommended.</p>
---	---

Attachment J

<p><u>Noise Element</u> Change out the Noise Element Figures to be correct Revise Action N-2.1.4: Update According to the City's Municipal Code to require new residential and mixed use development located above 75 dBA CNEL within the 60 dBA CNEL noise contours or higher of transportation corridors to submit an acoustical analysis and incorporate noise reduction strategies, such as vegetation buffers and physical sound barriers, as necessary to meet the requirements of the Noise Ordinance (Ord 12-7.14a)</p>	<p>See response above regarding Action N-2.1.4. No changes are recommended. The Noise Element Figures were reviewed and no changes are recommended.</p>
<p><u>Health and Environmental Justice</u> Policy HEJ-8.6: Develop community benefits agreements. Facilitate the creation of community benefits agreements (CBAs) for major private development projects to provide resources and mitigate pollution impacts for the benefit of local communities, especially when located in a DAC. Action HEJ-8.6.1: Identify potential community benefits, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower levels of environmental pollution • Reduced car and truck traffic • More affordable housing units • Workforce development opportunities • Tree and native species planting • Shade structures for extreme heat events • Green (e.g., trees) or gray (e.g. sound walls) barriers for noise and pollution mitigation • Community gardens and publicly accessible green space • Other investments as suggested by Santa Maria community members. 	<p>This policy and action is included in the General Plan to provide the City Council with the opportunity to develop this type of program in the future should they elect to do so. No changes to this Policy and Action are recommended.</p>
<p><u>Public Facilities and Services Element</u> Goals PFS-6 Policy PFS -1 and Policy PFS 6.5 They should all be deleted or revised to state that currently these buildings are locked down, fenced off or under surveillance and only available to the public in limited manner. School site are not open to the public.</p>	<p>See response above. No changes are recommended.</p>

Attachment J

<p><u>Recreation and Parks Element</u> <i>Park quality and capacity. Population growth over the last 25 to 30 years has contributed to overcrowding at many parks, (Why did the city Parks allow this to happen?) and this trend is expected to continue unless new parkland is added or existing facilities are expanded. To meet the City's park service goal today would require over 270 acres of new parkland above the current 250 acres ??? and over 440 acres by 2050. In addition to park expansion, it will be important to optimize underutilized portions of existing parks and to incorporate new parks into future Specific Plans.</i> <i>The city policy of 5 acres per 1,000 in unattainable and the city could not afford to maintain that much land. Current there is 230 acres and the city cannot afford to take on more than 2.5 acres per 1,000.</i> <i>PC needs to recommend to the city council this new policy of 2.5 acres per 1,000</i></p>	<p>See response above. No changes are recommended.</p>
<p>Letter 5: Dignity Health Marian Regional Medical Center, February 17, 2026</p>	
<p><i>Dignity Health requests the City to designate 60 acres of the Planned Annexation (PA) bordered by Main Street and Suey Road for Community Facilities (CF) development with a specific medical facility overlay. The potential future uses for this land include but are limited to the development of health sciences education campus, a behavioral health hospital and supportive services, advanced imaging and diagnostic services, ambulatory surgical center, skilled, convalescent and assisted living facilities, ancillary retail services and a comprehensive medical offices complex. The designation of land, close to the hub of existing medical services will streamline future development and accelerate the timeframe for future services. It will prioritize healthcare for the community and allow for planning for needed housing and retail development in the remaining Planned Annexation. The identified location will create a cohesive healthcare market that will create convenience for patients, efficiencies for healthcare providers and unity for the community.</i></p>	<p>This item can be reviewed in coordination with Marian Regional Medical Center following adoption of the General Plan and direction from the City Council to initiate the LAFCO application process for SOI amendments and annexation. This process would include pre-zoning the 985-acre Planned Annexation area where the requested acreage for future medical uses can be considered. This letter is noted as being a part of the record for the General Plan Update. No changes are recommended.</p>

Attachment J

Attachments

- A – Santa Maria 2045 General Plan
- B – Final Environmental Impact Report (SCH# 2025020584)
- C – Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
- D – CEQA Findings
- E – Statement of Overriding Considerations
- F – Official Zoning Map
- Environmental Resolution
- General Plan Adoption Resolution
- Zoning Map Resolution with attached Ordinance