

San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Awards 2009 Recipients

**Award of Achievement
Community Plan - Unincorporated Community
Merced County • Hilmar Community Plan**

The Hilmar Community Plan addresses all the Blueprint Principles. The Merced County General Plan, of which the Hilmar Community Plan is a component, fosters an urban centered concept. This requires new urbanization to be compact and developed within existing communities. The Hilmar Community Plan fosters compact building design by encouraging higher density residential development that reflects the plan's Community Character and Design Guidelines. These Guidelines provide standards for a variety of higher density residential types in order to support a traditional central business district that encourages pedestrian use, and puts less reliance on motorized vehicles. The overall impact of the plan will be to reduce the town's footprint into a more compact form of community development. By directing necessary residential, commercial, and industrial development to urbanized areas, economic growth and job creation is strengthened while adjacent farmland is preserved.

**Award of Achievement
Master Planned Community
Harlan Ranch • "A Clovis Community"**

Harlan Ranch Community is a mixed-use development that creates a variety of livable neighborhoods with a broad range of housing types and densities. Rather than applying a monotonous conventional pattern of similar intensity across the project site, the developer programmed a range of residential intensities from low density single family homes of 3.5 dwelling units per acre, to medium high density of 10.9 units per acre. New product types, including the garden court cluster and the alley load concept, were reintroduced to the Valley. This diverse range of housing types, as well as the project's strong pedestrian network of paths and trails, benefits the community in many ways by providing a choice to the consumer, while working toward adequately supplying market demand.

**Award of Achievement
General Plan - Small Jurisdiction
City of Porterville General Plan**

The Porterville 2030 General Plan seeks to establish a well-defined compact urban form, with neighborhood centers, improved open space amenities and streets and agricultural buffers. The hillside areas to the east of town are especially important to the attractiveness of the community and receive adequate attention in the General Plan. The Plan directs a majority of future growth eastward into the foothills that lie directly east of the community, away from the valley floor and prime farmland. It includes an agricultural "green belt" along the western and southern edges of the community as well as preservation of rocky hill and important archeological and environmental areas nearby. The Plan reestablishes downtown as the retail, cultural and entertainment core of the community where an active effort exists to preserve historical buildings and the historical architecture.

Award of Achievement
Community Plans - Unincorporated Community
Kings County General Plan • 4 Community Plans

Kings County has recently completed its 2035 General Plan, which includes individual community plans for the unincorporated communities of Armona, Home Garden, Kettleman City and Stratford. The primary focus of each community plan is to integrate smart growth principles into community revitalization efforts that aim to create or strengthen a centralized community core. New “mixed use” land use designations are integrated along with prioritization of centralized services and pedestrian connectivity in each community core. Open space corridors were designated to enhance the quality of life for residents and increase the use of alternative forms of transportation. Compact residential growth and infill development are strong themes within each plan. The plan also provides a range of densities that allow for a variety of housing options. Areas for future community growth are defined in each plan to ensure compact, centralized growth occurs in a phased and balanced manner that prevents the untimely conversion of prime agricultural land.

Award of Merit
General Plan - Small Jurisdiction
City of Tracy General Plan

Tracy created new Elements in its General Plan, including a Community Character Element, a Public Facilities Element and an Economic Development Element that work together to guide future development. With the Land Use Element, these Elements have become the key to creativity and ingenuity in the development of the city. Policies allow for measured development within Tracy’s Sphere of Influence, but also sharply focus on downtown and existing commercial centers and neighborhoods. Key to managing the growth of Tracy is a strong policy framework supporting infill and downtown development with maps and policies that identify “secondary growth areas”, away from prime farmland, subservient and adjacent to areas within the existing city limits. A “level playing field” was created when all future development areas were required to first undergo comprehensive infrastructure master planning that tied them together both in space and time: development moves forward with a clear understanding of the required services, opportunities for joint use infrastructure, and costs associated with development of the whole of the future development areas.

Award of Merit
Master Planned Community
Copper River Ranch

The vision for Copper River Ranch was to create a community where residents could live, work and play. Thus, a wide array of land use designations from multi-family, single family, custom lots, retail, offices and open space, available to the entire Fresno community, exist within the project. The community has been designed with an eight mile network of regional and project trails that connect the residential, commercial and open space areas.

Two other Blueprint oriented aspects of the project are its inclusion of NEV lanes for Neighborhood Electric Vehicles and the City of Fresno’s first tertiary level wastewater reclamation facility. This facility provides wastewater treatment services not only to Copper River but also to the surrounding community. One hundred percent of the facility’s reclaimed water will be used within the project boundaries to irrigate landscaped and park areas.

Award of Merit
Sustainable Development Policies
Kings County General Plan • Land Use and Resource
Conservation Elements

Kings County has recently completed a comprehensive update to its General Plan. While the update included all seven of the mandated elements, the nomination for a Blueprint Award was limited to the Land Use and Resource Conservation elements, as these are the two driving elements within the plan that define where future growth may occur and provide a strong long-term plan for the preservation of agriculture. The key themes in the Land Use and Resource Conservation elements are:

- Environmental Responsibility – preservation/enhancement of natural resources while living within the limits imposed by available resources
- Community Revitalization – protection of Kings County’s special character
- Quality of Life – maintaining an outstanding quality of life for Kings County residents

Because the timeline on the General Plan update coincided with Blueprint outreach activities, many new policies and land use changes in the Plan resulted from the public participation associated with the Blueprint process.

Honorable Mention
City of Bakersfield • Mill Creek

Mill Creek is unlike any other amenity in Bakersfield. Once a fast moving canal in a dirt ditch surrounded by dilapidated cyclone fencing, it is now a natural looking creek meandering through downtown Bakersfield, linking housing, commercial, entertainment and recreational venues with a safe and healthy path. This new path and waterway have created usable open space through a very dense portion of Bakersfield.

Honorable Mention
City of Tracy • Growth Management Ordinance and
Guidelines

In May 2009, the Tracy City Council adopted a Growth Management Ordinance (GMO) and Guidelines that directly implements the city’s General Plan. The Plan promotes infill development while accounting for new development in expansion areas. This new GMO is the strongest infill policy that the City has had since the GMO was first adopted in 1987. The ordinance directly establishes downtown development as the priority among competing developing areas.

Honorable Mention

City of Madera • Vision Madera 2025

Recognizing the challenges that projected population growth would bring, the City of Madera initiated an extensive public discussion to develop a vision and action plan for the next 20 years. This community-wide effort, the *Vision Madera 2025* program, was conducted over nearly two years and involved hundreds of citizens representing dozens of community interests including business, environment, neighborhood, social service, healthcare, education, government and many others.

Honorable Mention

City of Shafter • OSIP (Oakland-Shafter Inland Port)

The Oakland-Shafter Inland Port (OSIP) is an innovative infrastructure project located in the city of Shafter. The project will provide an intrastate short-haul, freight rail expressway service connecting the Port of Oakland with the San Joaquin Valley. The inland port will consist of integrated multi-modal transportation resources including:

- Intermodal rail transfer and trans-loading facilities;
- Industrial warehouses and distribution centers; and
- Related freight transport logistics and services.

The project will result in fewer trucks on Bay Area and San Joaquin Valley freeways and is projected to have a significant and positive impact on air quality.



San Joaquin Valley **BLUEPRINT**

www.valleyblueprint.org