

City of Grass Valley 2025 General Plan Annual Progress Report



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PURPOSE OF GENERAL PLAN ANNUAL REPORT

California Government Code Section 65400 mandates that cities and counties submit an annual progress report (APR) on the General Plan and progress on its implementation to the legislative body, the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) and the Housing and Community Development Department (HCD). The four purposes of the annual report are to:

1. Provide information to assess progress on implementation of the General Plan in accordance with the stated goals, policies, and implementation measures.
2. Provide information to identify necessary course adjustments or modifications to the General Plan to improve implementation.
3. Provide a clear correlation between land use decisions made during the reporting period, and the goals, policies, and implementation measures of the General Plan.
4. Provide information regarding local agency progress in meeting its share of regional housing needs and local efforts to remove governmental constraints to the development of housing.

This document fulfills Government Code Section 65400; however, it should be noted that Charter Cities such as Grass Valley were exempt of this General Plan requirement prior to 2019. Accordingly, other than the Housing Element Annual Progress Report, the City has not submitted annual reports prior to that date.

The purpose of the APR is to provide the public and decision makers with an update of the City’s progress in implementing its General Plan vision. This annual assessment provides an opportunity to adjust or modify its policies, goals, and objectives to ensure that the City meets its stated vision. A secondary purpose of the APR is to fulfill housing element statutory requirements regarding the City’s progress in meeting its share of regional housing needs and its efforts to remove government constraints to the development of housing in accordance with Government Code Section 65584.3(c) and 65584.5(b)(5). The Housing Element APR has separate reporting requirements and forms, which have been submitted electronically by the City by the April 1, deadline.

CITY OF GRASS VALLEY GENERAL PLAN BACKGROUND

The Grass Valley General Plan Update commenced June 30, 1998, with a “kickoff” meeting at the Grass Valley City Hall. From the onset, the Grass Valley General Plan Update was aided by the leadership of an appointed Steering Committee. The Steering Committee had eight members, appointed by the City Council. Two were Council members, two were members of the Planning Commission, and four were Members-at-Large. The Steering Committee guided General Plan activities through bi-monthly meetings with staff and consultants; sponsored Public Workshops designed to afford members of the public opportunity to participate in General Plan development; and served as the City’s decision-making body throughout General Plan formulation.

General Plan Elements – The 2020 Grass Valley General Plan includes the following General Plan Elements: Land Use

- Circulation

- Conservation/Open Space (formally separate elements being combined)
- Housing
- Noise
- Safety (formally Safety and Seismic Safety Elements, being combined)
- Community Design (formally Urban Design)
- Historical
- Recreation
- Mineral Management

The City’s General Plan addresses State General Plan requirements. California law requires that every city and county adopt a long-term General Plan that addresses eight specific topics or “elements.” The General Plan must be internally consistent and contain the State Government Code requirements.

CITY’S RESPONSIBILITY

The effectiveness of the General Plan ultimately depends on how it is implemented and maintained over time. State law requires that most actions of local governments affecting the physical environment be consistent with the General Plan. This implementation of the Plan is the responsibility of numerous departments and divisions including:

- City Manager’s Office (City Clerk, Economic Development and Communications)
- Administrative Services Department (Finance & Human Resources)
- Community Development Department (Planning, Building, Housing & Code Compliance)
- Public Works & Engineering (Community Services, Facilities and Maintenance)
- Fire Department (Fire abatement) and,
- Police Department (Community Services, Information Technology & Animal Control)

Additionally, several other governmental agencies provide services within the City. While these agencies are neither part of the City’s operational structure nor directly responsible for implementation of the General Plan, the City does coordinate its activities with these other agencies and relies upon their assistance for full implementation of the General Plan. These agencies include, but are not limited to the following:

- Nevada Irrigation District
- Nevada Union High School
- Nevada County Local Agency Formation Commission
- Nevada County Community Development Agency

AMENDMENTS TO THE GENERAL PLAN

State law allows the City to amend its General Plan no more than four times per year (Charter Cities are Exempt from this requirement). Amendments may be proposed and acted upon at any time

during the year and one action may include multiple amendments. Any changes to the General Plan require a public hearing by the City Council upon recommendation by the Planning Commission and include evaluation of the environmental impacts as required by the California Environmental Quality Act. (CEQA).

There was one notable General Plan text amendment to the Land Use Element in 2025, made in an effort to support an affordable housing project initiated by Nevada County Habitat for Humanity. The amendment added language to the Business Park (BP) land use designation that allows affordable, residential-only projects in the Business Park land use designation when a proposed housing project is needed to satisfy State-mandated housing targets established by the California Housing and Community Development (HCD) Department through their Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process. Prior to the amendment, residential development within the BP designation needed to be subordinate and concurrent with a commercial project.

2025 MAJOR MILESTONES & PROJECTS

The following actions and projects within the City of Grass Valley furthered policies and goals of the 2020 General Plan

The following City Council Actions taken in 2025 supported safety policy, **6-SP**: to incorporate fire hazard reduction considerations into land use plans/patterns, both public and private:

- Used Measure B funds to purchase Fireside Defensible Space Inspection Software – City Council 1/14/2025
- Adopted the Nevada County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan – City Council 2/11/2025
- Authorized purchase of an EMS Staff Commend Vehicle to replace current EMS vehicle for improved operational safety response 11/25/2025
- Authorized purchase of two sets of hydraulic vehicle extraction tools
- Adoption of Local Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps – City Council 5/27/2025
- Purchase of a 107-foot ladder truck to enhance the Fire Department’s response capabilities – authorized 4/8/2025
- Purchase of a Skid Steer Masticator for wildfire vegetation removal and vegetation maintenance – 6/24/2025

The following City Council Actions taken in 2025 supported circulation policy, **3-SP**: Improve public transportation to better link existing and future residential areas with high traffic generating/industrial nodes:

- Intersection improvements at Main Street and South Auburn Street to revert to a stop-controlled intersection – Approved by City Council 1/14/2025
- Downtown Street Rehabilitation Project– Approved the streets rehabilitation project in February 25, 2025, South Auburn St between Main St and Neal St and East Main St between Richardson St and Church St. Other work includes concrete curb, gutter and sidewalk improvements, drainage improvements, pavement marking and striping, and signage Improvements occurred in spring 2025. - City Council 2/25/2025

The following City Council Action taken in 2025 supported circulation policy, **2-CP**, to plan for multi-purpose transportation/recreation and pedestrian facilities to optimize facility usage and enhance potential funding:

- Enter into a contract for design and environmental support services for proposed restoration of the Memorial Park Magenta Drain - City Council 2/25/2025

The following City Council Action taken in 2025 supported historic element policy, **7-HP**: Rehabilitate older commercial areas utilizing Façade Improvements Program and other programs:

- Adopt an Ordinance consistent with SB-10, allowing up to 10 dwelling units to properties within the Town Core zoning designation – City Council 3/11/2025

The following City Council Action taken in 2025 supported circulation policy, **19-CP**: Add vehicular parking in the downtown area.

- Completed the Mill Street Parking Lot construction project – City Council 3/11/2025

The following City Council Actions taken in 2025 supported Safety Element policy, **12-SP**: Maintain a high level of inter-jurisdictional cooperation and coordination, including appropriate automatic aid agreements with fire protection/suppression agencies automatic aid agreements with fire protection/ suppression agencies in western Nevada County

- Worked with Nevada County on the purchase of Tablet Command, a software platform to improve the interoperability amongst various fire agencies throughout the County – City Council 2/11/2025
- Authorized submittal of a Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grant in collaboration with the Fire Safe Council to support efforts to strengthen critical infrastructure, implement hazard fuels reduction using nature-based solutions, assist with hazard tree removal, expand the home hardening retrofit program, enhance the green waste program, and provide community education initiatives for the City - City Council 2/11/2025
- Enter and agreement with Nevada County on a Boundary Drop Response Plan, ensuring that the closest available resource will respond to an emergency regardless of jurisdictional boundary - City Council 3/11/2025
- Designate the City Manager to represent City on California Forest Improvement Program (CFIP) grant application agreements to support forest thinning and forest health improvements - 9/23/2025

The following City Council Actions taken in 2025 supported Circulation Element policies, **11-CO** Develop and implement a comprehensive traffic safety program, including improvement of facilities serving pedestrian needs; **13-CO** Improvement of the transportation system to facilitate commerce and economic development; and **14-CO** Improvements and maintenance of adequate emergency access throughout the city:

- Annual Measure E Street Rehabilitation Project for the pavement resurfacing of East Main St, Brunswick Ave, Dorsey Dr, Sutton Way, Olympic Park Circle, Old Tunnel Road and Sierra College Drive. Project work primarily includes a micro surfacing overlay, pavement markings, and striping improvements – Authorized by City Council 4/8/2025
- Adopted the 5-year Capital Project List and budgets covering FY 25/26 through FY 29/30 – 6/10/2025

- Completed the Condon Park Road Maintenance Project – 6/24/2025
- Completed the Bennett Street Bridge Maintenance Project – 6/24/2025

The following City Council Actions taken in 2025 supported Recreation Element policy, **1-RP** to provide parks and open space of different sizes and types to respond to the needs of a diverse population, including trails for pedestrian and equestrian use, bicycle pathways, linear parkways and park-like natural areas

- Established an Ad Hoc Committee for the Condon Park Skatepark Expansion project. – 5/27/2025

The following City Council Action taken in 2025 supported Conservation /Open Space Element policy, **21-COSP** to Continue to implement water quality improvement plans, including storm water separation and sewage treatment plant expansion

- Authorized bids for the Slate Creek Lift Station Pump Replacement Project – 8/12/2025; contract awarded 10/28/2025

The following City Council Action taken in 2025 supported Land Use Element policy, **39-LUP**, assure that acceptable inter-agency agreements regarding future service and facility provision are in place prior to approval of any major new development.

- Execute an agreement amendment with Nevada Irrigation District to allow the City to expand its service area to parcels along LaBarr Meadows Road for improved service – 8/12/2025

The following City Council Action taken in 2025 supported Land Use Element policies **33-LUP**, to promote Downtown as a hub for area cultural, entertainment and retail development.

- Adopted Ordinance for art installations throughout the City -9/23/2025

The following City Council Action taken in 2025 supported Circulation and Community Design Element policies **11-CP**, Design selected streets and intersections employing modern roundabouts and other traffic calming techniques; and **5-CDP**, design and construct streetscape improvements along South Auburn Street and Colfax Avenue as they enter downtown to enhance the area visually and to improve pedestrian access.

- Approved engineering for the downtown Grass Valley roundabout project – 11/5/2025

The following City Council Actions taken in 2025 supported Land Use, objective, 13-LUO, to provide sufficient affordable housing units for those working in Grass Valley.

- Approved extension of a Standard Agreement with the California Department of Housing And Community Development (HCD) to preserve eligibility for the use of these funds should the state unfreeze them in the future to support local housing activities , including construction, rehabilitation, and assistance to low-income households – 11/12/2025
- Approved a General Plan text amendment to allow residential-only projects, without a commercial component, when part of an affordable housing project proposed within the Business Park land use designation. 11/25/2025

The following City Council Action taken in 2025 supported Recreation and Community Design

Element policies 6-RP, to provide non-motorized linkages between parks and open spaces; and **4-CDP**, to provide connections for automobiles, bicycles and/or pedestrians between neighborhoods and commercial districts when neighborhood safety and character are not compromised.

- Authorized submittal of a Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant for the Trolley Trail Multimodal Connector Study – 12/9/2025

Commercial Projects:

The following projects approved in 2025 supported Land Use goals **6-LUG** to Promote a jobs/housing balance within the Grass Valley region in order to facilitate pleasant, convenient and enjoyable working conditions for residents, including opportunities for short home to work journeys; and **7-LUG**, to create a healthy economic base for the community, including increasing employment opportunities through attraction of new and compatible industry and commerce, and through retention, promotion and expansion of existing businesses

- Approved entitlement for an Issued a building permit for the Jada Windows expansion building for a ±70,000 square foot window and door manufacturing building for Jada Windows in March 2024. The entitlement approved February 2025, building permit issued September 2025
- Issued building permits for an 80-room hotel project on Plaza Drive in May 2025. Certificate of Occupancy is anticipated in Spring 2026.
- Certificate of Occupancy for a new Sherwin Williams paint store in September 2025.

The following projects approved in 2025 supported Land Use policy **35-LUP** to recognize the importance of and encourage home-based businesses that do not conflict with the character of established neighborhoods

- The City issued 26 home-based businesses within the 2025 calendar year.

Residential Projects:

The following residential projects approved in 2025 supported Land Use policies and objectives **28-LUP**, to promote the construction of affordable housing utilizing the techniques and approaches described in this General Plan; and 13-LUO, to provide sufficient affordable housing units for those working in Grass Valley.

- *Habitat for Humanity - Entitlement granted for a 16-unit Habitat for Humanity affordable housing project on Gates Place.*
- *An expansion of the Sierra Guest Home, was approved in January 2024 for a total of 27 supportive housing rooms, including two full apartment units; The Certificate of Occupancy.*

The following residential projects approved in 2025 supported Land Use and Community Design policies, **24-LUP**, on large parcels, encourage clustering of residential units on the most developable portions of the site in order to reduce infrastructure and other housing-related construction costs; **25-LUP**, to utilize clustering and other land use techniques to protect environmentally sensitive resources, such as heritage trees and wetlands; and 17-CDP, to assure adequate City design review

of all new development.

- Loma Rica Ranch – Approved in 2019, the City issued 39 building permits for new home construction in 2025 for the new subdivision known as Loman Rica Ranch. Phase 1 of the Specific Plan has been approved with entitlement for 235 total homes.
- *Gilded Springs* – Staff issued eight building permits, adding to the four previously issued, for residential construction in 2025 for this 26-unit residential infill subdivision.
- *Ridge Village/McKenna Subdivisions* – 34 single family infill lots with floor plans ranging in size from 1,200 to 3,000 square feet. Subdivision improvements are complete. Staff has had conversations with several potential developers in 2025 and anticipates development will occur in 2026
- *The Pines of Grass Valley* – Currently reviewing grading permit for a 108 for-rent 1- & 2-bedroom apartments. The resort-style apartment project includes a swimming pool, hot tub, sundeck, private cabanas with TVs, fire pit, outdoor Yoga Studio, on-site business center, smart home features, on-site deli and market. Staff has continued to work with the developer to address retaining wall and grading permit corrections.
- *Timberwood Estates* – 45 single family home development, offering semi-customized homes in three sizes from 1,804 to 2,224 square feet, including 2-car garages. Building permits are issued in 2021. Buildout is on-going, with the majority of building permits issued in 2023. Staff has had several conversations with potential lot-purchasers in 2025 and is anticipating that the remaining lots will be built out in 2026.

The following residential projects approved in 2025 supported Community Design policy, **9-CDP**, to continue to allow second units on lots in single-family residential areas subject to appropriate development standards and design criteria.

- The City issued building permits for eight Accessory Dwelling units in 2025

PRIOR YEARS APPROVED PROJECTS

- Target shopping center remodel and site improvements, completed in 2024.
- *Brunswick Commons*: 41-unit affordable rental apartment project, designed to provide housing targeting the homeless and mentally ill, with a Certificate of Occupancy issued in 2022.
- *Southern Sphere of Influence Planning and Annexation Project* – 1) an amendment to the General Plan land use designations on 237 of the 400 acres; 2) a prezone amendment on 237 of the 400 acres of land to various zone districts consistent with the proposed General Plan amendments; 3) an expansion of the boundaries and amendment to the Southeast Industrial District Combining Zone; 4) an amendment to add 31 acres to the City's Sphere of Influence; and 5) the annexation of approximately 400 acres.
- *Grass Valley RV Resort and Annexation Project* – The Grass Valley RV Park Resort and Annexation

Project consists of 147 space RV Park Resort with 15 glamping spaces for short term camping on ±20 acres. The project also includes the annexation of ±25 acres of property into the City limits with a zoning designation that permits commercial and residential and combinations thereof.

- *Brockington Center Frontage Landscaping* – The Brockington (Safeway) shopping center frontage landscaping improvement project includes installation of several decorative rock walls and new parking lot landscaping.
- *Condon Park Accessibility & Parking Lot Improvement Project* – The Condon Park Accessibility Project was initiated 2020 and completed in 2021. The project included grading and resurfacing the trail, repaving the roadway, and repairing and installing sidewalk to meet current ADA standards. The 2021 Parking Lot Improvement Project included installation of a new restroom building, repaving of the LOVE building and baseball field parking lots, and extension of existing concrete walkway.
- *Slate Creek Road & Drainage Improvements* – The Slate Creek Road & Drainage Improvement project includes replacing drainage culvert, installing infiltration trenches, repaving and other needed improvements on Slate Creek Road to the City limits.
- *Dutch Bros Coffee* – The construction of a ±900 square foot Dutch Bros with drive-through was completed in 2021.
- *McDonald's Remodel* – The project consists of a façade, décor, drive-thru and restroom upgrade, as well as a 1,200 square foot building addition is under construction through 2021 with completion in 2022.
- *Wendy's Restaurant* – A ±2,366 square foot Wendy's restaurant with drive-through with parking and landscaping is under construction in 2021 with completion in 2022.
- *West Olympia Hotel* – A two-story, 74 room hotel that includes a pool and fitness center was approved by the Planning Commission on December 15th, 2020. Construction is anticipated in Spring/Summer 2022
- *Brunswick Commons* – The project is a mixture of affordable housing and homeless resource center which includes transitional housing units. The project is a Nevada County sponsored project consisting of 41 units of affordable housing for homeless and mentally ill. Also included are 33 one bedroom and 8 two-bedroom units. The project is being constructed in 2021 with completion in Spring/Summer 2022.
- *Coach N Four Motel* – Nevada County's 18-unit motel will initially continue as temporary emergency housing for people experiencing homelessness, with a focus on families, veterans, and other vulnerable groups. Construction to convert the Coach N Four Motel into permanent housing has commenced in 2021 with completion slated in 2022.
- *Quick Quack Carwash* – Development Review was approved for the car wash facility in June 2022; A building permit was issued in December 2022, and Certificate of Occupancy was granted in November 2023.

STATUS OF GENERAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

The following table outlines selected General Plan policies and action items that the City made notable progress towards in 2025. The table is not a comprehensive list of all policies and action items in the General Plan; many policies/actions are under ongoing implementation and may not be listed. As most of the General Plan policies and related action items have been implemented through the adoption of ordinance and resolutions, incorporated into the regular governmental activities of the applicable departments, or included in development proposals as they are reviewed for consistency with the City’s policies, the purpose of providing the policy implementation below is simply to streamline the review and highlight the annual progress efficiently.

The City’s General Plan has always been built around central themes; all are key focus points of the City’s current vision:

- Preserve Grass Valley’s historical character and encourage restoration.
- Expand public services to serve a growing population.
- Encourage variety in residential building types and environments.
- Include high density housing areas in the town center.
- Provide better regional connections. Improve the circulation patterns within the City.
- Protect and improve the Downtown Historic area.
- Diversify the economy and locate industry to avoid undue traffic.
- Preserve scenic beauty and character.

To implement the City’s 2020 General Plan, the City adopted a strategic plan, last updated in April 2022. The concept of a long-range Strategic Plan was presented to the Grass Valley City Council in 2018. The purpose of the Strategic Plan was to provide a set of goals from which comprehensive programs would be developed and adopted to help direct the City’s future strategies and projects. The Strategic Plan was developed with input from community focus groups consisting of an assortment of interested citizens and community leaders. Community contributors culminated at a Citywide public forum where discussion focused on the future direction of Grass Valley and potential projects to enhance the City’s livability. Seven core goals were identified: 1) Community Sense of Place; 2) Transportation; 3) Recreation and Parks; 4) Economic Development & Vitality; 5) High Performance Government & Quality Service; 6) Public Safety; 7) Water & Wastewater Systems & Underground Infrastructure.

HOUSING ELEMENT ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

The State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), acting as the City’s Council of Governments, has determined the amount of affordable housing assigned to the City of Grass Valley for the planning period, known as the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). The 2019 – 2027 RHNA adopted by HCD allocates 743 housing units to the City of Grass Valley. This represents the number of housing units the City is responsible for accommodating during this planning period. The RHNA identifies 269 units, approximately 36 percent, to be affordable to very low- and low-

income households. The above-moderate income category represents the greatest need for Grass Valley's total share of regional housing at 349 units or 47%. HCD has recently communicated the allocation for the 7th Cycle Housing Element Update and the number of residential units allocated to Grass Valley is nearly double that.

Over the past several years, the Planning Division has processed an average of 50 planning and zoning applications annually. Applications include General Plan Amendments, Rezones, Development Review Permits, Tentative Maps, Planned Developments, Use Permits, Lot Line Adjustments, etc.

Within the eight-year housing cycle to date, the city has permitted 206 units. We have entitlements for a total of 413 additional units including those approved but not yet built in Loma Rica, Timberwood Estates, Berriman Ranch, and the Pines. Based on average annual build-out, the City can expect an additional 50 to 75 units by the end of the housing cycle in 2027, which means we will likely fall short of the units allocated for all income targets. The City is not responsible for ensuring build-out of their target allocation and is only responsible for ensuring there is adequate capacity to accommodate the build-out. However, jurisdictions do incur some consequences when build-out, largely not within their control, is not achieved including loss of some local control. If a jurisdiction misses its housing production goals, it becomes subject to the "builder's remedy," allowing developers to submit projects that do not comply with local zoning and general plan standards, provided the project includes a certain percentage of affordable housing (typically 20% for lower-income or 100% for moderate-income). Developers also may take advantage of Streamlined Ministerial Approval (SB 35) for qualifying housing projects, which also must include a minimum of affordable units.

State law requires the city to complete a review of the implementation of the programs in the State Certified Housing Element. **Table D** attached lists each of the programs in the Housing Element and indicates the timeframe to complete the program and the City's efforts to date. As the table illustrates, and as noted above, the City will likely fall short of its allocated housing targets for its 2019 – 2027 State Certified Housing Element.

The attached information is a summary of the housing unit activity of the City of Grass Valley during 2025. The information is an excerpt summary of Tables of the State Department of Housing and Community Development.