



# Sustainability Update

The Sustainability Policy and Regulatory Update is a comprehensive update to Santa Cruz County land use and transportation policies and regulations to plan for development that can accommodate projected population and job growth while maintaining and improving the environment, economy, and quality of life for those who live and work here. The project also modernizes the County Code and updates policies and regulations to meet new state laws.

## What's Included?

This project includes four components:

- Amendments to General Plan/Local Coastal Program Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5, 7
- Amendments to County Code Titles 5, 12, 13, 15, 18
- New County Design Guidelines
- Map amendments (changes to land use designations and zoning) on certain parcels

Key topic areas covered by the project include sustainable communities, housing, transportation, agriculture and resource conservation, code modernization, commercial development, community services and environmental justice.



## Project Highlights

- ❖ Focused growth along key corridors and activity centers in urban areas
- ❖ Continued protection of natural resources
- ❖ Layered transportation network
- ❖ Attainable housing policies and regulations
- ❖ New Residential Flex and Workplace Flex zone districts
- ❖ Modernized use and development permit structure
- ❖ Modernized land uses allowed on agricultural properties with preservation of agricultural land
- ❖ Spotlight on equity and environmental justice

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Visit the Sustainability Update website to learn more about the project and review draft documents: [www.sccoplanning.com/SustainabilityUpdate](http://www.sccoplanning.com/SustainabilityUpdate).

Santa Cruz County Planning Department

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# Sustainable Communities

As envisioned in the Sustainability Update, sustainable communities include attractive, healthy and walkable neighborhoods with housing available to all income levels; a vibrant economy; and transportation choices that enhance the quality of life and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Development is focused within urban areas to protect the environment and open space. The Built Environment Element, County Code, and Santa Cruz County Design Guidelines apply sustainable design principles to all scales of development, from individual buildings and sites to the regional scale.

## Green Buildings + Sustainable Sites

For individual buildings and sites, design policies, guidelines and regulations support “green building” features such as solar energy systems, rainwater harvesting, and recycled and non-toxic building materials to conserve energy, water, and other natural resources and support a healthy indoor and outdoor environment. Sites are designed to preserve trees and natural site features, minimize off-site stormwater runoff, and incorporate native plants in landscapes to support local wildlife. These policies are aligned with the County’s *Climate Action Strategy*.



Bioswale and street trees. Photo: MIG, Inc.



Outdoor seating on lower 41st Ave. Photo: MIG, Inc.

## Complete Neighborhoods

At the neighborhood scale, the “15-minute neighborhood” framework encourages integrated commercial and community land uses within neighborhoods to give residents the choice of walking or bicycling to destinations like grocery stores, schools, workplaces, parks, gyms, and libraries. Land use planning for health and wellness is especially critical given recent trends of increased obesity and decreased access to healthy food. New planning tools, including more flexible development standards, support compact housing choices that foster walkable neighborhoods and

community connections. Accessible, pedestrian-oriented development along multimodal corridors and main streets provide active ground floor uses and public gathering places. Neighborhood character is enhanced with development that integrates street trees and landscapes, public art, and connections to local history.





# Sustainable Communities

## Community Growth Framework

At the community scale, the County continues to focus growth in urbanized areas within the Urban and Rural Services Lines. Accommodating development within these lines preserves agricultural land and open space to sustain the County's agriculture, timber, and tourism economic bases, conserve natural resources, and restrict growth in areas with high disaster risk and/or limited infrastructure. Higher-intensity residential and commercial development is planned around multimodal corridors, high-quality transit stops, and centers of community activity. Population and job growth are coordinated with development of transportation infrastructure.

## Regional Coordination

At the regional scale, the County is coordinating long-range planning and review of major development projects with cities, neighboring counties, and regional and state agencies. Recognizing the interrelationship between land use and transportation, the County is working with the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission and adjoining communities on transportation projects that increase transportation options and support healthy communities, including the 32-mile Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail. Additionally, coordination with special districts ensures that sufficient utility infrastructure and public facilities are available for areas where the County plans to accommodate growth.

## Highlights

- ❖ New Santa Cruz County Design Guidelines provide design guidance to ensure neighborhood compatibility, and encourage public gathering places, quality open space, and the inclusion of sustainable design features such as rainwater cisterns and solar energy systems
- ❖ New "Residential Flex" zone district supporting compact residential development along key corridors along with updated guidance to facilitate mixed-use projects and support "15-minute neighborhoods"
- ❖ Regulations protecting natural resources are maintained, honoring our community's strong connection to nature and treasured access to outdoor recreation and open space
- ❖ New requirement in Chapter 13.11 to include trees in all residential developments
- ❖ Layered network approach to roadways supports alternative modes of transportation

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Visit the Sustainability Update website to learn more about this project and review draft documents at [www.sccoplanning.com/SustainabilityUpdate](http://www.sccoplanning.com/SustainabilityUpdate). The following documents will address sustainability:

*Draft General Plan:*

- Chapter 2, Built Environment Element, Goal 1: Home Occupations
- Chapter 2, Built Environment Element, Goal 4: Community Character + Design

*Draft County Code:*

- Design Standards and Guidelines (13.11.070–13.11.076)

*Draft Santa Cruz County Design Guidelines:*

- Residential Design Guidelines
- Commercial and Mixed-Use Design Guidelines

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## Housing Diversity to Meet Community Needs

The County's housing needs are changing as a result of several interconnected trends: seniors are making up a larger percentage of the population as the Baby Boomer generation ages; more professionals are choosing to move to Santa Cruz and commute over the hill to Silicon Valley or work remotely; and the region has not built enough housing to accommodate demand, leading to a housing supply crisis. Production of low- and moderate-income housing options has particularly lagged. As housing costs continue to rise, many residents are at risk of being priced-out of living in Santa Cruz County.

Detached single-family homes comprise two-thirds of the County's existing housing units. Unfortunately, the large housing unit size and expensive price tag often makes single-family housing poorly suited to meet the needs of singles, students, young families, seniors, and others seeking smaller, low or moderate-income housing options.

The Sustainability Update includes land use policies and code updates to encourage development of housing that is attainable to a wide range of residents. Greater housing diversity in Santa Cruz County offers an opportunity to support a more diverse community, which in turn will not only help seniors age in place but will help employers attract and retain workers as more people can afford to both live and work within the County.



Top photo: <https://www.flickr.com/>  
 Middle photo: <https://www.pikrepo.com/>  
 Bottom photo: <https://pansykemprealty.com/>  
 Accessed June 12, 2020.

## Context-Appropriate Housing Development

The County is planning for housing development in locations and at densities that are appropriate for our community. Existing and proposed residential land use designations and zone districts ensure that density is appropriate for the level of infrastructure and services available. In rural areas, lower density development will be maintained based on resource and infrastructure constraints. Within the County's urban and rural services lines, the Sustainability Update includes zone districts with densities ranging from 1 to 45 units per acre, with an additional density bonus available to projects that incorporate affordable housing units. The highest density is proposed for a new "Residential Flex" zone district, which is intended for compact housing near transit stops, multimodal corridors, and centers for employment, education, shopping, and services. All development will be subject to standards such as building setbacks from property lines, building height, floor area, open space, and parking.

## Infill Housing Options and the “Missing Middle”

The Sustainability Update promotes housing types such as accessory dwelling units (ADUs), small lot single family homes, dwelling groups, duplex/triplex/quadplexes, townhomes, and small apartment buildings, all of which can work well as “infill” development (new development within existing developed neighborhoods). These housing types are referred to as the “missing middle” because they have densities between those of single-family homes and apartment buildings. Infill development in single family neighborhoods adds population density to support a wider range of neighborhood businesses. Design guidelines will ensure that infill development is proportional in scale and size to the surrounding neighborhood.



ADU over a garage provides infill development in an existing neighborhood. Photo: <https://accessorydwellings.org/what-adus-are-and-why-people-build-them/>. Accessed June 12,

## Highlights

- ❖ Addition of new General Plan policies to encourage attainable housing for residents of all income levels
- ❖ New “Residential Flex” zone district for compact housing near key corridors and activity centers
- ❖ Revised development standards for existing residential zones to encourage infill development.
- ❖ New development standards for mixed use residential/commercial development
- ❖ Updates to allowed uses and permit requirements in residential zones to align with modern land uses, state laws, and new permit framework.
- ❖ Simplified calculations for floor-area ratio (FAR). FAR is the ratio of building floor area to lot area.
- ❖ New design guidelines focusing on creation of high-quality housing within the context of transportation corridors and existing neighborhoods.



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Visit the Sustainability Update website to learn more about this project and review draft documents at [www.sccoplanning.com/SustainabilityUpdate](http://www.sccoplanning.com/SustainabilityUpdate). The following documents will address housing development:

*Draft General Plan:*

- Chapter 2, Built Environment Element Goal 2: Residential Land Use
- Chapter 2, Built Environment Element Goal 4: Community Character + Design

*Draft County Code:*

- Residential Districts (13.10.331 et seq)
- Accessory, temporary, secondary uses (13.10.611 et seq)
- Residential Special Use Regulations (13.10.681 et seq)
- Design Standards and Guidelines (13.11)
- Parking and Circulation (13.16)

*Draft Santa Cruz County Design Guidelines: Chapter 3: Multifamily Residential, Chapter 5: Mixed-Use*



# Commercial Development

The Sustainability Update includes commercial and industrial land use policies recognizing the evolving workplace, shopping, and service needs of residents, businesses, and visitors. These policies are closely aligned with the County's [Economic Vitality Strategy](#).

## Jobs/Housing Balance

According to the U.S. Census, twice as many workers commute out of the County as commute in, and commute times are increasing. Higher-income residents tend to work over the hill, and there are few job opportunities within the County for these residents. On the flip side, workers in existing lower-wage jobs in Santa Cruz County are finding it more and more difficult to afford to live here. To improve the jobs/housing balance, the County is planning to accommodate strategic job growth in industries such as health care and technology, while simultaneously enabling more housing options for workers in existing industries such as agriculture and tourism.



Soquel Village. Photo: <https://localwiki.org/santacruz/Soquel>. Accessed June 12, 2020.

## Location, Location, Location

The Sustainability Update recognizes that retail, restaurants, and other consumer commercial land uses are appropriate in towns and villages, along commercial corridors and in centers of community activity. Modern office growth is encouraged along the Soquel Drive corridor, coordinated with high-quality transit, pedestrian and bike amenities, and complimentary land uses. Design guidelines will provide for attractive and engaging commercial streetscapes. The Sustainability Update plans for large service commercial and industrial land uses to be located away from activity centers, along truck routes.

## Mixed-Use Development + Flexible Workplaces

Traditional zoning separates land uses such as residential, office, shopping, manufacturing, and does not allow for more than one land use per property. Separation of land uses is sometimes necessary for health and safety. However, mixed land uses can provide many benefits, such as efficient design, active streetscapes, economic viability, and housing diversity. There is an opportunity to redevelop and rebrand shopping centers as mixed residential and commercial community activity centers, especially since future retail growth is limited by the rise of e-commerce. Also, the proposed “Workplace Flex” Zone District will bridge the gap between traditional office and light industrial land use, and is characterized by dynamic employment centers with a mixture of office, commercial, manufacturing, and research uses, as well as ancillary retail and services. In addition, medical mixed-use policies will provide for modern medical buildings with complimentary land uses.





# Commercial Development



Multi-use Santa Cruz Sash Mill. Photo: Santa Cruz County staff.

Small businesses are encouraged to grow in incubators, coworking spaces, and satellite offices. Broadband development is planned to accommodate traditional office growth as well as telecommuting. Home-based businesses that are compatible with residential neighborhoods serve to provide economic stability for property owners while adding to neighborhood land use diversity.

## Tourism + Visitor Accommodation

New hotels, motels, and other lodging types are needed to match visitor demand and are encouraged to locate in centers of commercial activity to generate “multiplier effect” benefits as overnight visitors patronize local businesses. Temporary events and new permanent amenities can serve to highlight Santa Cruz County as a year-round tourist destination.

## Highlights

- ❖ Removal of parcel-specific commercial policies from the General Plan, and addition of new policies to encourage activity centers for employment, medical services, community gathering, and shopping and entertainment.
- ❖ New “Workplace Flex” Zone District that accommodates a variety of office, service commercial and light industrial land uses, as well as complementary consumer commercial land uses.
- ❖ Updates to allowed uses, development standards, and permit requirements in commercial and industrial zones to align with modern land uses, state laws, and a new permit framework.
- ❖ Introduction of maximum floor area ratios (FAR) for commercial, visitor, office and industrial land use designations. FAR is the ratio of building floor area to lot area.
- ❖ New design guidelines focusing on integrated land use and transportation planning along key corridors.



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Visit the Sustainability Update website to learn more about this project and review draft documents at [www.sccoplanning.com/SustainabilityUpdate](http://www.sccoplanning.com/SustainabilityUpdate). The following documents will address commercial development:

*Draft General Plan*

- Chapter 2, Built Environment Element (Objective BE-1.3: Activity Centers, Goal 3: Commercial + Industrial Land Use, Goal 4: Community Character + Design)

*Draft County Code:*

- Zone Districts (Commercial Districts: 13.10.331 et seq; Industrial Districts: 13.10.341 et seq)
- Special Uses (Commercial: 13.10.651 et seq; Visitor Accommodations: 13.10.689 et seq)
- Site Development and Design Review (13.11)
- Parking and Circulation (13.16)

*Draft Santa Cruz County Design Guidelines*

- Chapter 4: Commercial, Chapter 5: Mixed-Use, Chapter 6: Workplace Flex

## A New Approach to Transportation Network Planning

Transportation planning has shifted substantially over the last decade. State legislation and regional policy changes recognize the need to achieve a more balanced, multi-modal transportation system that allows people with varying physical abilities, ages and economic circumstances to access goods and services via transportation modes other than single-occupant vehicle travel.

The Sustainability Update provides a framework for providing a system that recognizes all users by identifying a network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities where people are prioritized at a human scale as well as recognizing the need to maintain streets that move vehicles and transit. This approach provides for all modes but prioritized on specific streets to comprise a “layered network.” In an area where right-of-way is constrained and there are not many opportunities for new facilities, attempting to get the best facilities for all modes on all roadways is practically infeasible. This approach allows for improved facilities for each user type within a network. As an example, a Main Street type would have much larger sidewalks than a Multimodal Corridor.



Source: Sustainable Santa Cruz County Plan

### Layered Network and Street Types

A balanced transportation system is based on the understanding that it is difficult for a single roadway to meet the demands and expectations of all modes simultaneously. A “layered” transportation network envisions streets as systems based on user types.

In this approach, certain user types are prioritized on specific streets. When compiled together the roadway system is then comprised of multiple networks of street types such that different users are traveling using different networks. This layering approach allows for each user type to have a higher quality experience than an approach that results in compromising space for all users by attempting to accommodate everyone within limited space.

## The Land Use -Transportation Nexus

Santa Cruz County experiences severe congestion, particularly in the north-south direction, with long peak periods of travel and high amounts of delay. The direction of commute traffic and level of congestion reflects the jobs-housing imbalance that exists in the County, with jobs focused in cities and affordable housing focused farther south. Our incomplete transportation network also contributes to congestion by



# Transportation

reducing the options for mobility and access to key destinations throughout the County. Transportation issues are inextricably linked to land use as well as historic patterns of insufficient investment in transportation infrastructure. The Sustainability Update reflects this re-orientation toward the land use-transportation connection by tying development character and land use form to the street type.

## Technology will Transform Infrastructure

New technology such as automated vehicles and vehicle-to-infrastructure communications become more commonplace, transportation networks will change permanently in ways that are hard to envision in 2022. However, planners can anticipate that parking needs will change and become more centralized, curb space will be in higher demand, and that our current transportation system will go through a major disruption as we know it. Therefore, the Sustainability Update includes objectives and policies geared towards taking a proactive and adaptable approach to planning for intelligent transportation solutions and new technology.



Source: <https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop17001/ch1.htm>

## Highlights

- ❖ Layered network approach to roadways tied to land use planning
- ❖ Incorporation of community character and streetscape
- ❖ Updated and comprehensive policies on coastal access
- ❖ Inclusion of policies for safety of all modes
- ❖ Recognition of technological innovations including data infrastructure



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Visit the Sustainability Update website to learn more about this project and review draft documents at [www.sccoplanning.com/SustainabilityUpdate](http://www.sccoplanning.com/SustainabilityUpdate). The following documents will address transportation:

*Draft General Plan:*

- Chapter 2, Built Environment Element, Goal 1: Sustainable Development Framework
- Chapter 3, Access and Mobility Element

*Draft County Code:*

- Access, Circulation, and Parking (13.16)

*Draft Santa Cruz County Design Guides: Residential and Mixed-Use Design Guidelines*

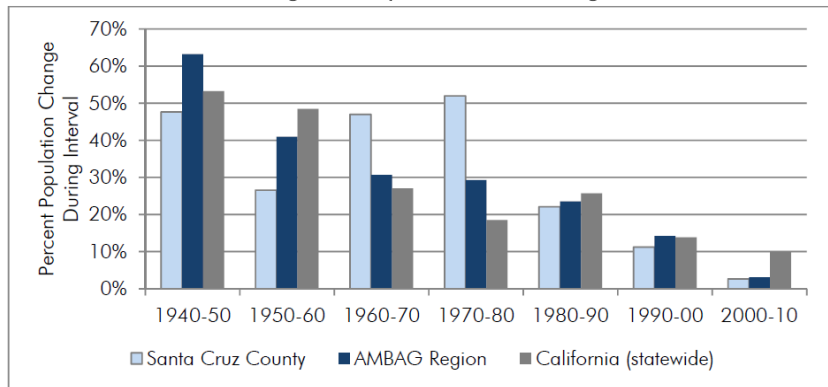


# Community Services

Community services are critical to both high-quality neighborhoods and commercial vitality. Services such as water, sewer, telecommunications, fire, and police must be adequate to serve both existing people and businesses, but also new growth. The County’s estimated 2020 population according to the California Department of Finance (DOF) was 271,233 with about half of those people residing in the unincorporated area. According to the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, the unincorporated County is projected to grow five percent by 2040. The County will continue to focus growth within the Urban and Rural Services Lines in order to ensure the adequate provision of services to communities and to preserve agricultural land and open space.

The Sustainability Update addresses the provision of community facilities and infrastructure to support existing and future populations in a manner that supports existing sustainable growth patterns. Major revisions to community services are detailed below.

Housing and Population in the Region



Source: California Department of Finance

## Highlights

- ❖ Updates to be consistent with the recently completed Parks Strategic Plan
- ❖ New policies to address the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act requirements
- ❖ Updates to telecommunications to address requirements related to broadband access and new technologies.
- ❖ Water Supply and Conservation
- ❖ Updates to ensure consistency with new Environmental Justice law

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Visit the Sustainability Update website to learn more about this project and review draft documents at [www.sccoplanning.com/SustainabilityUpdate](http://www.sccoplanning.com/SustainabilityUpdate). The following documents will address community services:

**Draft General Plan:**

- Chapter 1, Introduction
- Chapter 7, Parks, Recreation, and Public Facilities

**Draft County Code:**

- Parks, Recreation and Open Space Districts: Sections (13.10.351 - 13.10.355)
- Public and Community Facilities District: Sections (13.10.362)

Transportation infrastructure is addressed in the Access + Mobility Element and green infrastructure and light impact design is addressed in the Built Environment Element.





# Environmental Justice

There are seven overarching environmental justice themes: pollution exposure and air quality, public facilities, food access, safe and sanitary homes, physical activity, “civil” or community engagement, and improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities. Environmental justice is woven throughout the Sustainability Update by identifying policies and programs that support and prioritize services to disadvantaged populations.



Source: Sustainable Santa Cruz County Plan

The Sustainability Update also includes mapping of disadvantaged communities, which are defined as population groups that are disproportionately affected by environmental pollution or hazards, have high concentrations of low income, high rates of unemployment, low levels of homeownership, high rent burden, sensitive populations, or low levels of educational attainment (Health and Safety Code [HSC] section 39711). In order to account for the changing characteristics of the community as well as the variety of state-mandated definitions, the County identifies disadvantaged communities as those that are defined as such by HSC section 39711, and by state agencies such as the California Air Resources Board, the California Environmental Protection Agency, and the State Water Resources Agency, or U.S. Census tracts where the majority of the population are low income, poverty, or minority as defined by U.S. Census data or local income surveys.

## Highlights

- ❖ New policies related to food access and community engagement
- ❖ New policies related to access to open space and public infrastructure
- ❖ Identification of policies that support environmental justice throughout the General Plan
- ❖ Mapping of disadvantaged communities

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Draft General Plan:

- Chapter 2, Built Environment Element
- Chapter 3, Access + Mobility
- Chapter 5, Agriculture, Natural Resources, + Conservation
- Chapter 7, Parks, Recreation, and Public Facilities

Environmental Justice goals, objectives, policies and implementation measures in each chapter of the General Plan are noted by the initials “EJ.”

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# Agriculture + Resource Conservation

## Conservation Shapes Our Community

Santa Cruz County is graced with unparalleled scenic beauty, with oak and redwood forests, grasslands and coastal scrub, networks of creeks and streams, and stunning coastlines, all providing outdoor recreation opportunities for County residents and important habitat for rare plant and animal species. Prime and productive agricultural land concentrated along the north coast and in south county supports a thriving agricultural industry and contributes to the open space and bucolic landscapes in rural areas.



Photo: <https://unsplash.com/>

In 1978, forward-thinking citizens of Santa Cruz County passed the Measure J voter initiative, which established the Urban and Rural Services Lines to protect these important resources. For over 40 years, County land use policies have directed development to urbanized areas where services are available, and limited land divisions and development density and regulated land uses allowed outside these areas. Policies consistent with Measure J provided in the Agriculture, Natural Resources + Conservation Element continue to preserve open space to maintain the scenic rural character outside urban areas; protect public safety, cultural resources, and natural habitats, including riparian corridors; preserve agricultural land for agricultural use; and provide for the long-term sustainable management of water, timber, and mineral resources.

## Supporting Agriculture

Since the last major update of the General Plan in 1994, the local agricultural economy has evolved in several significant ways. One trend has been the centralization and consolidation of farming operations. Farmers often lease multiple parcels, and require centralized locations for storage of agricultural equipment and other infrastructure. At the other end of the economic scale, smaller local farms may



Photo: <https://unsplash.com/>

depend on ancillary agri-tourism activities such as farm dinners and community education to ensure that farming remains commercially viable. Local wineries may also rely on on-site events to remain profitable.



# Agriculture + Resource Conservation



Photo: Santa Cruz County

While updating policies and regulations to support modern farming practices, County regulations continue to preserve agricultural land as an essential and irreplaceable resource for future generations by maintaining policies limiting land divisions and conversions of agricultural land and requiring buffers on land adjacent to commercial agricultural parcels. The Sustainability Update also provides new guidance for siting development to protect agricultural land and minimize disturbance to agricultural soils and local agricultural operations.

## Highlights

- ❖ Continue to protect cultural resources; protect and restore natural resources including sensitive habitats and scenic areas; provide for the long-term sustainable management and conservation of water, timber, and mineral resources; and preserve open space in rural and urban areas.
- ❖ Allow a broader range of agricultural support uses on agricultural land such as agricultural research and development facilities and agricultural services, while requiring discretionary review and ensuring such uses on commercial agricultural land support the primary agricultural use.
- ❖ Support local wineries and breweries by allowing expanded on-site marketing events, with standards to protect agricultural land and minimize impacts to adjacent properties.
- ❖ Allow consolidated storage of farm equipment to support farming operations on multiple parcels. This supports farms located on multiple leased properties that are not necessarily adjacent.
- ❖ Facilitate agritourism events such as farm stays and dinners, and on-farm education and sales. The additional income provided by agritourism can be essential to the success of smaller local farms.

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Visit the Sustainability Update website to learn more about this project and review draft documents at [www.sccoplanning.com/SustainabilityUpdate](http://www.sccoplanning.com/SustainabilityUpdate). The following documents will address agriculture and resource conservation:

Draft General Plan:

- Chapter 5, Agriculture, Natural Resources + Conservation

Draft County Code:

- Environmental and Resource Protection (Title 16)
- Agricultural Districts (13.10.312- 13.10.315)
- Agricultural Uses (13.10.631-13.10.639)



# Code Modernization

The intent of Code Modernization is to update land use regulations in the Santa Cruz County Code to function more effectively. Clarifying permit and other code requirements will provide a better experience for applicants and reduce uncertainty in the application process. From the community perspective, updating land use regulations and uses allowed within zone districts will support community investment and reduce unpermitted construction. While modernizing land use regulations, the Sustainability Update continues to maintain regulations protecting the environment and neighborhood quality.

## Community Context

The Santa Cruz County Code was adopted in the 1950s and has been amended frequently. Land use regulations addressing zoning, housing, and permit requirements have become increasingly complex. After a series of community forums, in 2014 and 2015 Planning Staff presented a proposal to the Board of Supervisors to modernize land use regulations in the County Code, focusing on community priorities: Clarify permit requirements and reduce processing time and uncertainty, modernize agricultural regulations, update uses allowed in zone districts, and address home-based businesses. Code Modernization is now part of the Sustainability update to allow for additional community input and comprehensive environmental review.



*Photo: Santa Cruz County staff*



*Photo: Santa Cruz County staff*

## What is Code Modernization?

Code Modernization includes the following key updates to land use regulations in Chapter 13.10 (Zoning Regulations) of the County Code:

- Update regulations for agricultural uses to support local commercial agriculture, breweries, and wineries, while preserving agricultural land (see the “Agriculture and Resource Conservation” fact sheet.)
- Modernize the list of uses allowed in zone districts, such as allowing research and development in commercial districts, and provide permit reviews appropriate for each use.
- Clarify regulations for home-based business in residential areas, including home occupations, and weddings and community events.







# Code Modernization

- Update development standards for the Multi-family (RM) zone district and permit requirements for residential accessory structures (also see the “Housing” Fact Sheet.)

Permit requirements for land use projects provided in Chapter 18.10, Permit and Approval Procedures, are also updated to be clearer and to provide appropriate permit reviews:

- Introduce “Use Permits” for new uses, such as establishing a new restaurant in an existing building, and “Site Development Permits” for physical site development, such as the construction of a new building. This replaces the current “review levels” approach and will allow the review process to match the project scope more closely.
- Standard terms describing the permit review processes will replace the current “review levels.” For example, a “Conditional Use Permit” describes a use permit requiring public notice and a public hearing and would replace the current “Level 5 approval” term.
- Clarify which permits are subject to environmental review (“discretionary” vs. “ministerial”).

## Highlights

- ❖ Change permit Level I – VII framework to “use permit” and “development permit” framework
- ❖ Remove local solar access requirements (Chapter 12.28, Solar Access Protection) to ensure consistency with state law.
- ❖ Move information regarding appeal of Coastal Permits from Zoning Regulations (Chapter 13.10) to Chapter 13.20 (Coastal Zone Regulations)
- ❖ Consolidate procedural requirements, including requirements for amending the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map, General Plan, and Local Coastal Program, in Title 18, Procedures.
- ❖ Update requirements for Planned Unit Developments and provide as new Chapter in Title 18.
- ❖ Consolidate parking requirements in new County Code Chapter 13.16



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*Draft County Code:*

- *Building Regulations (Title 12)*
- *Zoning Regulations (Title 13, Chapter 13.10)*
- *Site, Architectural and Landscape Design Review (Title 13, Chapter 13.11)*
- *Environmental and Resource Protection (Title 16)*
- *Procedures (Title 18)*

