



# Governor's Office of Planning and Research General Plan Guidelines



As the State of California's primary document explaining the legal requirements of a general plan, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) *General Plan Guidelines* has provided guidance on the development of general plans for almost 40 years. Throughout this time, planning law has become more complex, communities have evolved, technology has improved, and the challenges of planning for future growth and development have persisted. For the 2013 update to the *General Plan Guidelines (GPG 2013)*, OPR is evaluating the best ways to provide policy guidance in a user-friendly, online format and will explore the feasibility of creating templates to reduce the time and cost of updating a general plan. We hope that *GPG 2013* will be a resource for decision-makers, planners, and the public for the development and implementation of local general plans.

As California approaches 50 million residents, information-based planning policies will be crucial to enhance the quality of life in existing and future neighborhoods. *GPG 2013* will provide guidance on general plan statutory requirements, consolidate OPR's *General Plan Guidelines* supplements, and provide advice on how the general plan can address contemporary planning issues. Such issues may include:

- Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction and Climate Adaptation
- Renewable Energy
- Infill Development
- Public Health
- Regional Planning

In coordination with the Governor's [Environmental Goals and Policy Report](#) and OPR's other guidance documents, *GPG 2013* will help promote livable communities with strong economies and healthy environments.

Over the next year, OPR will get input from a variety of stakeholders and the general public to ensure *GPG 2013* provides a thorough view of the general plan's role in creating better communities. As part of that effort, OPR will hold a number of public workshops to provide details and receive input on the update. Please visit the [OPR General Plan Guidelines](#) website and sign up for the [General Plan Guidelines E-List](#) for the latest information on *GPG 2013*.

## General Plans

Each county and city must adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan that addresses land use, conservation, safety, circulation, noise, open space, housing, and other issues, if necessary.

OPR is required by [Government Code Section 65040.2](#) to adopt and periodically revise guidelines for the preparation and content of local general plans.

The [General Plan Guidelines](#) were last adopted in 2003.