

Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation Element

Introduction

The Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation Element specifies objectives, policies, and programs to achieve the permanent preservation and management of public open space lands, natural resources, and the enhancement of community recreational opportunities. This element incorporates two state-mandated elements (conservation and open space) with an optional recreation component.

The open space portion of the element addresses open space acquisition and management, preservation of agricultural lands, focusing on key Open Space Planning Areas identified during the last comprehensive update of the General Plan. The Conservation section addresses natural resource conservation topics such as waterways, natural and riparian habitats, wildlife preservation, and scenic, historic and cultural resources. Recreation focuses on outdoor recreation and parks, including neighborhood, community and regional parks and trails in open space areas surrounding the city.

In addition to this Element, the Tri-City and County Cooperative Plan for Agriculture and Open Space Preservation, an optional element to the Fairfield General Plan, contains policies related to this planning area southwest of Fairfield. Preservation of open space vital to the mission of the airbase can be found in the Travis Protection Element. Finally, protection of agriculture is also addressed in the Land Use and Economic Development Elements of the General Plan.

Goal

The goal of the Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation Element is:

Designate, preserve, and protect agricultural, ecological, recreational and scenic lands in Fairfield and surrounding areas for now and future generations.

Objectives, Policies, and Programs

Open Space

Objective OS 1

Support preservation of existing agricultural lands. (See Policy LU 2.1 and Objective ED 8)

Policy OS 1.1

Preserve agricultural enterprises by supporting right-to-farm policies, and separating and buffering agricultural lands from new development areas. (See Policy AG 1.1)

Policy OS 1.2

Support the Solano County General Plan and its policies and programs to promote and support agricultural uses, including agricultural tourism centers and services at appropriate locations. (See Policy AG 1.2)

Program OS 1.2 A

Support County efforts to promote farmers and agritourism in Suisun Valley and Green Valley. Such support might include technical assistance on grant applications, cooperation on water supply issues where appropriate, marketing of products, and joint tourism campaigns.

Program OS 1.2 B

Support the efforts of Solano County, Solano Land Trust, and the local agricultural community to improve bicycle routes and trails in Suisun Valley to facilitate tourist access to Suisun and Green Valleys.

Program OS 1.2 C

Support the County agricultural preserve program and a strong County right-to-farm ordinance. (See Policy AG 1.2 B)

Program OS 1.2 D

Encourage development of agriculture processing and handling industries. (See Policy AG 1.2 C)

Policy OS 1.3

Maintain current agricultural zoning in the area east of Travis AFB, including the Jepson Prairie and Wilcox Ranch. (See Policy AG 1.3)

Policy OS 1.4

Permanently preserve productive agricultural lands within the Suisun Valley by continuing to direct new urban development away from the Suisun Valley. "Urban development" does not include the agricultural services and agritourism development envisioned in the Solano County General Plan, which is appropriate for development in the County. (See Policy LU 2.1, AG 1.4 and ED 8.3)

Program OS 1.4A

Support development, including tourism and support services, at locations identified in the Solano County General Plan which strengthens the agricultural economy in Suisun Valley

Policy OS 1.5

What is urban shall be municipal, and what is rural shall be within the County. Any urban development requiring basic municipal services shall occur only within the incorporated City and within the urban limit line established by the General Plan. (See Objective LU 3, AG 1.6 and Policy LU 3.1) The City will support agritourism centers in Suisun Valley and Green Valley that support the agricultural economy in the valleys, consistent with Measure L.

Objective OS 2

Create a greenbelt/open space buffer around the perimeter of the city that provides a clear sense of identity for the City of Fairfield as separate from other urban areas and incorporates the hills, agricultural valleys, the Jepson Prairie, and the Suisun Marsh. (See Policy LU 2.4)

Policy OS 2.1

Development Master Plans and Specific Plans abutting Open Space Planning Areas shall address preservation of important greenbelts and open space buffers. Key view corridors, watersheds, and prominent ridges shall be protected. (See Objective UD 5)

Policy OS 2.2

Establish and maintain open space buffer zones between Vallejo and Fairfield along I-80 and between Fairfield and Benicia along I-680, identified as Open Space Planning Area 1 on the Open Space Planning Area map.

Policy OS 2.3

All land uses and activities in Open Space Planning Area 1, also known as the Benicia/Fairfield/Vallejo Buffer as shown in Exhibit OS-1, shall conform to the policies contained in the Tri-City and County Cooperative Plan for Agriculture and Open Space Preservation.

Policy OS 2.4

Support the Solano County General Plan goals and objectives for Green Valley, including the Green Valley Specific Plan.

Policy OS 2.5

Establish a permanent open space buffer between Fairfield and Vacaville consistent with the Fairfield Train Station Specific Plan and the amended Greenbelt boundary established by the Solano-Vacaville-Fairfield Joint Powers Authority.

Program OS 2.5 A

Implement the open space preservation program outlined in the Fairfield Train Station Specific Plan.

Policy OS 2.6

Limit development on hillsides above 200 feet in elevation.

Policy OS 2.7

Promote clustering of housing units to preserve hillsides, ridges, and the maximum amount of open space (See Policy LU 13.1 and Policy UD 5.3)

Objective OS 3

Ensure adequate funding for management of public open space. (See Objective LU 7)

Policy OS 3.1

When development projects include open space dedications, the Conditions of Approval and/or the Development Agreement shall address funding for long term maintenance of the open space.

Policy OS 3.2

Ownership and management responsibility of public open space shall be assigned to the public agency or private organization best suited to meeting this responsibility.

Program OS 3.2 A

Continue to support the activities of the Solano Land Trust in acquiring and managing open space lands in the vicinity of Fairfield.

Program OS 3.2 B

Continue to support Solano County's open space management and recreation programs for open space areas near the City of Fairfield.

Policy OS 3.3

Residents, property owners, and users shall contribute to maintaining public open spaces.

Program OS 3.3 A

Establish Lighting and Landscaping Districts, Community Facilities Districts or other appropriate mechanisms to fund maintenance and management of open space lands.

Program OS 3.3 B

Implement revenue generating programs and projects in Fairfield open space properties that generate funds for maintenance and capital improvements.

Program OS 3.3 C

Evaluate other mechanisms to generate funds for maintenance of open space and associated recreational programs. Such programs might include parcel taxes, focusing on properties not in an open space assessment district.

Policy OS 3.4

Support countywide and regional efforts to establish a permanent mechanism in Solano County to fund the acquisition and management of open space lands.

Policy OS 3.5

Work with the Solano County Sheriff, CalFire, the California Highway Patrol, and appropriate fire districts to ensure that public safety and security is adequately addressed in all public open space areas.

Objective OS 4

Generate funds within the community for acquisition of open space lands.

Policy OS 4.1

New development shall fund its share of open space acquisition. *Include open space acquisition funding as an element in all areawide plans, master plans, and specific plans.*

Program OS 4.1A*Implement the funding mechanisms for the Fairfield-Vacaville-Solano Greenbelt outlined in in the Northeast Fee Program.*

Program OS 4.1B

As part of the planning process, develop and implement dedication programs, funding mechanisms, and cooperative agreements with nonprofits and other agencies in forthcoming master or areawide plan areas such as Nelson Hill and Rancho Solano North.

Program OS 4.1C

Establish Community Facilities Districts in proposed development areas to fund the acquisition and management of open space lands.

Program OS 4.1D

Investigate the use of an appropriate annual bond repayment property tax at an appropriate level for public open space purposes on all new Fairfield residences.

Conservation

Objective OS 6

Protect and enhance visual resources throughout the City. (See Objectives LU 15, LU 16, and UD 5 and Policies UD 5.1, UD 5.2, and UD 5.3)

Policy OS 6.1

Preserve views of hills and other scenic features surrounding Fairfield. (See Policy UD 5.2 and Policy HS 4.7)

Policy OS 6.2

Continue to administer adopted preservation ordinances for trees and streams. (See Policy UD 5.3)

Policy OS 6.3

All grading shall be integrated and compatible with adjacent areas so as to create a natural topographical appearance and avoid abrupt changes in slope.

Program OS 6.3 A

For all development in hillside overlay (-H) areas, implement the Hillside Development Guidelines and the Hillside Grading Ordinance. .

Program OS 6.3A

During project review, the City shall review development proposals to confirm that proposed developments are suitable for hillside areas.

Policy OS 6.4

New development within a Scenic Vista Area or its viewshed shall comply with the policies and guidelines in the Scenic Vistas and Roadways Plan. (See Objective UD 5)

Policy OS 6.5

Significant natural features shall be preserved wherever development is allowed in a Scenic Vista Area, and views of these significant features shall not be obstructed.

Policy OS 6.6

New development along a Scenic Roadway shall comply with the policies and guidelines in the Scenic Vistas and Roadways Plan.

Program OS 6.6 A

Develop where appropriate public trails, bicycle lanes, and viewpoints along scenic roadways within the Planning Area.

Policy OS 6.7

Preserve the character of Nelson Hill through protection of key open space, recreation amenities, viewpoints, and natural resources in conjunction with any proposed development. (See LU Nelson Hill Policies 4, 5, 6, and 7)

Policy OS 6.8

Maintain the scenic vistas of the rolling hills that are seen from the urban areas of Fairfield.

Policy OS 6.9

Limit development above the 200 foot contour on Cement Hill because of its dominant visual significance to the City. If the City ultimately acquires this open space, it shall develop publicly accessible trails and vista points on Cement Hill to take advantage of the outstanding views of Fairfield and the Valley.

Program OS 6.9 A

Seek development rights, fee title, or conservation easements to lands on Cement Hill in exchange for future development approvals on developable lands below the 200 foot contour.

Objective OS 7

Identify and protect sensitive biological habitat and resources.

Note that the City of Fairfield is participating in the preparation of a Habitat Conservation Plan. If this Plan is adopted, the specific standards and requirements in the Plan will supersede specific standards and mitigation requirements in this document. Other Policies in this section will continue to apply where appropriate.

Policy OS 7.1

Establish policies to protect indigenous wildlife and their habitats. Support the Solano County Water Agency Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) preparation effort and, if the HCP is approved and adopted, implement its requirements.

Program OS 7.1 A

Adopt a conservation plan and mitigation banking program for annual grassland wildlife habitat during any areawide planning process. The plan should identify sites for habitat preservation and enhancement and establish predictable mitigation requirements for developers, mitigation funding mechanisms, and interagency agreements on mitigation measures and

priorities. Preparation of the plan would include tasks described in the 1992 General Plan EIR.

Program OS 7.1 B

For each proposed development site containing riparian, oak woodland, oak savanna, annual grassland, agricultural lands, and wetlands that potentially support special-status raptor nests or habitat, the City will require qualified biologists to conduct a reconnaissance survey of the site and identify potential sensitive biological resources, including special-status species (as identified in the 2001 EIR for the Comprehensive Amendment to the General Plan) and their habitats, jurisdictional waters of the United States, and any other protected biological resources. If no sensitive biological resources are found during this survey, no further surveys will be necessary.

If sensitive biological resources are found, the biologist will conduct additional surveys, as needed, using methods and protocols developed or acceptable by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife and make recommendations for avoiding sensitive biological resources to the extent feasible. The biologist will also flag or fence sensitive resources to be avoided. This requirement shall apply prior to City consideration of any development proposal for the site.

Program OS 7.1 C

If elderberry shrubs are found during implementation of Policy OS 7.1, the project proponent will refer to current U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conservation guidelines for the valley elderberry longhorn beetle). If it is determined that impacts cannot be avoided by maintaining distance requirements as specified in the guidelines, the project proponent will consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under Section 7 of the federal Endangered Species Act (or Section 10 if the project does not involve a federal action). Under Section 7, the consultation will require the preparation of a biological assessment, development of a compensation plan according to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service guidelines, and, on approval by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, authorization to take valley elderberry longhorn beetle in the form of a Section 7 biological opinion. If no federal action is involved, the project proponent will prepare an Habitat Conservation Plan under Section 10 of the federal Endangered Species Act.

Program OS 7.1 D

For each proposed development site containing aquatic habitats, including ponds, canals, creeks, or other drainages or water bodies that potentially support California red-legged frog, foothill yellow-legged frog, western or northwestern pond turtle, or California Tiger Salamander, the City will require qualified biologists to conduct a reconnaissance survey of the site and identify potential sensitive biological resources, including special-status species (as identified in the 2001 EIR for the Comprehensive Amendment

to the General Plan) and their habitats, jurisdictional waters of the United States, and any other protected biological resources. If no sensitive biological resources are found during this survey, no further surveys will be necessary.

If sensitive biological resources are found, the biologist will conduct additional surveys, as needed, using methods and protocols developed or acceptable by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife and make recommendations for avoiding sensitive biological resources to the extent feasible. The biologist will also flag or fence sensitive resources to be avoided. This requirement shall apply prior to City consideration of any development proposal for the site.

Program OS 7.1 E

For each proposed development site containing grasslands, brush lands, woodlands, and chaparral with sandy or loose soils, and abundant ant colonies for foraging that potentially support California horned lizard, the City will require qualified biologists to conduct a reconnaissance survey of the site and identify potential sensitive biological resources, including special-status species (as identified in the 2001 EIR for the Comprehensive Amendment to the General Plan) and their habitats, jurisdictional waters of the United States, and any other protected biological resources. If no sensitive biological resources are found during this survey, no further surveys will be necessary.

If sensitive biological resources are found, the biologist will conduct additional surveys, as needed, using methods and protocols developed or acceptable by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and make recommendations for avoiding sensitive biological resources to the extent feasible. The biologist will also flag or fence sensitive resources to be avoided. This requirement shall apply prior to City consideration of any development proposal for the site.

Program OS 7.1 F

If upland habitats, including grasslands, brush lands, woodlands, and chaparral that potentially support California horned lizard are found in a project area during implementation of Program OS 7.1J, the project proponent will, to the extent feasible, avoid direct and indirect impacts on these habitats. Additional surveys may be conducted to determine presence or absence of this species in the planning area. If it is determined the species is not present on the planning area or on habitat adjacent and contiguous with the planning area, no further mitigation is required. If the species is present, the project proponent will consult with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to develop appropriate mitigation to offset impacts on this species and its habitat.

Program OS 7.1 G

If special-status raptors nests are found on or in the vicinity of a project area through implementation of Program 7.1B, the project proponent will consult with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to develop appropriate site-specific mitigation strategies to avoid impacts on active nests. Active raptor nests are protected under the California Fish and Game Code, Section 3503.5. Mitigation measures could include establishing protective buffer zones, timing restrictions, or compensation through acquisition of replacement nesting habitat.

Program OS 7.1 H

If nesting Swainson's hawks are found on or in the vicinity of a project area through implementation of Program OS 7.1B or if known nests are identified through other sources (e.g., the California Natural Diversity Database) within 10 miles of the planning area, the project proponent will mitigate for losses of annual grassland and agricultural foraging habitat using the current California Department of Fish and Wildlife mitigation guidelines for Swainson's hawk (California Department of Fish and Wildlife 1994).

Program OS 7.1 I

For each proposed development site containing grasslands and agricultural habitats along field edges and ruderal habitats that potentially support western burrowing owl, the City will require qualified biologists to conduct a reconnaissance survey of the site and identify potential sensitive biological resources, including special-status species (as identified in the 2001 EIR for the Comprehensive Amendment to the General Plan) and their habitats, jurisdictional waters of the United States, and any other protected biological resources. If no sensitive biological resources are found during this survey, no further surveys will be necessary.

If sensitive biological resources are found, the biologist will conduct additional surveys, as needed, using methods and protocols developed or acceptable by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and make recommendations for avoiding sensitive biological resources to the extent feasible. The biologist will also flag or fence sensitive resources to be avoided. This requirement shall apply prior to City consideration of any development proposal for the site.

Program OS 7.1 J

If active burrowing owl nesting or wintering burrows are found on or in the vicinity of a project area through implementation of Program OS 7.1N, the project proponent will implement the California Department of Fish and Wildlife mitigation guidelines for burrowing owls (California Department of Fish and Wildlife 1995).

Program OS 7.1 K

For each proposed development site containing riparian areas that potentially support great egret, snowy egret, great blue heron, or black-crowned night heron rookeries, the City will require qualified biologists to conduct a reconnaissance survey of the site and identify potential sensitive biological resources, including special-status species (as identified in the 2001 EIR for the Comprehensive Amendment to the General Plan) and their habitats, jurisdictional waters of the United States, and any other protected biological resources. If no sensitive biological resources are found during this survey, no further surveys will be necessary.

If sensitive biological resources are found, the biologist will conduct additional surveys, as needed, using methods and protocols developed or acceptable by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and make recommendations for avoiding sensitive biological resources to the extent feasible. The biologist will also flag or fence sensitive resources to be avoided. This requirement shall apply prior to City consideration of any development proposal for the site.

Program OS 7.1 L

If heron or egret rookeries are found on or in the vicinity of a project area through implementation of Program OS 7.1P, the City will require the project proponent to consult with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to develop appropriate site-specific mitigation strategies to avoid impacts on active colonies. These could include establishing no-disturbance buffers, timing restrictions, or habitat compensation.

Program OS 7.1 M

For each proposed development site containing freshwater or saltwater marsh, or upland sites with blackberries, nettles, thistles, and grain fields that potentially support tricolored blackbird nesting colonies, the City will require qualified biologists to conduct a reconnaissance survey of the site and identify potential sensitive biological resources, including special-status species (as identified in the 2001 EIR for the Comprehensive Amendment to the General Plan) and their habitats, jurisdictional waters of the United States, and any other protected biological resources. If no sensitive biological resources are found during this survey, no further surveys will be necessary.

If sensitive biological resources are found, the biologist will conduct additional surveys, as needed,; using methods and protocols developed or acceptable by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and make recommendations for avoiding sensitive biological resources to the extent feasible. The biologist will also flag or fence sensitive resources to be avoided. This requirement shall apply prior to City consideration of any development proposal for the site.

Program OS 7.1 N

If tricolored blackbird nesting colonies are found on or in the vicinity of a project area through implementation of Program OS 7.1R, the City shall require the project proponent to consult with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to develop appropriate site-specific mitigation strategies to avoid impacts on active colonies. These could include establishing no-disturbance buffers, timing restrictions, or habitat compensation.

Program OS 7.1 O

For each proposed development site containing saltwater marsh, the City will require qualified biologists to conduct a reconnaissance survey of the site and identify potential sensitive biological resources, including special-status species (as identified in the 2001 EIR for the Comprehensive Amendment to the General Plan) and their habitats, jurisdictional waters of the United States, and any other protected biological resources. If no sensitive biological resources are found during this survey, no further surveys will be necessary.

If sensitive biological resources are found, the biologist will conduct additional surveys, as needed, using methods and protocols developed or acceptable by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and make recommendations for avoiding sensitive biological resources to the extent feasible. The biologist will also flag or fence sensitive resources to be avoided. This requirement shall apply prior to City consideration of any development proposal for the site.

Program OS 7.1 P

If habitat for saltwater marsh special-status species is found on or in the vicinity of a project area through implementation of Program OS 7.1T, the City shall require the project proponent to consult with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to determine the potential for state or federally threatened or endangered species or state fully protected species (e.g., salt marsh harvest mouse, California clapper rail, and black rail). If potential for these species exists, then the project proponent will consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under Section 10 or 7 of the federal Endangered Species Act and with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to determine the potential effects of the proposed project on these species. The project proponent will prepare the appropriate state and federal environmental documentation that could ultimately result in authorization to take 1 or more threatened or endangered species under the federal Endangered Species Act and through a California Department of Fish and Wildlife Section 2081 permit process. No take authorization is available for fully protected species, and consultation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife would be required to develop approved avoidance measures.

Program OS 7.1 Q

If aquatic habitats, including vernal pools and other seasonal wetlands, ponds, creeks, and other drainages or water bodies that potentially support California tiger salamander are found in a project area during implementation of Program OS 7.1G, the project proponent will consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under Section 7 of the federal Endangered Species Act (or Section 10 if the project involves a federal action). The consultation could result in additional protocol surveys using U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service survey guidelines and could require the preparation of a biological assessment, development of a compensation plan according to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service guidelines, and, on acceptance by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, authorization to take the California red-legged frog in the form of a Section 7 biological opinion. If no federal action is involved, the project proponent will prepare a habitat conservation plan under Section 10 of the federal Endangered Species Act.

Policy OS 7.2

Work with the County and the City of Vallejo to preserve Green Valley Falls as a nature reserve.

Program OS 7.2A

As funding permits, work with the County, the City of Vallejo, and the Solano Land Trust to provide opportunities for appropriate public access in the environmentally sensitive areas of the Green Valley canyon.

Policy OS 7.3

Support County and Solano Land Trust efforts to preserve, enhance, and restore the Rockville Trails property.

Program OS 7.3 A

Support the efforts of Solano County and the Solano Land Trust to develop a Master Plan for Rockville Trails. Coordinate this planning with the City of Fairfield's goals and objectives for Rockville Hills Regional Park. Work with the County and the Land Trust to address public access, safety, and parking issues

Policy OS 7.4

Cooperate with Solano County and local nonprofit organizations like the Solano Land Trust to identify critical wildlife habitat areas suitable for acquisition and permanent preservation.

Policy OS 7.5

Identify and protect vernal pools located in the entire General Plan Area.

Program OS 7.5 A

Adopt a conservation plan and mitigation banking program for vernal pools and seasonal wetland habitats during the preparation of required areawide

plans. The components of this program are described in the 1992 General Plan EIR.

Program OS 7.5 B

For each proposed development site containing vernal pool or seasonal wetland biological communities, the City will require qualified biologists to conduct a reconnaissance survey of the site and identify potential sensitive biological resources, including special-status species (as identified in the 2001 EIR for the Comprehensive Amendment to the General Plan) and their habitats, jurisdictional waters of the United States, and any other protected biological resources. If no sensitive biological resources are found during this survey, no further surveys will be necessary.

If sensitive biological resources are found, the biologist will conduct additional surveys, as needed, using methods and protocols developed or acceptable by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and make recommendations for avoiding sensitive biological resources to the extent feasible. The biologist will also flag or fence sensitive resources to be avoided. This requirement shall apply prior to City consideration of any development proposal for the site.

Program OS 7.5 C

If vernal pools or other seasonal wetlands that potentially support federally listed invertebrates are found in a project area during implementation of Program 7.5B, the project proponent must consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under Section 7 of the federal ESA (or Section 10 if the project does not involve a federal action). The consultation could result in additional protocol-level surveys to determine the presence or absence of the species and could require the preparation of a biological assessment, development of a compensation plan according to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service guidelines, and, on approval by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, authorization to take federally listed invertebrates in the form of a Section 7 biological opinion. If no federal action is involved, the project proponent will prepare a habitat conservation plan under Section 10 of the federal Endangered Species Act.

Policy OS 7.6

Avoid the potential for negative impacts of increased human activity on sensitive habitat areas when establishing new recreational facilities or programs.

Policy OS 7.7

Continue promoting the preservation of existing mature trees and encourage the planting of appropriate shade trees in new developments. (See Policy UD 6.1 and Program UD 6.1 A)

Program OS 7.7 A

Implement Zoning Ordinance requirements for street trees and parking lot shade trees in new residential and commercial developments

Program OS 7.7 B

Adopt a conservation plan and mitigation banking program for oak savannah and oak woodland habitat during any areawide planning process. The plan should identify habitat preservation and enhancement sites and criteria for incorporating and protecting oak savannah habitat and individual valley oaks as part of development projects, and would establish predictable mitigation requirements for developers, mitigation funding mechanisms, and interagency agreements on mitigation measures and priorities. Preparation of the plan would include tasks described in the 1992 General Plan EIR.

Policy OS 7.8

For each proposed development site within oak woodland or oak savannah biological communities, the City will require qualified biologists to identify and map all sensitive biological resources, including special-status species (as defined above) and their habitats; using methods and protocols developed or acceptable by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife, make recommendations for avoiding sensitive biological resources to the extent feasible; and flag or fence sensitive resources to be avoided. This requirement shall apply prior to City consideration of any development proposal for the site.

Program 7.8 A

The loss of healthy oak trees of all age classes should be avoided or reduced to the extent feasible for each development site. Prior to consideration of any development proposal for the site, the City shall require a botanist or certified arborist to identify and map project-site trees, noting the diameter at breast height and condition of all oak trees on the project site. The botanist or arborist will coordinate placement of protective temporary fencing outside of the driplines of oak trees to be preserved.

Program 7.8 B

For each project in which unavoidable removal of oak woodland or savanna habitat will occur, the City shall require the development of a compensation plan. Compensation will consist of tree planting (preferably onsite) or purchase and preservation of existing woodland or savanna. The City will develop required compensation ratios for removed oak trees, consistent with its Tree Conservation Ordinance and require compliance with the compensation plan. Where native oak trees are to be removed, the conservation plan shall provide for replacement with native oak trees, unless native species that are appropriate for the replanting site are not readily available from commercial sources. In this case, non-native species may be approved.

Policy OS 7.9

Preserve and protect special status plant populations.

Program OS 7.9 A

The City shall require project proponents within undeveloped lands to retain a qualified botanist to conduct surveys of proposed project sites to identify special-status plant species. If survey results identify potential habitat for special-status plants, blooming period surveys will be conducted for all potentially present special-status plants. All locations of special-status plants will be identified on maps.

Program OS 7.9 B

Developers shall prepare a plan to avoid impacting special-status plants, especially federally listed species, during construction. Prior to beginning construction, the plants to be protected and the buffer zone around each plant community shall be identified, fenced, and protected during construction activities. The buffer zone shall meet the standards contained in this General Plan document and shall be approved by appropriate federal and State agencies.

Program OS 7.9 C

If City staff determines that complete avoidance of a special-status plant is not feasible, the City will require the project proponent to retain a qualified botanist to develop a mitigation plan. Depending on the legal status of the plant species (i.e., listing under the federal ESA or CESA), the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be consulted before preparation of the mitigation plan. The mitigation plan should include a description and map of mitigation sites, methods to be used; management techniques for the sites; and sources of funding to purchase, manage, and preserve the sites. Mitigation could include purchase of an existing offsite area known to support the special-status species to be affected, as well as preserving the site in perpetuity. Transplanting and/or reseedling of special-status plants is not a proven effective compensation method for most species; therefore, project proponents should avoid special-status plants for which transplanting techniques have not been proven or compensate for impacts by preserving another population.

Policy OS 7.10

Prevent the spread of noxious weeds.

Program OS 7.10 A

As part of the biological survey of a construction site, identify and map noxious weed infestation areas before construction activities. Infestation areas will be avoided by construction activities, if feasible.

Objective OS 8

Preserve and protect natural resources.

Policy OS 8.1

Work with Regional and State agencies and surrounding communities to develop regional solutions to air quality issues. (See Objective LU 5, Policy LU 5.1, and Policy CI 12.1)

Program OS 8.1A

Participate in the County Climate Action Plan program

Policy OS 8.2

Mitigate air pollution from fixed and vehicular sources as required by state and regional air quality plans and programs. (See Policy LU 13.2 and Objective CI 12)

Program OS 8.2A

Work with other local agencies to develop and implement a plan to address State directives to reduce greenhouse gasses and air pollutants, including compliance with SB 375 and AB32.

Program OS 8.2B

Continue efforts to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions associated with City facilities and activities, such as building energy retrofits, alternative energy, high efficiency lighting, flexible fuel fleet vehicles, and electric vehicle charging stations.

Program OS 8.2C

Continue to require development projects to implement best management practices to reduce air pollutant emissions associated with construction and operation of the project, including dust control measures.

Program OS 8.2C

Continue to implement requirements for buffer zones on new development near major potential stationary pollution sources.

Policy OS 8.3

Encourage more efficient use of private vehicles and increased use of mass transit and alternative transportation modes. (See Objectives CI 6 and CI 7 and Policy CI 12.4)

Program OS 8.3A

During development review continue to encourage project design that reduces the need for multiple short vehicle trips. Address bicycling, walking, and transit use in all projects. Implement the “complete streets” policies in the Circulation Element and the Train Station Specific Plan to facilitate walking, bicycling, and transit.

Program OS 8.3B

Continue seeking funding for expansion of the Fairfield Transportation Center.

Program OS 8.3C

Work with regional and local transit providers to maintain and expand transit service to employment centers.

Program OS 8.3D

Complete construction of the planned Vacaville-Fairfield Train Station to improve transit connections to Sacramento and the Bay Area.

Policy OS 8.4

Encourage the retrofitting of existing buildings to be energy efficient. (See Objective HO 7)

Program OS 8.4A

Continue implementation of the Green Building Code.

Program OS 8.4B

Facilitate the efforts of Pacific Gas and Electric to educate commercial building owners and homeowners about energy efficiency measures.

Program OS 8.4C

Implement building energy efficiency programs identified in the Climate Action Plan, when adopted.

Policy OS 8.5

Require water conservation and energy efficiency techniques to be incorporated into the design of all development projects. (See Policy UD 6.2 and Policy PF 4.8)

Policy OS 8.6

Support recycling activities throughout the City. (See Policy PF 13.1 and Program PF 13.1 A)

Program OS 8.6 A

Continue implementing the City's household curbside recycling program. (See Program PF 13.1 A)

Program OS 8.6 B

Continue implementing the City's Construction Waste Disposal and Recycling Program

Policy OS 8.7

Encourage the use of raw, reclaimed, and recycled water where feasible.

Objective OS 9

Maintain existing waterways in their natural state if possible.

Policy OS 9.1

Promote restoration and establish permanent mechanisms to protect wetlands and riparian corridors.

Policy OS 9.2

Manage all seasonal creeks and other drainage courses so as to protect and enhance the Suisun Marsh. (See Policy PF 8.4 A)

Program OS 9.2 A

During development review, require all projects to continue to meet the requirements of the Fairfield-Suisun Sewer District. Incorporate appropriate best management practices into stormwater runoff plans to reduce impacts on local seasonal creeks and drainage courses.

Policy OS 9.3

Secure wetlands designation for appropriate lands in the Fairfield/Vacaville Greenbelt and for lands in the Travis AFB/Jepson Prairie Planning Area.

Program OS 9.3 A

Support the establishment of a regional or State wildlife preserve within the Travis AFB/Jepson Prairie Open Space Planning Area that will complement the existing Jepson Prairie Reserve. Work with Solano County and the Solano Land Trust to permanently preserve and manage Wilcox Ranch.

Policy OS 9.4

Allow no development on the east side of I-680 between Parish Road and the Cordelia historic area.

Policy OS 9.5

Support acquisition of key parcels on the periphery of the Suisun Marsh to ensure the integrity of the entire marsh.

Policy OS 9.6

Continue to protect the integrity of the Suisun Marsh Secondary Management Zone.

Policy OS 9.7

Promote only low intensity recreational activities which are compatible with the marsh environment adjacent to Suisun Marsh.

Policy OS 9.8

Preserve natural water courses through requirements of land dedication and open space improvement imposed during the land development process.

Policy OS 9.9

The proponents of new development projects along important freshwater marsh, riparian or open water habitat areas that are not already covered by the City's Creekside Protection Ordinance shall provide an assessment of the habitat. Based on the assessment, an enhancement or restoration plan would be required to be prepared by a qualified person(s) experienced in the development and implementation of riparian restoration and enhancement plans.

Program OS 9.9 A

For each proposed development site within freshwater marsh, salt marsh, vernal pool, and seasonal wetland biological communities, the City will require qualified biologists to conduct a reconnaissance survey of the site and identify potential sensitive biological resources, including special-status species (as identified in the 2001 EIR for the Comprehensive Amendment to the General Plan) and their habitats. If no sensitive biological resources are found during this survey, no further surveys will be necessary.

If sensitive biological resources are found, the biologist will conduct additional surveys, as needed to map the resources and, using methods and protocols developed or acceptable by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife; make recommendations for avoiding sensitive biological resources to the extent feasible. The biologist will also flag or fence sensitive resources to be avoided. This requirement shall apply prior to City consideration of any development proposal for the site.

Program OS 9.9 B

The loss of freshwater marsh, salt marsh, and vernal pool/seasonal wetland habitat and of stream channel and open-water habitats will be avoided or reduced to the extent feasible for each development site. Within each proposed development or agricultural conversion site, the project wetland ecologist will delineate and map waters of the United States and isolated wetland and open-water habitats and will make recommendations for avoidance. The wetland ecologist will coordinate placement of protective temporary fencing around wetland, stream channel, and open-water habitat to be preserved. Erosion control measures will be implemented at the edges of graded areas to minimize potential release of sediments into adjacent avoided wetland, stream channel, and open-water habitats.

Program OS 9.9 C

The City shall require the project proponent to obtain all necessary permits pertaining to affected waters of the United States, including wetland habitat and stream channel and pond habitat regulated by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and/or San Francisco Bay Regional Water

Quality Control Board prior to construction. Grading or other construction activities within streambeds or ponds may require a streambed alteration agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Discharge of fill into waters of the United States will require a Clean Water Act Section 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Clean Water Act Section 401 certification from the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board. The permitting process will also require compensation for construction impacts.

Program OS 9.9 D

For each project in which unavoidable removal of wetland habitat or other waters of the United States will occur, the City shall require the project proponent to develop a compensation plan prior to construction. Compensation may include purchase of mitigation credits for the affected habitat types at an established mitigation bank, if available; preservation, and possibly enhancement, of in-kind habitat types; or creation and preservation of in-kind habitat types. Required mitigation ratios will be developed on a case-by-case basis in coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and/or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (for wetlands that are occupied by federally listed species).

Program OS 9.9 E

For each proposed development site within a riparian habitat biological community, the City will require qualified biologists to conduct a reconnaissance survey of the site and identify potential sensitive biological resources, including special-status species (as identified in the 2001 EIR for the Comprehensive Amendment to the General Plan) and their habitats, jurisdictional waters of the United States, and any other protected biological resources. If no sensitive biological resources are found during this survey, no further surveys will be necessary.

If sensitive biological resources are found, the biologist will conduct additional surveys, as needed, to map the resources and, using methods and protocols developed or acceptable by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife, make recommendations for avoiding sensitive biological resources to the extent feasible. The biologist will also flag or fence sensitive resources to be avoided. This requirement shall apply prior to City consideration of any development proposal for the site.

Program OS 9.9 F

For each proposed development site affecting a stream channel or open water biological communities, the City will require qualified biologists to conduct a reconnaissance survey of the site and identify potential sensitive biological resources, including special-status species (as identified in the 2001 EIR for the Comprehensive Amendment to the General Plan) and their

habitats, jurisdictional waters of the United States, and any other protected biological resources. If no sensitive biological resources are found during this survey, no further surveys will be necessary.

If sensitive biological resources are found, the biologist will conduct additional surveys, as needed, to map the resources and, using methods and protocols developed or acceptable by the USFWS and CDFG, make recommendations for avoiding sensitive biological resources to the extent feasible. The biologist will also flag or fence sensitive resources to be avoided. This requirement shall apply prior to City consideration of any development proposal for the site.

Policy OS 9.10

Avoid or reduce the loss of riparian habitat to the extent feasible for each development site.

Program OS 9.10 A

For each proposed development within a riparian habitat biological community, and prior to consideration of development proposals, the City shall require a botanist to identify and map riparian habitat and make recommendations for avoidance. The botanist will coordinate placement of protective temporary fencing around riparian habitat to be preserved.

Program OS 9.10 B

The City shall require the project proponent to obtain all necessary permits pertaining to affected riparian habitat within the planning area prior to allowing development. Removal of riparian habitat may require a streambed alteration agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and may require a Section 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and federal Clean Water Act, Section 401, certification from the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board. The permitting process will also require compensation for riparian impacts.

Program OS 9.10 C

For each project in which unavoidable removal of riparian habitat will occur, the City shall require the project proponent to develop a riparian habitat compensation plan. Compensation will consist of plantings, preferably onsite, or purchase and preservation of existing riparian habitat. The City will develop required compensation ratios for removed riparian vegetation in coordination with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife; the Department may require specific compensation for a site through the streambed alteration agreement.

Objective OS 10

Preserve and establish cultural and historic resources.

Policy OS 10.1

Conserve valuable resources by promoting educational activities and encouraging conservation efforts by citizens, property owners, and builders.

Policy OS 10.2

Prior to submittal, the applicant should consult with the California Archaeological Inventory Northwest Information Center at Sonoma State University to determine if the project will have an impact on cultural resources.

Policy OS 10.3

Avoid impacts on cultural resources when archeological studies reveal the presence of cultural resources at a development site. If avoidance is infeasible, require site testing by a qualified archeologist to determine the significance of the resources, and implement recommended mitigation measures.

Policy OS 10.4

Halt construction at a development site if cultural resources are encountered unexpectedly during construction and require consultation with a qualified archeologist to determine the significance of the resources.

Policy OS 10.5

Promote a regional or County museum or education center to build awareness of our area's history and resources.

Policy OS 10.6

Require archeological studies by a qualified archeologist (as defined by the Secretary of the Interior's standards) in areas of archeological significance prior to approval of development projects.

Policy OS 10.7

Prepare and maintain an inventory of historic structures within the General Plan Area per the City's adopted Historic Preservation Ordinance and, where appropriate, promote the inclusion of these structures on the California Register of Historic Resources and the National Register of Historic Places. Work with property owners in seeking registration of historical structures as State Historic Landmarks or listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Program OS 10.7 A

The City shall require that a qualified architectural historian inventory and evaluate the significance of buildings and structures located in or adjacent to parcels within established historic districts or adjacent to registered landmarks before approval of development projects.

Policy OS 10.8

Promote the preservation and restoration of historical sites and structures within the General Plan Area that are significant to the City's or the region's cultural or historic background. (See Policy UD 3.4)

Recreation

Objective OS 11

Maximize public value from open space for recreational uses. (See Objective LU 6)

Policy OS 11.1

Secure public access to open space to the maximum extent feasible.

Policy OS 11.2

Promote trail systems through the open spaces, and pedestrian/bicycle links throughout the City, per the adopted Master Trails Plan and the Circulation Element Bicycle Routes Map. (See Objective CI 9, Policies CI 9.1 and CI 9.2, and Program CI 9.2 A)

Policy OS 11.3

Require all development projects to incorporate recreation and trails elements into project design.

Policy OS 11.4

Where appropriate, projects should provide access to trail heads located on adjacent public or nonprofit-owned open space lands.

Policy OS 11.5

Actively participate with other governmental entities (cities, county, state, and federal) or agencies in the acquisition, management, and use of recreational/open space lands and facilities. (See Policy LU 5.3 and Program LU 5.3 A)

Program OS 11.5 A

Actively promote ridgetop and hillside trails along major north-south ridges connecting Benicia and eastern Vallejo, and between Benicia and Green Valley to become major links to the Bay Area Ridge Trail System.

Program OS 11.5 B

Actively promote trails for hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians in the Green Valley Falls/Vallejo Lakes Planning Area that link the reservoirs, Green Valley Falls, Lower Green Valley, and the Rockville Hills area.

Program OS 11.5 C

Identify and promote potential shared arrangements for owning, improving, and managing open space/conservation/recreational areas of mutual interest. This may include:

- *joint powers agreements.*
- *transfer of development rights.*
- *shared ownership of open space areas.*
- *shared management responsibilities.*
- *joint funding programs.*
- *memoranda of understanding.*

Policy OS 11.6

Work with Solano County and State and federal resource agencies to incorporate appropriate water courses within the General Plan Area as components of the recreation corridor system. Public access within sensitive habitat areas of waterway shall be considered individually to ensure protection of the habitat resource.

Program OS 11.6 A

Require development projects to provide appropriate pedestrian, bicycle, and equestrian trails with frequent access points along the urban stream corridors.

Policy OS 11.7

Preserve public access corridors for walkers, bicyclists, and equestrians along future floodway improvement projects whenever feasible.

Policy OS 11.8

Utility easement corridors shall be designated for recreational open space unless an acceptable trail alternative is included in a development plan.

Objective OS 12

Provide parks that meet the diverse needs of current and future residents.

Policy OS 12.1

Implement the Parks Capital Projects Plan, which identifies desired programs and recreation facility improvements.

Program OS 12.1 A

Periodically (every three-to-five years) review the Parks Capital Projects Plan in conjunction with the the annual City budget, and the availability of regional, State, and federal grant programs to identify projects for funding.

Program OS 12.1 B

City staff shall continuously monitor the availability of regional, State, and federal grants for the development of parks and recreational areas.

Policy OS 12.2

Promote the establishment of neighborhood parks of up to approximately seven acres in size at a ratio of 1.5 acres of usable park land per 1,000 residents throughout the City. Neighborhood parks are intended to serve a 1/2 mile radius area and to provide space and facilities for active, neighborhood level sports, as well to provide space for casual and passive recreation and leisure.

Policy OS 12.3

Encourage the establishment of community parks of approximately 40 acres or more at a ratio of 2.0 acres usable park lands per 1,000 residents. Community parks provide a broad range of fields, facilities, and spaces for sports and other recreational activities suitable, in some cases, for community-wide and even regional populations.

Policy OS 12.4

Work with regional partners to promote development of regional parks and open space preserves to meet passive and natural-oriented regional open space and recreation needs. Regional parks need not be owned and operated by the City of Fairfield but may be owned by Solano County, a park district or other public entity, or a private organization such as the Solano Land Trust.

Policy OS 12.5

Encourage the development of specialized parks, pocket parks, private parks and private recreational facilities in neighborhoods whose developer or residents wish to provide unique or additional recreational facilities for their communities. Use of private facilities may be limited to residents of the neighborhood, although projects that receive city or public funding should be made available to the broader public.

Program OS 12.5 A

Implement the concepts for specialized recreational and civic facilities, pocket parks and private recreational facilities in the Train Station Specific Plan, including the Town Square, the Lake Park, and the Great Park.

Policy OS 12.6

Develop new recreational venues for softball, soccer, picnicking, and outdoor cultural events.

Policy OS 12.7

Preserve and develop the entire Linear Park system, from Solano Community College eastward through the Fairfield Train Station Specific Plan area , as illustrated on the Land Use Diagram, exclusively as a multi-purpose recreational

and multimodal transportation corridor in order to provide linkages among recreation and parks, schools, shopping, industry, residential, and other community activity centers.

Objective OS 13

Ensure that all parks, trails, and recreational open space properties have adequate funding for management, maintenance and necessary capital improvements.

Policy OS 13.1

No park, trail, or recreational open space will be developed until long term funding for maintenance and management is in place, such as through a community facilities district, lighting and landscaping maintenance district, or an endowment program.

Policy OS 13.2

Developers shall establish a neighborhood association or other funding mechanism to fund private park and recreational facility maintenance.

Supporting Text

Open Space

The City of Fairfield is committed to preserving the open space areas surrounding the city that help create the community's sense of identity and distinction from nearby cities, natural setting, and quality of life. These open space preserves and buffers shall, when feasible, be acquired or preserved. They will serve to preserve the community character by protecting natural resources, offering recreational opportunities, and maintaining substantial amounts of open space land currently in economically productive uses. Rockville Hills Regional Park has already been established and shall be maintained as a permanent recreational open space buffer.

The Fairfield General Plan identifies 11 Open Space Planning Areas (OSPA) on Exhibit OS-1. These areas are defined due to their geographic location, physical characteristics, development potential, and open space values or attributes. The rationale for designating land for OSPA purposes is explained below.

Open Space for the Managed Production of Resources

Primary economic uses of open space within the Fairfield Planning Area include agriculture and grazing and domestic water production. Agriculture especially intensive row crops, grain production, orchards, and vineyards, is important to the economic vitality of the City and the region. Additionally, agriculture and its associated open space are essential to preserving regional heritage and contribute to the quality of life for residents in the county.

Open Space for the Preservation of Natural Resources

Natural Resources include waterways, natural habitat areas, wetlands, and geologic formations. These resource areas contribute to the character of the community and are valuable in their own right. Inundated by both urban development and agriculture over the past 150 years, remnant habitat areas have become scarcer and therefore take on a greater significance with the passage of time.

Open Space for Public Health and Safety

Unstable hillsides, flooding potential, earthquake fault zones, and Travis AFB noise and safety impacts restrict development potential in many areas around Fairfield. Development in these areas will be strictly regulated or prohibited, with land most susceptible to hazards preserved as permanent open space.

Open Space for Public Recreation

The public is increasingly demanding passive natural recreational opportunities close to urban areas. Passive recreation includes activities such as walking and hiking, riding mountain bikes, bird watching, and picnicking. Often, these activities can be accommodated with public trails next to open space areas with limited public access.

Open Space to Shape Urban Growth

Fairfield and its neighboring cities face significant growth pressures. To preserve the city's separation and individual character and to permanently preserve open space, buffer zones have been designated between Fairfield and its neighbors.

Visual Open Space

Visual open space, particularly hillside areas and ridge tops, contributes greatly to the character of the city. Much of this land is currently used for livestock grazing or agriculture. Given the importance of agriculture in preserving visual open space, agricultural land uses should be maintained. Scenic road and parkways are also one of the most common ways people enjoy visual open space. Scenic roads should be designated and maintained to maximize appreciation of rural open space.

Regional Open Space Issues

Fairfield contains or abuts significant regional open space landscapes, including ridgelines, the Suisun Marsh, and prime agricultural land. The City will work with regional agencies, other local governments, and non-profit organizations to preserve regional trail corridors like the Bay Area Ridge Trail.

Open Space Planning Areas

Brief descriptions of the Open Space Planning Areas (OSPA) are presented below. Exhibit OS-1 graphically depicts these areas. More detailed descriptions of open space attributes, existing conditions, and current uses are presented in the Open Space, Conservation and Recreation section of the Technical Document (Volume II of this General Plan).

OSPA 1 - Benicia, Fairfield, Vallejo Buffer Zone

Generally located between the cities of Benicia, Fairfield, and Vallejo, this OSPA comprises approximately 10,000 acres of generally steep hills primarily used for cattle grazing. Portions of this area are within each of the three cities' spheres of influence. Preservation of these hills as open space is critical to maintaining a physical separation between the cities of Fairfield, Vallejo, and Benicia. The City participates in a Joint Powers Agreement, the Tri City and County Cooperative

Planning Group, with Benicia, Vallejo, and Solano County. The Tri City and County Cooperative Plan is an adopted element of the General Plan.

OSPA 2 - Lower Green Valley

Located north of Highway 12 and I-80, west of Rockville Hills Park, and south of Green Valley Falls, this OSPA includes Green Valley and the hills to the west of the valley. Solano County has adopted a specific plan for Middle Green Valley that addresses permanent preservation of agriculture in exchange for limited residential development.

OSPA 3 - Green Valley Falls/Vallejo Lakes

This OSPA is located to the northwest of Cordelia along the Solano-Napa county line. The area consists of two watersheds, one draining into Napa Valley and one draining into Green Valley. The terrain is mostly mountainous, rugged, and steep, with Sugarloaf Peak (elevation 1,686 feet) to the west and Twin Sisters (elevation 2,259 feet) in the eastern portion of the area. The Vallejo Water Agency owns and manages the key properties in the area.

OSPA 4 - Rockville Hills/Stoneridge

This OSPA is located north of the I-80/I-680 interchange and east of Green Valley. It encompasses approximately 2,600 acres of intermittently wooded, rocky, and hilly terrain. A central valley occupies approximately one-third of this area. Rockville Hills Park is located in the southern portion. Prominent peaks are located in the northern portion of the area. Views in all directions, particularly to the east, are spectacular. In 2012, Solano Land Trust acquired Rockville Trails, 1,200 acres of rolling oak savanna immediately north of Rockville Hills Park. This acquisition will permanently preserve a significant tract of undeveloped wildlife habitat which offers impressive views and landscapes.

OSPA 5 AND 6 - Upper and Lower Suisun Valley

Suisun Valley occupies approximately 20,000 acres of prime farm and crop land, separating central Fairfield and Cordelia. Suisun Valley defines the Fairfield community and sets it apart from other communities in the Bay Area. It is bounded by Rockville Hills to the west, Suisun Marsh to the south, the Fairfield city limit to the east, and the Napa county line to the north. Solano County has adopted General Plan policies and zoning regulations to encourage preservation of agriculture in the valley while permitting a range of agritourism and service uses.

OSPA 7- Nelson Hill

This area includes approximately 240 acres lying northeast of Old Cordelia. It is contiguous to, but not incorporated in, the City of Fairfield. The highest point is

slightly over 300 feet elevation, and sides are steeply sloped except for the portion facing the Cordelia commercial area. Nelson Hill is recognized as a visual buffer between Cordelia and other areas of the City, affording uniquely spectacular views of the Suisun Marsh to the south.

OSPA 8 - Rolling Hills

The Rolling Hills OSPA occupies approximately 4,000 acres north of Fairfield. The area consists of hilly, often wooded country. Much of it is used for grazing livestock. Portions of this area are developed areas within the city limits, Rancho Solano and Rolling Hills. Some of the higher elevations above Rolling Hills, Serpas Ranch, and Castle rock have been permanently preserved as open space with limited public access. The Rolling Hills OSPA has some of the most attractive vistas from central Fairfield. The Rancho Solano North Master Plan Area, which is described in the Land Use Element, is located in a portion of this OSPA. The Rancho Solano Master Association owns significant open space resources within the subdivision.

OSPA 9 - Fairfield-Vacaville Greenbelt

This area includes the hills surrounding Lagoon Valley and a strip of land between the cities of Fairfield and Vacaville. Pursued jointly by the cities of Fairfield and Vacaville, a permanent open space buffer shall be established within the OSPA. The open space buffer shall be consistent with the Fairfield Train Station Specific Plan, an Element of this General Plan.

OSPA 10 - Travis AFB/Jepson Prairie

This OSPA encompasses approximately 26 square miles, bounded by Travis Air Force Base, the proposed Fairfield-Vacaville greenbelt, State Route 113, Jepson Prairie's eastern and southern borders, and the Suisun Marsh Preservation Area. Most of the land is devoted to livestock grazing. This is essentially the same area recommended for establishment of a major ecological park in the 1982 Jepson Prairie Feasibility Study. The land is primarily flat to rolling grasslands containing numerous vernal pools and wetlands. It represents some the state's most significant examples of Central Valley Prairie.

OSPA 11 - Suisun Marsh

Located immediately south of Fairfield and Suisun City, the Suisun Marsh is the largest continuous estuarine wetland in the United States. Occupying nearly 85,000 acres, the marsh is a vital wintering and breeding area for waterfowl. Strict federal and state regulations protect the wetlands and prohibit any new development or improvements which could degrade its quality. The Grizzly Island Wildlife Area and other State Department of Fish and Game lands are open to the public.

Open Space Acquisition Mechanisms

The Open Space portion of this Element includes policies and programs regarding open space acquisition. Some methods for acquiring permanent open space are described below.

Pooled Development Rights Program

In a pooled development rights program, several landowners agree to consolidate their landholdings and develop the land under a master development plan. Development is clustered on the least sensitive portions of the site, preserving open space assets. Profits from the development are shared among all of the landowners, even those whose properties are largely set aside as open space.

Dedication of Open Space Land

For large scale development projects, the City requires developers to dedicate land for open space. Recent examples include the Rolling Hills, Rancho Solano, and Paradise Valley projects. For smaller scale projects, open space dedication is generally more difficult to accomplish. In those circumstances where dedication is not feasible, other techniques such as in-lieu fee payment and development rights pooling could be applied. The City also requires identification of a funding source, such as a community facilities district or an endowment, to provide for long term management, maintenance, and capital improvements associated with the property.

In-Lieu Fee Payment

During those occasions when it is not desirable or feasible to obtain dedications of open space lands, fees are collected from developers for open space acquisition. Collected revenues are placed into specific open space accounts for purchase of open space lands.

Conservation or Open Space Easement

A conservation or open space easement is a contract between a landowner and another party to preserve the land in open space uses. In effect, the easement removes the right of the landowner or another party to develop the land or otherwise interfere with the open space character of the land. City policy is to support the efforts of private organizations such as the Solano Land Trust in taking the lead in acquisition of easements in the Fairfield area.

Open Space Funding Mechanisms

Following are potential funding programs that the City could utilize to implement the Open Space policies.

Bedroom Tax

This is a one-time City tax on new residential construction based on the number of bedrooms. Use of the revenue is restricted by City ordinance to funding construction and maintenance of park and recreation facilities. A fee increase would require a two-thirds vote of the electorate, since this is a "special tax" under Proposition 13. The Bedroom Tax is of limited utility for open space acquisition and maintenance, as its focus is on recreational facilities.

Mello-Roos District

State law permits the creation of Community Facilities Districts (CFD) which can sell bonds to finance a variety of community projects including the purchase of open space land. The bonds are repaid with an annual parcel tax. Mello-Roos CFD's require a two-thirds vote of the electorate, or a two-thirds vote of affected landowners in newly-developing portions of the City. Most CFD's are created at early stages of the development process by votes of the developers holding the land, and the cost of paying debt service on the bonds is borne by the residents who purchase homes in the districts.

Parcel Tax

The parcel tax is a citywide tax. A simple majority election is required if either tax revenues are deposited into the general fund or if the tax is imposed by a joint powers agreement. If the funds are to be specifically earmarked for open space, a two-thirds vote of the electorate is required.

Property Tax

The City may seek a two-thirds voter approval of a general obligation bond measure to fund open space acquisition and management. The bond issue amount is discretionary. Some advantages of this approach include that the City Council and the voters determine the level of funding, the tax is based on property value rather than a flat amount, and the cost of the funding is borne by both present and future property owners.

Municipal Park Improvement District

The Fairfield Municipal Park Improvement District (MPID) has authority to issue bonds for park improvements. The City Council requires bonds to be repaid by a revenue generating source related to the bond expenditure. For example, bonds authorized for the Rancho Solano golf course are being paid by greens fees. Since many types of open space do not generate revenue, the MPID is an appropriate funding source only in selected instances.

State Grants

Limited state funding is available on a case-by-case basis from the Coastal Conservancy, environmental license plate fund, and state park bond money. In some cases, local matching funds would be required for these grants. None of these constitute a stable revenue source.

Local Fund Raising

Local fund raising is limited in potential as a stable or sizable source. This would be most likely to be effective if a very popular site was to be acquired and a modest local matching contribution was required. One recent example is the successful acquisition of Rockville Trails, during which the Solano Land Trust was able to tap into local private donations to help fund the acquisition project.

Conservation

The conservation portion of the Element addresses visual resources, natural resources such as wildlife habitats and air quality, and cultural and historic resources. These resources are discussed in detail in the Technical Document (Volume II of the General Plan). Following is a general discussion of existing resources in and around the City.

Wildlife and Vegetation

Fairfield is located within a region which has a wide variety of vegetative and wildlife habitats. Land use changes, introduction of detrimental agricultural chemicals, and competition from non-native species have led to the decline of many wildlife species in the area. The Fairfield Planning Area includes the following types of habitats:
grassland, oak savanna, woodland, wetland, agricultural, and urban-industrial.

Creeks and Watershed Protection

The principal streams in the Fairfield area include Ledgewood, Pennsylvania Avenue, Union Avenue, Laurel, McCoy, Green Valley, Dan Wilson, Suisun, Jameson Canyon and American Canyon Creeks (see Public Facilities and Services Element Exhibit PF-4). The continued and uninterrupted flow of these streams is vital to maintaining the Suisun Marsh environment.

Although Suisun Marsh is not located with Fairfield's City limits, its value as an open space and water resource is of considerable significance to the City and the region. It is one of the largest contiguous brackish marshes in the United States and constitutes over 10% of California's remaining wetlands. A major wintering ground for waterfowl of the Pacific Flyway, the marsh provides feeding and resting areas for up to 28% of California's waterfowl during the autumn of low rainfall years. The principal authorities protecting the marsh are the San Francisco Bay Conservation

and Development Commission (BCDC) and the State Department of Fish and Game (DFG).

Archaeological, Historical, and Cultural Resources

While there has been no comprehensive inventory of archaeological resources within the planning area, individual surveys conducted during environmental review of development projects have identified several important archaeological sites associated with the Patwin era. The Patwins were a small tribe of hunter-gatherers concentrated in villages along local creeks, particularly in Green Valley. Surveyed archaeological sites have included middens, burial grounds, and village sites.

In 1976-77, the Central Solano County Cultural Heritage Commission conducted a survey of historic buildings and features in central Solano County. The study identified many significant historic sites in the City of Fairfield. Most of these are single-family homes located in areas that were originally residential neighborhoods. Other nonresidential structures chosen for their historical significance include the Solano County Courthouse, the water tower on Texas Street and the old post office. The historical town of Cement located in the northern part of the planning area, contains a number of structures related to the Pacific Portland Cement Company Factory. Old Town Cordelia also contains a collection of historical structures.

The City of Fairfield offers a broad range of cultural activities for all age groups. There are a variety of facilities available for these activities, including the Fairfield Center for the Creative Arts, the Fairfield Community Center, the Fairfield Senior Center, various school facilities, and the Fairfield/Suisun Library.

Resource Conservation

Resource conservation issues addressed by the General Plan include waste management, energy, water, and air quality.

The City will address solid waste diversion and disposal through the Source Reduction and Recycling Element (not an element of the General Plan, but a separate document) mandated by the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989. This bill requires each city divert 50% of its waste from going to the landfill. The Green Building Code of 2010 requires 50% of all construction and demolition debris to be diverted from landfill, with all C&D debris from new construction diverted. The City provides information to contractors on certified waste diversion options. The City has a curbside recycling program which includes composting for all green waste and food waste. In addition, State law now requires all multifamily apartment complexes with five or more dwelling units to provide for collection of recyclables. Waste management is also discussed in the Public Facilities and Services Element. The City has developed a water system that will provide non-potable irrigation water for areas such as parks, median strips, schools and streetscapes. This system will save the City energy, as water which previously went through the treatment and

purification process can now be delivered to areas which do not actually require potable water.

The City has conducted energy studies of all city buildings and facilities. Some of the conservation programs being implemented by the City include:

- New LED lights in City buildings
- New energy-efficient LED traffic signals and streetlights.
- Solar panels at the Fairfield Sports Center
- Energy-efficient LED lighting in public parks and reduced water and energy use in park irrigation systems.
- Solar panels and other technologies installed at water treatment plants to reduce energy consumption.

The City also continues to offer residential water audits to homeowners targeted to reduce water use.

Please refer to the Public Facilities and Services Element for further discussion of the City's water system.

Energy can be either renewable or nonrenewable. Renewable resources are that whose supply is unlimited or can be replenished. This includes solar, wind, hydroelectric and geothermal energy resources. Nonrenewable resources are those which are limited in supply and which may eventually be depleted. These include water, oil, gas and nuclear power.

The City is located within the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (AQMD) and must comply with state-mandated plans adopted by the district. In general, Fairfield air quality meets national and state standards, except for occasional violations of ozone and carbon monoxide standards. The land use and growth decisions of the City have a profound effect on the ability to combat air pollution. The land use, economic development, and circulation policies included in the General Plan all influence air quality.

Mineral Resources

The Planning Area includes two currently inactive quarries, Nelson Hill and Cement Hill, which were used for construction aggregate. There are abandoned limestone quarries on the western and southern slopes of Cement Hill. Scattered petroleum and natural gas wells have been drilled in the vicinity of Fairfield. (See Exhibit OS-2.)

Agricultural Soils Resources

In the Fairfield Planning Area, the well-drained soils of Suisun Valley and parts of Green Valley are considered to be prime farmland. Most of the hillside country west and north of Fairfield is grazing land. Grazing land also exists in the flat lands north of Travis Air Force Base. The Land Use Element includes two Agricultural Land Use Categories, intensive and extensive agriculture. Intensive agricultural lands are those which have the potential for the highest productive yield and are used for row crops and orchards. Extensive agricultural lands have a relatively lower productive yield and are primarily used for grazing.

Recreation

The City of Fairfield currently has the following park facilities;

- Twenty public (accessible to the general community) Community, Neighborhood or Pocket Parks totaling 295.6 acres, These parks include 15 neighborhood parks which are typically 5-7 acre parks serving a one-half mile radius and three larger community parks which include a variety of passive and active recreational facilities and are intended to serve a two-mile radius. The Fairmont neighborhood west of Pennsylvania Avenue has two pocket parks.
- In addition to neighborhood and community parks, the city operates Rockville Hills Regional Park, a 633 acre regional park. This park is primarily used for outdoor recreation, such as hiking and mountain biking, as well as wildlife viewing and public environmental education. Citizens also have access to three additional open space areas totaling nearly 1,300 acres.
- Fairfield has a system of linear parks and trails for walking, hiking, and bicycling. These trails often follow existing features like creeks, canals, bluffs, ridges, and utility right-of-ways. The core of the system is the Fairfield Linear Park, which the City has completed between Solano Community College and Dover Avenue. This ten-foot wide pathway and linear park serves as a central intermodal transit spine on which a citywide system of trails will be built.
- The City of Fairfield also has several private neighborhood parks and recreation centers which are generally not open to the general public.

Public Special Use Facilities

Special use facilities are generally single purpose in nature, having a unique or important recreational purpose. Examples include the Fairfield Community Center, Fairfield Senior Center, and the new Fairfield Community Swim Center (Allan Witt Park). Other examples could include an environmental center, golf course, zoo, various types of sport centers and outdoor theaters.

Private Facilities

Private facilities in the General Plan area include tennis clubs, fitness centers, golf courses, private schools and colleges and recreation facilities in new housing developments.

Golf Courses

The City operates two golf courses: Rancho Solano (204 acres) and Paradise Valley (190 acres). Both courses are used by local residents as well as visitors from throughout the region. Rancho Solano is Fairfield's first public golf course. The golf course contains 92 sand bunkers, five lakes, over 7,000 yards of championship play, large greens and a driving range. The course is complemented by a clubhouse consisting of a golf shop, bar and grill, fine dining, banquet facility and a private health and tennis resort. The Paradise Valley Golf Course contains 18 regulation golf holes, driving range, practice putting green, pro shop, maintenance yard, equipment building and restroom, a restaurant/bar and banquet facility.

Projected Park Needs

The General Plan has established for neighborhood parks a one-half mile radius standard and a population ratio of 1.5 acres of neighborhood park/1000 people. The General Plan Policy Document established a 2-acre/1000-population standard for community parks. In order to achieve the established population ratio, the Parks Capital Projects Plan estimated that under the projected 2031 population 165 acres of new park land is needed. Approximately 48 acres of this will be provided in Cordelia Community Park, with the first two phases completed. Per the 2002 Parks Capital Projects Plan, the new park land required to support the projected population increase through 2031 will be provided in several neighborhood parks, completion of the final phases of Cordelia Community Park, and an approximately 50 acre park, "The Great Park", planned for the Train Station Specific Plan Area. Two neighborhood parks will be built in The Villages at Fairfield by Lewis Operating Group as a condition of their development agreement. The Train Station Specific Plan also identifies a broad range of neighborhood parks, pocket parks, and private recreational facilities designed to meet the needs of that community.

The City has identified a variety of other projects and types of projects designed to meet specific needs of the population. Many of these facilities do not have a completed design or scheduled date of construction.

- Softball Fields
- Teen Center Facility
- Sports Center Facility
- Soccer Facility
- Community Center
- Youth Center

A new Parks Capital Plan will be prepared in 2014 once the City has finalized its ordinances related to parks financing (Quimby Act).

Opportunities for Shared Facilities

Because regional parks and natural areas attract visitors from throughout the Northern California region, cooperation among local governments, private organizations, and regional and state bodies is a preferred approach for managing such areas. The City has worked with several partners in open space issues, such as the California Coastal Conservancy, the Solano County Parks Department and neighboring cities. The City participates with the cities of Vallejo and Benicia and the County of Solano in the Tri City and County Cooperative Planning Group for Agricultural and Open Space Preservation. The Cooperative Planning Group is charged with preserving the land located roughly between the three cities and largely within the unincorporated County. The City also joined with Vacaville and the County to plan for the preservation of a buffer zone between Fairfield and Vacaville. In 1994, the two cities and the County entered into a joint powers agreement to form the Vacaville-Fairfield-Solano Greenbelt Authority (VFSGA). The agreement established general boundaries for the area and set forth preservation and land use goals including a buffer between cities, trail linkages, and Travis AFB protection.

The City also works with local and regional private nonprofit organizations. The Solano Land Trust, based in Fairfield, has taken a leading role in local open space planning. For example, the Land Trust worked with the Cooperative Planning Group to fund the purchase of over 6,000 acres of permanently preserved open space in the Planning Area. The Land Trust is currently working with the County of Solano to operate Lynch Canyon Regional Open Space.