

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The City of Hanford General Plan was comprehensively updated in 2002. The Plan did not include a separate air quality element, but it addressed air quality issues in the other general plan elements. The Air Quality Element is provided as a stand-alone document that amends the 2002 General Plan. The City anticipates incorporating the Air Quality Element into the next comprehensive General Plan update that is expected to occur over the next several years.

1.1 - Purpose

Air quality elements are optional elements in California, except for jurisdictions located within the San Joaquin Valley. Section 65302.1 of the California Government Code requires all 59 cities and eight counties within the boundaries of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) to include air quality elements or air quality goals, policies, and implementation strategies in other elements of their general plans. The City of Hanford (City) has opted to provide a separate Air Quality Element of the General Plan as a means to highlight the importance of this issue to City residents and to convey the interconnectedness of land use, transportation, and air quality in a single location in the General Plan. In addition, the City has taken this opportunity to simultaneously address greenhouse gases and climate change issues in the Air Quality Element. Most of the actions to reduce air pollutant emissions also reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Section 65302.1 includes the following four main requirements, which are addressed in this Air Quality Element:

- A report describing local air quality conditions including air quality monitoring data, emission inventories, lists of significant source categories, attainment status and designations, and applicable state and federal air quality plans and transportation plans.
- A summary of local, district, state, and federal programs, and regulations that may improve air quality in the city or county.
- A comprehensive set of goals, policies, and objectives that may improve air quality consistent with the strategies listed in the legislation.
- A set of feasible implementation measures designed to carry out those goals, policies, and objectives.

The Air Quality Element Background Report that accompanies the Air Quality Element was prepared to fulfill the requirements listed in the first two bullets. The Background Report provides detail regarding local, air district, state, and federal programs. Air quality goals,

policies, and objectives and implementation measures are included in this Air Quality Element. The Background Report also contains information regarding greenhouse gas emissions along with the regulations and programs that reduce these emissions.

Reducing Criteria Pollutant and Hazardous Emissions

The Air Quality Element fulfills a number of objectives that are very important to the City of Hanford, but the most important is to ensure that growth occurs in ways that protect and enhance the health of its residents. A second objective is to comply with state regulations requiring air quality elements. A third objective is to ensure that this air quality strategy promotes a land use pattern and transportation system that provides a healthy living environment and increased opportunities for residents to engage in lifestyle changes that are beneficial to air quality. Finally, the Air Quality Element demonstrates the City of Hanford's commitment to clean air.

Greenhouse Gases/Climate Change

The State of California is leading the country in efforts to reduce greenhouse gases and the impacts on the global climate. The California legislature has passed and the Governor has signed the landmark greenhouse gas and climate change legislation, Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), commonly known as the "California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006," that will have substantial impacts on the City of Hanford. In addition, the California Attorney General has initiated legal action against local governments for not addressing greenhouse gas and climate change issues in California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents prepared for General Plan updates and development projects. The Air Quality Element provides a focal point for the City of Hanford's General Plan efforts to reduce greenhouse gases and climate change impacts.

Under the current AB 32 "business as usual" scenario developed by the California Air Resources Board (ARB), statewide greenhouse gas emissions are increasing at a rate of approximately 1 percent per year as noted below. The following estimates represent the average statewide reductions needed from all emission sources (including all existing sources) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions back to 1990 levels.

- 1990: 427 Million Metric Tons of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (MMTCO₂e)
- 2008: 495 MMTCO₂e (an average 14 percent statewide reduction needed to achieve 1990 base)
- 2020: 596 MMTCO₂e "Business As Usual" (an overall 29 percent reduction needed to achieve 1990 base)

Senate Bill 375 was signed in September 2008 and establishes a process to develop regional targets for reducing projected year 2020 greenhouse gas emissions from passenger vehicles and light-duty trucks back to 1990 levels.

The City of Hanford community greenhouse gas emissions baseline estimate for 2007 and a business as usual emissions forecast for 2020 are as follows:

- 2007: 513,579 metric tons of CO₂e per year
- 2020: 703,876 metric tons of CO₂e per year
- A 29-percent reduction of the 2020 business as usual inventory amounts to a reduction of 204,124 metric tons per year of CO₂e.

San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Process

Blueprint Planning Principles

1. Create a range of housing opportunities & choices.
2. Create walkable neighborhoods.
3. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration.
4. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
5. Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective.
6. Mix land uses.
7. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas.
8. Provide a variety of transportation choices.
9. Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities.
10. Take advantage of compact building design.
11. Enhance the economic vitality of the region.
12. Support actions that encourage environmental resource management.

The City of Hanford is a partner in the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint (Blueprint) process and the Kings County Blueprint Growth Scenario efforts led by the Kings County Association of Governments (KCAG). The Blueprint process is a regional, multi-year effort to develop a preferred growth scenario and planning principles to guide development through the year 2050. KCAG held a series of public workshops with elected and appointed officials, and it hosted numerous public participation venues. The KCAG transportation planners in conjunction with the Cities and County Professional Planners Group prepared two items: the Blueprint Planning Principles and the 2050 Kings County Preferred Growth Scenario. The Planning Principles listed below are general policy guiding statements that establish direction to the Cities and County on preferences for guiding growth to 2050.

The City of Hanford supports the Blueprint Planning Principles, and the Air Quality Element provides a step toward implementing the principles on the ground.

1.2 - Consistency with Other General Plan Elements

The Air Quality Element was reviewed for consistency with the existing General Plan Elements that were adopted by the City in 2002. The review found that the Air Quality Element is consistent with all other elements of the General Plan. The Air Quality Element most closely interacts with the Land Use, Circulation, Open Space, Conservation & Recreation, and Housing Elements. An analysis of relationship of the goals, objectives, and policies of these elements is included in Appendix A of this document. The Housing Element is consistent, since it demonstrates that sufficient housing is planned to accommodate the City's projected needs and avoids a jobs/housing imbalance that would result in excessive emissions from long-distance commuting.

General Plan Integration

The Air Quality Element provides a bridge that interconnects with other General Plan Elements. This connection is mandated by California Government Code 65300.5, which states, “. . . in construing the provisions of this article, the Legislature intends that the general plan and elements and parts thereof comprise an integrated, internally consistent and compatible statement of policies for the adopting agency.” Air quality is impacted by many aspects of our built environment and life style choices we make. The impacts and interrelationships are described as the land use, transportation, air quality connection. Increasingly, energy use and climate change are also considered part of this connection.

This connection is based on the idea that the design, density, and pattern of land uses impacts the transportation system that serves those land uses, and the transportation system in turn impacts the amount people drive and options for using less polluting modes of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and transit. The policies of the Land Use Element with connections to air quality are those supporting compact development, direct pedestrian connections, complete sidewalks, safe and comfortable routes connecting frequently accessed destinations with residences, and eliminating barriers to walking and bicycling. The Circulation Element lays out the goals, objectives, and policies for developing the transportation system in a way that is consistent with and accommodates the growth planned in the Land Use Element. Circulation Element policies that promote the development of a multi-modal transportation system and prevent excessive traffic congestion provide air quality benefits.

Some specific concepts encouraged by the General Plan and Air Quality Element include:

- Compact development
- Transit and pedestrian oriented and traditional neighborhood design
- Mixed-use development
- Preventing land use conflicts

1.3 - Scope and Organization

The Air Quality Element provides a comprehensive set of goals, objectives, policies, and implementation programs intended to meet the requirements of Assembly Bill 170 for Air Quality Elements and state laws pertaining to greenhouse gases. Section 2 of the Air Quality Element provides summary-level background information on the regulatory setting, existing air quality, health effects, and greenhouse gas/global climate change issues. A detailed Air Quality Background Report is incorporated by reference as a companion document to the Air Quality Element. The Air Quality Background Report provides air quality attainment status, ambient air quality data, emission inventories for the City of Hanford and the San Joaquin Valley for all pollutants of concern, and other information of importance for understanding the problems facing the City and the rest of the air basin. Section 3 provides air quality goals, policies, and objectives. Section 4 provides Implementation Monitoring and Tracking Programs for the new air quality goals, objectives, policies, and programs in Section 3. A list of goals, objectives, and policies of the other General Plan elements that have air quality benefits along with a brief explanation of the source of the air quality benefit are provided as Appendix A.