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Natural and Cultural Resources

The Folsom of today has been shaped by its relationship with and development of its natural and cultural resources. The preservation and protection of these resources is vital to the continued benefit and enjoyment of current and future residents. This Element contains goals and policies that seek to balance growth with the conservation and enhancement of the area's natural and cultural resources.

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Natural Resource Conservation

Conservation and protection of natural resources are integral to not only a healthy ecosystem, but also to a healthy human population. Folsom is located in eastern Sacramento County within the transitional zone between the Sacramento Valley and northern Sierra Nevada foothills. Folsom contains grasslands, oak woodlands, rivers/creeks/open water, riparian, and wetlands habitats. Policies in this section guide the location, design, and quality of development to protect biological resources such as open space corridors and wildlife habitat.

Goal NCR 1.1

Protect and enhance Folsom's natural resources for current and future residents.

NCR 1.1.1 Habitat Preservation

Support State and Federal policies for preservation and enhancement of riparian and wetland habitats by incorporating, as applicable, standards published by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service into site-specific development proposals.

RDR

NCR 1.1.2 Preserve Natural Resources

Require that a qualified biologist conduct a vegetative/wildlife field survey and analysis prior to consideration of development applications for projects located in sensitive habitat areas and potential habitats for sensitive wildlife and floral species. **RDR**

NCR 1.1.3 Wetland Preservation

Require developers to prepare a wetland mitigation and monitoring plan that describes the habitats present within the proposed project site and establishes a plan for the long-term monitoring and mitigation of sensitive habitats. **RDR**



NCR 1.1.4 Native and Drought Tolerant Vegetation

Encourage new developments to plant native vegetation, including that which is important to Native American lifeways and values, and drought tolerant species and prohibit the use of invasive plants. **RDR**

NCR 1.1.5 New Open Space

Continue to acquire strategically-located open space areas for passive and active recreational uses when such parcels of open space value become available and feasible funding sources are identified to sustain the ongoing maintenance expenses. **SO**

NCR 1.1.6 Consolidate Parcels

Encourage landowners to consolidate identified habitats, open space, and park lands between separately-owned development projects and individually-owned properties, when feasible. **MPSP**

NCR 1.1.7 Fugitive Light

Encourage measures to limit fugitive light from outdoor sources, including street lighting. **RDR**

NCR 1.1.8 Planting in New Development

Require the planting of street trees, parking lot canopy trees, screening trees, and other amenity trees and landscaping in all new development, consistent with City landscaping development guidelines, to minimize the heat island effect. Planting strips must be large enough to accommodate a large tree canopy and allow for healthy root growth. **RDR**

NCR 1.1.9 Public Awareness

Encourage and support development projects and programs that enhance public appreciation and awareness of the natural environment. **PI**

Scenic Resources

Scenic resources contribute to a sense of identity, and can provide positive psychological benefits as well as economic value from tourism. Folsom has many natural assets, and its views of the foothills, lakes, and river are enjoyed by every Folsom resident. Buildings and other man-made structures can complement the scenic views when sensitively designed or obstruct them when poorly designed. Policies in this section ensure that Folsom remains a community with beautiful views.

Goal NCR 2.1

Allow residents to enjoy views of the hills, lakes, river, and habitats that make Folsom such a beautiful place to live.

NCR 2.1.1 Maintain Scenic Corridors

The City shall protect views along identified scenic corridors.

MPSP

NCR 2.1.2 Complementary Development

Through the planned development permit process, require new development to be located and designed to visually complement the natural environment along Folsom Lake, the American River, nearby hillsides, and major creek corridors such as Humbug, Willow, Alder, and Hinkle. **RDR**

NCR 2.1.3 Light Pollution Reduction

The City shall minimize obtrusive light by limiting outdoor lighting that is misdirected, excessive, or unnecessary, and requiring light for development to be directed downward to minimize overspill and glare onto adjacent properties and reduce vertical glare. **RDR**



Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The purpose of the goals and policies in this section is to provide clean air for the community as well as reduce the amount of greenhouse gases (GHG) emitted and reduce Folsom's impact on the natural environment. Clean air improves the health of Folsom residents and makes the city a more pleasant place to live. The State and Federal governments regulate GHG emissions, and Folsom must meet those standards.

Goal NCR 3.1

Improve the air quality in Folsom by meeting State and Federal standards, minimizing public exposure to hazardous air pollutants, reducing particulate matter in the atmosphere, and minimizing odors.

NCR 3.1.1 Regional Cooperation

Coordinate with surrounding jurisdictions, the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD), the California Air Resources Board (ARB), CALTRANS, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency toward the development of a consistent and effective approach to the regional air pollution problem. **IGC**

NCR 3.1.2 Coordinate on Review of Air Quality Impacts

Coordinate with ARB and SMAQMD to use consistent and accurate procedures in the review of projects which may have air quality impacts. Comments on the analysis shall be solicited from SMAQMD and ARB. **IGC RDR**

NCR 3.1.3 Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled

Encourage efforts to reduce the amount of vehicle miles traveled (VMT). These efforts could include encouraging mixed-use development promoting a jobs/housing balance, and encouraging alternative transportation such as walking, cycling, and public transit. **RDR MPSP**

NCR 3.1.4 Maintain Ambient Air Quality Standards

Work with the California Air Resources Board (ARB) and the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District

(SMAQMD) to meet State and National ambient air quality standards in order to protect residents, regardless of age, culture, ethnicity, gender, race, socioeconomic status, or geographic location from the health effects of air pollution.

IGC

NCR 3.1.5 Emission Reduction Threshold for New Development

Require all new development projects that exceed SMAQMD’s thresholds of significance to incorporate design, construction material, and/or other operational features that will result in a minimum of 15 percent reduction in emissions when compared to an “unmitigated baseline” project. **RDR**

NCR 3.1.6 Sensitive Uses

Coordinate with SMAQMD in evaluating exposure of sensitive receptors to toxic air contaminants and odors, and impose appropriate conditions on projects to protect public health and safety so as to comply with the requirements of SMAQMD for the exposure of sensitive receptors to toxic air contaminants and odors. **IGC**

Goal NCR 3.2

Improve the sustainability of the community through continued local efforts to reduce GHG emissions.

NCR 3.2.1 Community Greenhouse Gas Reductions

Reduce community GHG emissions by 15 percent below 2005 baseline levels by 2020, and further reduce community emissions by:

- 40 percent below the 2020 target by 2030;
- 51 percent below the 2020 target by 2040, and
- 80 percent below the 2020 target by 2050. **RDR**

NCR 3.2.2 Municipal Greenhouse Gas Reductions

Reduce municipal GHG emissions by 15 percent below 2005 baseline levels by 2020, and further reduce municipal emissions by:

- 40 percent below the 2020 target by 2030;
- 51 percent below the 2020 target by 2040, and
- 80 percent below the 2020 target by 2050 **SO**



NCR 3.2.3 Greenhouse Gas Reduction in New Development 

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from new development by encouraging development that lowers vehicle miles traveled (VMT), and discouraging auto-dependent sprawl and dependence on the private automobile; promoting development that is compact, mixed-use, pedestrian friendly, and transit oriented; promoting energy-efficient building design and site planning; improving the jobs/housing ratio; and other methods of reducing emissions while maintaining the balance of housing types Folsom is known for. **RDR**

NCR 3.2.4 Additional GHG Emission Programs

Continue to evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of new policies, programs, and regulations that contribute to achieving the City's long-term GHG emissions reduction goals (see Policies NCR 3.2.1 and 3.2.2). **MPSP**

NCR 3.2.5 Climate Change Assessment and Monitoring

Continue to assess and monitor performance of GHG emissions reduction efforts for 2020, 2030, and beyond, including progress toward meeting longer-term GHG emissions reduction goals for 2035 and 2050 by reporting on the City's progress annually, updating the GHG inventory and forecasts at least every five years, and preparing updates to the GHG Strategy in the General Plan, as appropriate; as well as assess and monitor the effects of climate change and associated levels of risk in order to plan a community that can adapt to changing climate conditions and be resilient to negative changes and impacts. **MPSP**

NCR 3.2.6 Coordination with SMAQMD

Coordinate with SMAQMD to ensure projects incorporate feasible mitigation measures to reduce GHG emissions and air pollution from both construction and operations, if not already provided for through project design. **IGC**

NCR 3.2.7 Preference for Reduced-Emission Equipment 

Require contractors to use reduced-emission equipment for City construction projects and contracts for services. **SO**

NCR 3.2.8 GHG Analysis Streamlining for Projects Consistent with the General Plan

Projects subject to environmental review under CEQA may be eligible for tiering and streamlining the analysis of GHG emissions, provided they are consistent with the GHG reduction measures included in the General Plan and EIR. The City may review such projects to determine whether the following criteria are met:

- Proposed project is consistent with the General Plan land use designation for the project site;
- Proposed project incorporates all applicable GHG reduction measures (documented in the Climate Change Technical Appendix to the General Plan EIR) as enforceable mitigation measures in the CEQA document prepared for the project; and,
- Proposed project clearly demonstrates the method, timing and process for which the project will comply with applicable GHG reduction measures and/or conditions of approval, (e.g., using a CAP/GHG reduction measures consistency checklist, mitigation monitoring and reporting plan, or other mechanism for monitoring and enforcement as appropriate).

Appendix A describes how the General Plan serves as a Qualified Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Strategy and what GHG reduction measures must be incorporated into a project to be eligible for tiering and streamlining the analysis of GHG emissions.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Folsom borders the American River and is within the American River watershed. North of Highway 50 storm drains collect and convey urbanized runoff into Willow Creek, Humbug Creek, Hinkle Creek, Gold Creek, and Alder Creek, all of which drain into the Lower American River. Alder Creek drains much of Folsom south of Highway 50. The creeks, streams, riparian habitats, and wetlands perform many functions. They funnel urban runoff to the American River, provide habitat for a variety of flora and fauna, and help improve the water quality of urban runoff. Policies in this section protect water quality in these waterways.

Goal NCR 4.1
 Preserve and protect water quality in the city’s natural water bodies, drainage systems, and groundwater basin.



NCR 4.1.1 Water Quality

Ensure the quality of drinking water meets City, State, and Federal standards. **RDR**

NCR 4.1.2 Community Education

Consistent with requirements of stormwater quality permits, educate community members on the importance of water quality and the role streams and watersheds play in ensuring water quality. **PI**

NCR 4.1.3 Protection

Ensure the protection of riparian corridors, buffer zones, wetlands, and undeveloped open space areas to help protect water quality. **RDR**

NCR 4.1.4 Creek Clean-Up

Sponsor a citywide volunteer creek clean-up day during “Creek Week.”

NCR 4.1.5 New Development

Require new development to protect natural drainage systems through site design, runoff reduction measures, and on-site water treatment (e.g., bioswales). **RDR**

NCR 4.1.6 Low-Impact Development

Require new development to protect the quality of water resources and natural drainage systems through site design, source controls, runoff reduction measures, best management practices (BMPs), and Low-Impact Development (LID). **RDR**

Cultural Resources

The policies in this section strive to preserve and protect Folsom’s historic character as well as Folsom’s archeological resources. Folsom has many cultural resources, most notably Historic Folsom, with its Gold Rush-era buildings lining Sutter Street. Folsom Prison, California’s second oldest prison, detained its first prisoner in 1880. Before European settlement the Nisenan people inhabited the Folsom planning area, and evidence of their culture can still be found today.

Goal NCR 5.1

Encourage the preservation, restoration, and maintenance of cultural resources, including buildings and sites, to enrich our sense of place and our appreciation of the city's history.

NCR 5.1.1 Historic Buildings and Sites

Whenever feasible, require historic buildings and sites to be preserved or incorporated into the design of new development. **RDR**

NCR 5.1.2 Cultural Resources Inventory

Maintain an inventory of prehistoric and historic resources, including structures and sites. **MPSP**

NCR 5.1.3 Nominate Additional Cultural Resources

Nominate additional buildings and sites to the City of Folsom Cultural Resources Inventory of locally significant cultural resources.

NCR 5.1.4 Applicable Laws and Regulations

Ensure compliance with City, State, and Federal historic preservation laws, regulations, and codes to protect and assist in the preservation of historic and archeological resources, as listed in the City of Folsom Historic Preservation Master Plan, including the use of the California Historical Building Code as applicable, including, but not limited to, Senate Bill 18, Assembly Bill 52, Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines, and, where applicable, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. **MPSP**

NCR 5.1.5 Funding Sources

Strive to obtain Federal, State, and private funding and incentives for maintaining and rehabilitating historic buildings and sites. **FB**

NCR 5.1.6 Historic District Standards

Maintain and implement design and development standards for the Historic District. **RDR**

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