



Siskiyou County General Plan Update

Vision and Guiding Principles

PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT

September 2024

A general plan's vision and guiding principles provide direction and introduce key themes. All the goals, policies, and implementation programs must be consistent with the vision and guiding principles.

- **What is a Vision?** A vision statement is an aspirational description of what the community would like to be in the future. It is a summary of high-level goals to be achieved by the updated General Plan. The vision provides the foundation for more specific goals, policies, and programs developed during the update process. The visioning process is valuable in identifying issues important to the community and in providing early direction for alternatives development and analysis.
- **What are Guiding Principles?** At the heart of the General Plan are "Guiding Principles" that express the key values and aspirations for Siskiyou County's future and act as guideposts for the goals, policies, and implementation measures contained within the General Plan. These principles expand on the main ideas contained in the vision statement so that important concepts are given more weight. Guiding principles are purposefully broadly stated to guide the County throughout development of the updated General Plan.

The following draft vision statements and guiding principles were developed by the Project Team in direct response to the community feedback received in June and July 2024. Given the diverse range of priorities expressed by the community, distilling these aspirations into a single statement and set of principles is challenging. Therefore, the Project Team has included three options as a starting point for further discussion and refinement.

Countywide Vision Options

Option 1:

Siskiyou County is a thriving, independent community where people can enjoy the region's rural charm, historic character, and natural open spaces. It is a place that prioritizes self-sufficiency and the long-term economic success of its residents and small businesses. Locals and tourists alike have ample access to recreational opportunities, natural resources, and the clean air and water that ensure a healthy life for those who call Siskiyou County their home. The community protects itself from wildfires and other natural hazards through stewardship of the natural environment.

Option 2:

Siskiyou County, nestled amongst the mountains, rivers, and abundant open spaces of the region, is a place where people can live in a rural setting that matches their values and way of life. The county's support for its many small businesses and close-knit, active communities create a region where people can thrive and maintain self-sufficiency. Natural resources provide a livelihood for countless individuals and are enjoyed by visitors and locals alike.

Option 3:

Siskiyou County is a one-of-a-kind region with an independent spirit and active community. Natural resources and open spaces are intertwined with every aspect of local life and the economy, from agricultural opportunities to natural resource extraction and the promotion of tourism. Residents lead a healthy and safe lifestyle in the county's many small towns that continue to preserve their unique rural and historic heritage.

Guiding Principles

1. Hazards, Safety, and Wildfire Preparedness

Ensure hazard preparedness to maintain safe and healthy communities. Protect communities from wildfire risk and other climate hazards through forest management, reducing wildfire risk, coordinating with State and Federal agencies, and other climate adaptation strategies. Preserve the county's clean air, soil, and water for residents through the stewardship of natural resources and mitigation of risks.

2. Natural Resources and Scenery

Manage and responsibly maintain the county's natural resources and open spaces to ensure continued use for all groups in the county that depend on these spaces for their livelihood and health. Preserve public access to the region's one-of-a-kind, diverse, natural beauty and recreational opportunities. Promote sustainable water resource management for future generations of farmers and ranchers.

3. Economic Development

Incentivize economic development and expand employment opportunities across a diversity of employment bases. Boost local tourism through the promotion of the county's natural resources, unique history, and cultural heritage. Support sustainable natural resource economies, including farming, ranching, forestry and other industries as a cornerstone of the local economy. Encourage locally owned businesses as a way to foster community independence and promote the small-town feel and unique, historic charm of the county's many communities.

4. Sense of Community and Unique Lifestyle

Prioritize the preservation of the remote, rural, uncrowded lifestyle offered in Siskiyou County. Promote community involvement through community events and collaboration with local tribes. Recognize the unique sense of place and values known throughout the county, including the independent, free spirit of local residents. Draw from residents' self-sufficient character as an asset for creating thriving, active communities.

5. Land Use, Housing, and Infrastructure

Incentivize the development of housing near employment centers to ensure housing opportunities for all county residents, regardless of age or income. Promote intentional development that ensures community stability into the County's future while avoiding overdevelopment in rural areas. Invest in high quality infrastructure, including the county's transportation network and other services that meet the needs of residents and local businesses. Expand educational opportunities and ensure adequate health care facilities to provide care for a healthy community.