



Chapter 2: General Plan Vision and Guiding Principles

The Vision Statement and Guiding Principles form the General Plan foundation. The Vision Statement expresses the collective community philosophy that will shape Atascadero through 2045 and beyond. The vision does not describe an end statement; rather, it defines the framework for decision making moving forward. The principles further articulate the vision by focusing on the specific growth, change, and preservation frameworks for decisions. These represent the highest-level policy direction of this General Plan. All goals, policies, strategies, and actions have been crafted to be consistent with the Vision Statement and Guiding Principles.

Vision Statement

To prioritize goals and actions in the 2045 General Plan, the City developed an overarching Vision Statement based on extensive community ideas and feedback received during the General Plan update process. This Vision Statement shown below reflects the ideas, thoughts, and desires heard from residents, local business and property owners, elected and appointed officials, and other members of the Atascadero community. The statement expresses a bold vision for Atascadero, both as a goal and lens through which long-term planning decisions will be made.

2045 General Plan Vision Statement

Atascadero provides opportunities for all residents and business owners to thrive. Our community-focused culture pursues investments and land use strategies that create a diversity of housing types, support local businesses, improve all mobility modes, and respect our natural environment. Collective community actions improve conditions for current and future generations.

Guiding Principles

The Guiding Principles are rooted in community voices heard during initial engagement activities and City Council's strategic planning initiatives. They will both guide the goals, policies, strategies, and programs in this General Plan and future decisions the City will make related to implementation of this plan. These principles, organized into five topical categories, essentially provide the decision-making lens for City officials, staff, and decision-makers.

Guiding Principles – Our Places

- Respect Atascadero's semi-rural character as the community evolves.
- Facilitate vibrant public spaces that encourage community connections. Support City parks, trails, and facilities that provide access to a variety of recreation experiences.
- Promote investments in downtown that support the needs of local businesses and residents and provide a quality experience for visitors.
- Encourage synergistic commercial and residential uses along the El Camino Real and Morro Road corridors to support long-term viability of commercial spaces.

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Guiding Principles – Our People

- Support a culture that is welcoming, inclusive, and based on mutual respect.
- Create and maintain opportunities for people of all income levels and ages to live, work, raise families, and retire in Atascadero.
- Target growth to serve community needs and enhance the quality of life.

Guiding Principles – Our Economy

- Incentivize a mix of business and revenue streams that support a resilient economy.
- Diversify Atascadero’s employment opportunities to address the needs of an evolving workforce and attract jobs for all skill levels and income ranges.

Guiding Principles – Our Infrastructure

- Facilitate safe, convenient, and comfortable connections for people of all abilities and in different stages of life.
- Support and maintain efficient and sustainable infrastructure systems.
- Organize public service systems so that all neighborhoods and business districts have access to public services and emergency response.
- Plan and prepare for community safety and resiliency from evolving climate threats, natural, and human-caused hazards.

Guiding Principles – Our Natural Environment

- Integrate Atascadero’s natural, historical, and cultural landscapes and resources into planning decisions.