



# City of Wheatland

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## PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING STAFF REPORT

Date: July 6, 2021  
Agenda Item:

**Subject:** Consider recommending City Council adoption of the proposed Citywide Agriculture Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Measures.

**Prepared by:** Tim Raney, Community Development Director

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### Recommendation

Staff requests that the Planning Commission adopt the attached resolution recommending City Council adopt the proposed Citywide Agriculture Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Measures (see Attachment 1).

### Background

In 2014, the City annexed the Johnson Rancho and Hop Farm Annexation Project, and now includes more than 1,500 acres of active agriculture land. Active agricultural land is typically located within unincorporated County land, which is why the City of Wheatland currently has limited, if any, adopted policies, standards, or guidelines related to agricultural production. As the City continues to urbanize and develop, staff has identified the importance of developing policies, standards, and guidelines to protect an industry that has been the backbone of the City and surrounding region.

On June 11, 2019 the Wheatland City Council appointed two City Council members, two Planning Commissioners, two local agriculture producers, and a local business owner to an Ad-Hoc Committee for the preparation of the Citywide Agriculture Production Standards project.

## **Discussion**

The proposed Citywide Agriculture Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Measures is intended to implement and expand on the adopted plans, including the Wheatland General Plan Policy Document and the City of Wheatland Community Vision.

### *Wheatland General Plan Policy Document*

The City of Wheatland General Plan sets the framework for future growth and development within which Wheatland can expand while still maintaining the small-town feeling and quality of life that are so important to Wheatland residents. The major theme of the General Plan is to retain and build upon Wheatland's small-town and neighborhood qualities while achieving an economically-healthy and self-sufficient community.

The City of Wheatland General Plan identified the following Goal and Policies for agriculture in the City of Wheatland:

**Goal 1.1:** To Maintain the productivity and minimize developments affects on agricultural lands surrounding Wheatland.

**Policy 1.1.1.** The City shall discourage leapfrog development and development in peninsulas extending into agricultural lands to avoid adverse effects on agricultural operations.

**Policy 1.1.2.** The City shall support the local agricultural economy by encouraging the location of agricultural support industries in the City, establishing and promoting marketing of local farm products, exploring economic incentives, and support for continuing agricultural uses adjacent to the City, and providing its fair share of adequate housing to meet the needs of agricultural labor.

**Policy 1.1.3.** The City shall promote good neighbor policy between residential property owners and adjacent farming operations by supporting the right of the farmers and ranchers to conduct agricultural operations in compliance with State laws.

**Policy 1.1.4.** The City shall work with agribusiness to reduce vandalism, trespassing, roadway hazards, and other public safety issues.

### *City of Wheatland Community Vision*

In 2008, the City of Wheatland completed a process establishing a long-term vision of what Wheatland could and should become in the future. The City Council, Planning Commission, and citizens came together to produce a vision statement and guiding policies which, as they are implemented, could lead to Wheatland becoming a leading city in Northern California, in terms of progressive urban planning and Smart Growth principles. The Wheatland Community Vision provides a comprehensive guide to the long-term treatment in the areas of Environmental Resources, Community Development and Design, Economic Development, Mobility, Education, Governance, Infrastructure, Public Safety, and Green Space and Recreation.

The City of Wheatland community vision statement is:

*Wheatland is committed to being forward thinking non-reactionary city that values its small-town feel, and its agricultural and historical heritage.*

The Community Vision of the City of Wheatland is guided by principles, which includes the following economic development and green spaces and recreation principles applicable to Wheatland:

- *Wheatland shall encourage agricultural food and fiber processors to locate in the City of Wheatland as means of creating local jobs and ensuring the viability of agriculture in Yuba County.*
- *Wheatland shall support the development of County policies and programs that would enhance the long-term viability of agriculture outside of Wheatland's urbanizing areas.*
- *Urban agriculture opportunities shall be incorporated into the design of parks and open space areas.*

The Citywide Agriculture Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Measures is consistent with, and implements the economic development and green spaces and recreation principles included in the Community Vision listed above.

#### *Policy Document Preparation*

Staff worked with the selected Ad-Hoc Committee members and created four goals ranging from protecting the critical role of agriculture land, increasing the agricultural economy, protecting agriculture operations as the City grows, and expanding agritourism opportunities within the City (see Exhibit 1 to Attachment 1).

#### Proposed Citywide Agriculture Goals

- Goal 1 Protect the critical role of agriculture land and production toward balancing the well-being of the City.*
- Goal 2 Seek to increase the value-added component of the City's agricultural economy.*
- Goal 3 Protect agricultural operations and related industries as the City grows.*
- Goal 4 Seek and expand opportunities for agritourism as part of the City's economic stability and viability.*

#### *Policy Document Implementation*

The Citywide Agriculture Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Measures are proposed to serve as a regulatory tool for new the development in Wheatland. The goals, objectives, and implementation measures included in this document are to be used by designers, developers, builders, planners, and regulators.

These goals, objectives, and implementation measures set forth specific criteria that encourage the establishment of a greater sense of quality, unity, and conformance with the community's historical agricultural heritage.

### **CEQA Review**

The proposed policy document is exempt from environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines section 15305, Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the above information, staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt the attached resolution recommending the City Council adopt the proposed Citywide Agriculture Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Measures.

### **Attachments**

1. Resolution No. 2021-\*\* Recommending Council Adoption of the Citywide Agriculture Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Measures.

Exhibit 1: City of Wheatland's Citywide Agriculture Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Measures.

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
RESOLUTION NO. 2021-05**

**RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WHEATLAND  
RECOMMENDING CITY COUNCIL ADOPTION OF THE CITYWIDE AGRICULTURE GOALS,  
OBJECTIVES, AND IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES**

**WHEREAS**, on August 13, 2014 the City of Wheatland annexed the Johnson Rancho and Hop Farm Annexation Project, which included active agriculture production land; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 11, 2019 the City of Wheatland City Council appointed two City Council members, two Planning Commissioners, two local agriculture producers, and a local business owner to an Ad-Hoc Committee for the preparation of the Citywide Agriculture Production Standards; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 15, 2021, the Planning Commission duly held a public hearing on the matter, and received and considered evidence, both oral and documentary recommending City Council approval of the Citywide Agriculture Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Measures; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission gave notice of public hearing as required by law; and

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that in recommending approval to the City Council of the Citywide Agriculture Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Measures, the Planning Commission makes the following findings, which are based on its review and consideration of the entire record, including the recitals above and any oral or written testimony provided at the hearing:

1. The proposed policy document is exempt from environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines section 15305, Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations.
2. The proposed policy document is consistent with the General Plan, as it carries out the purposes of the General Plan and is consistent with the land use and development designation in such plans.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Planning Commission recommends the City Council approve the Citywide Agriculture Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Measures, in the form attached as Exhibit 1, subject to such changes as may be approved by the City Council.

\*\*\*\*\*

**I HEREBY CERTIFY** that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the Planning Commission of the City of Wheatland at a regular meeting thereof held on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of July 2021, by the following vote:

**AYES:**

**NOES:**

**ABSENT:**

**ABSTAIN:**

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LISA THOMASON  
City Clerk

**EXHIBIT 1**

**THE CITY OF WHEATLAND'S CITYWIDE AGRICULTURE  
GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES**







# WHEATLAND'S CITYWIDE AGRICULTURE GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES

JULY 2021



City of Wheatland  
Community Development Department  
111 C Street  
Wheatland CA 95692

**City of Wheatland's  
Citywide Agriculture Goals,  
Objectives, and Implementation Measures**

**Prepared By:**

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**July 2021**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

In 2014, the City annexed the Johnson Rancho and Hop Farm Annexation Project, which included more than 1,500 acres of active agriculture production land. Active agricultural land is typically located within unincorporated County land, which is why the City of Wheatland previously had limited adopted policies, standards, or guidelines related to agricultural production. As the City continues to urbanize and develop, staff has identified the importance of developing policies, standards, and guidelines to protect an industry that has been the backbone of the City and surrounding region.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

As part of the scope for the preparation of the Citywide Agriculture Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Measures, the City performed public outreach and workshops.

On June 11, 2019 the Wheatland City Council appointed two City Council members, two Planning Commissioners, two local agriculture producers, and a local business owner to an Ad-Hoc Committee for the preparation of the Citywide Agriculture Production Standards project. A series of workshops were held in order to determine the community's interests and goals regarding citywide agricultural policy and production. As members of the community, it was important for the Ad-Hoc Committee to be involved in the development process to ensure these goals, objectives, and implementation measures reflect the community's interests.

The meetings were also an opportunity for the public to provide input. Based upon the direction set by the Ad-Hoc Committee, as well as stakeholder and community feedback during the workshops, the Wheatland's Citywide Agriculture Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Measures have been prepared.

## II. RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING PLANS

The City of Wheatland's Citywide Agriculture Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Measures is consistent with, and serves to implement adopted plans, including the Wheatland General Plan Policy Document and the City of Wheatland Community Vision, as discussed in more detail below.

### CITY OF WHEATLAND GENERAL PLAN

The City of Wheatland General Plan sets the framework for future growth and development within which Wheatland can expand while still maintaining the small-town feeling and quality of life that are so important to Wheatland residents. The major theme of the General Plan is to retain and build upon Wheatland's small-town and neighborhood qualities while achieving an economically-healthy and self-sufficient community.

The City of Wheatland General Plan identified the following Goal and Policies for agriculture in the City of Wheatland:

**Goal:**

- 1.1:** To Maintain the productivity and minimize developments affects on agricultural lands surrounding Wheatland.

**Policies:**

- 1.1.1.** The City shall discourage leapfrog development and development in peninsulas extending into agricultural lands to avoid adverse effects on agricultural operations.
- 1.1.2.** The City shall support the local agricultural economy by encouraging the location of agricultural support industries in the City, establishing and promoting marketing of local farm products, exploring economic incentives, and support for continuing agricultural uses adjacent to the City, and providing its fair share of adequate housing to meet the needs of agricultural labor.
- 1.1.3.** The City shall promote good neighbor policy between residential property owners and adjacent farming operations by supporting the right of the farmers and ranchers to conduct agricultural operations in compliance with State laws.

- 1.1.4. The City shall work with agribusiness to reduce vandalism, trespassing, roadway hazards, and other public safety issues.

The Citywide Agriculture Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Measures is intended to implement and expand on the agriculture goal and policies of the Wheatland General Plan.

## CITY OF WHEATLAND COMMUNITY VISION

In 2008, the City of Wheatland completed a process establishing a long-term vision of what Wheatland could and should become in the future. The City Council, Planning Commission, and citizens came together to produce a vision statement and guiding policies which, as they are implemented, could lead to Wheatland becoming a leading city in Northern California, in terms of progressive urban planning and Smart Growth principles. The Wheatland Community Vision provides a comprehensive guide to the long-term treatment in the areas of Environmental Resources, Community Development and Design, Economic Development, Mobility, Education, Governance, Infrastructure, Public Safety, and Green Space and Recreation.

The City of Wheatland community vision statement is:

*Wheatland is committed to being forward thinking non-reactionary city that values its small-town feel, and its agricultural and historical heritage.*

The Community Vision of the City of Wheatland is guided by principles, which includes the following economic development and green spaces and recreation principles applicable to Wheatland:

- *Wheatland shall encourage agricultural food and fiber processors to locate in the City of Wheatland as means of creating local jobs and ensuring the viability of agriculture in Yuba County.*
- *Wheatland shall support the development of County policies and programs that would enhance the long-term viability of agriculture outside of Wheatland's urbanizing areas.*
- *Urban agriculture opportunities shall be incorporated into the design of parks and open space areas.*

The Citywide Agriculture Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Measures is consistent with, and implements the economic development and green spaces and recreation principles included in the Community Vision listed above.

### III. AGRICULTURE GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES

The following Agriculture Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Measures have been specifically developed to be applied to all new development located near existing agriculture land in the City of Wheatland.

#### GOAL 1

**Protect the critical role of agriculture land and production toward balancing the well-being of the City.**

Objective 1.1 Conserve agricultural lands and minimize conflicts between agricultural and nonagricultural uses.

Implementation Measure 1.1.1 Non-agricultural development initiated adjacent to pre-existing commercial agriculture shall provide and maintain a fire-safe buffer zone between agriculture activity and the development. The buffer shall be 100 feet wide with a row of Italian, Leyland, Carolina Sapphire Cypress, or other suitable tree, planted and maintained at the 50' centerline of the buffer, spaced 15 feet apart on the tree line without any other wood or vine plants in the buffer. Reasonable alternatives to this design are acceptable if agreed upon by the developer, the Wheatland Community Development Director, and affected ongoing commercial agriculture operation.

Implementation Measure 1.1.2 Buffer maintenance will be the responsibility of the underlying fee title owner and shall be enforced by the City of Wheatland.

Implementation Measure 1.1.3 In circumstances in which a buffer is not meant to be permanent, the buffer will be terminated once the underlying agricultural purpose for the buffer no longer exists.

Objective 1.2 Develop and maintain a circulation system that supports the City's agricultural industry.

Implementation Measure 1.2.1 Provide adequate truck routes to and from existing agricultural land that avoids sensitive local roadways.

Objective 1.3 Support management programs (controlled burning, etc.) when it is found they improve the quality of rangeland for livestock and wildlife.

Implementation Measure 1.3.1 The City shall amend the existing Agricultural Combining District to allow for vegetation management on agricultural land.

Implementation Measure 1.3.2 The City shall amend the existing Agricultural Combining District to allow for pest control on agricultural land.

## **GOAL 2**

**Seek to increase the value-added component of the City's agricultural economy.**

Objective 2.1 Prevent food deserts in the City of Wheatland.

Implementation Measure 2.1.1 The City shall amend the existing Agricultural Combining District to allow for direct sales of agricultural products.

Objective 2.2 Create opportunities for agricultural manufacturing uses in the City of Wheatland.

Implementation Measure 2.2.1 The City shall amend the existing Agricultural Combining District to allow for the manufacturing of agricultural products.

Objective 2.3 Expand agricultural support industries and/or facilities to be considered compatible and appropriate uses in agricultural land.

Implementation Measure 2.3.1 The City shall amend the existing Agricultural Combining District to include but not limited to additional uses such as cold storage, warehouses, parking lots, greenhouses, temporary and permanent worker housing and offices, processing equipment and facilities, agricultural research facilities, loading docks, workshops established to serve on-site and/or off-site farming and ranching activities.



### **GOAL 3**

#### **Protect agricultural operations and related industries as the City grows.**

Objective 3.1 Seek advice from the agricultural community for any future evaluation of land areas needed for urban development next to or near agricultural lands.

Implementation Measure 3.1.1 Create a notification list for local farmers to provide comments on proposed development projects.

### **GOAL 4**

#### **Seek and expand opportunities for agritourism as part of the City's economic stability and viability.**

Objective 4.1 Support the expansion of the existing agritourism within the City.

Objective 4.2 Embrace the agricultural history in Wheatland.

Objective 4.3 Support urban farming throughout the City.

## **IV. POLICY DOCUMENT IMPLEMENTATION**

The Citywide Agriculture Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Measures serve as a regulatory tool for new the development in Wheatland. The goals, objectives, and implementation measures included in this document are to be used by designers, developers, builders, planners, and regulators.

These goals, objectives, and implementation measures set forth specific criteria that encourage the establishment of a greater sense of quality, unity, and conformance with the community's historical agricultural heritage. It is also important to note that the goals, objectives, and implementation measures are not intended to delay or restrict development, but rather to add consistency and predictability to the development review process. These goals, objectives, and implementation measures are the minimum requirements that each development project should strive to meet.

The "shall" statements offer relatively little flexibility, unless choices are provided within the statements themselves. Any "should", "recommended", or "encouraged" statements offer flexibility and indicate that the City is open to design features that are equal to or better than those stated, so long as the intent is satisfied.

Any pictures, drawings, and diagrams in this document are intended to illustrate the intention of the individual goal, objective, or implementation measure. They are not intended to illustrate the only or even the best way to meet the minimum requirements. Applicants and project designers are encouraged to consider designs, styles, and techniques not pictured in the examples that fulfill the intention of the goals, objectives, and implementation measures.

### **FUTURE DEVELOPEMNT PLAN REVIEW PROCESS**

When submitting a development plan for review, the development application shall demonstrate how a project has responded to the goals, objectives, and implementation measures included in this document. The applicant has the burden of proof to demonstrate how a proposed design satisfies the goals, objectives, and implementation measures and appropriately addresses the objective in order to achieve the goal. This determination will be made by the Community Development Director.

Consideration of these goals, objectives, and implementation measures should be contemplated early in the design process and should be a collaborative effort with the developer and City staff. Developers are encouraged to meet with the Community Development Director early to identify any major issues associated with these goals, objectives, and implementation measures. The development plan review process authorizes the Community Development Director to review certain development applications for conformance with the adopted goals, objectives, and implementation

measures. Any party aggrieved by the decision of the Community Development Director may file an appeal in accordance with the provisions and procedures for appeals set forth in Section 18.67.070 of the Wheatland Municipal Code.

Anyone considering a development project should first make an appointment to discuss the project and these goals, objectives, and implementation measures with a member of the Community Development Department staff. The staff member can help explain the City's development procedures and determine what project entitlements would be required. The staff member can also provide an approximate timetable for the processing of the project and describe any other permits or approvals that may be required.

### Exceptions

It is envisioned that the great majority of projects will comply in their entirety with these goals, objectives, and implementation measures. However, it is possible that there may be unusual circumstances where a project may not be able to meet one or more of the goals, objectives, and implementation measures due to the peculiarities of the project. In such instances, the Community Development Director or the Planning Commission may approve an exception provided that the overall intent of the goals, objectives, and implementation measures is still being met.

### Who Does the Reviewing?

The Community Development Director (or designated staff) handles the task of development plan review for projects that do not require Planning Commission approval. When Planning Commission approval is required, such as a project requiring a conditional use permit, planned development or other entitlement, the Commission serves as the review authority. When the Director or Commission determines that a project conforms to all applicable provisions of the City Code, the project is approved. The approval may be subject to conditions that bear a reasonable relationship to the nature and intensity of development and the potential impacts such development may generate. Before a building permit may be issued, the project must demonstrate compliance with all applicable conditions and codes.

