

Exeter General Plan, 2000 to 2020 Evaluation

What is in the General Plan?

State law requires every city and county in California to adopt a General Plan, which serves as a “blueprint” for the physical development of that city or county. It also promotes the conservation of various resources as well as the protection of the public’s health, safety and welfare. The General Plan is required to include seven elements:

- Land Use
- Circulation
- Open Space
- Conservation
- Noise
- Safety
- Housing

Each element typically contains a profile of existing conditions in the community and then a series of goals, policies and action plans to implement the City’s objectives during the life of the plan, which is generally 20 years. Some of the elements contain maps that designate future land uses, circulation features, park and recreation facilities and lands that are to be conserved due to their unique qualities.

State planning law indicates that every five years a city should evaluate its general plan to determine if the population projections contained in that plan are still valid and which goals, objectives and actions contained in the plan have been implemented. It is rare for cities and counties to evaluate their adopted general plans. In most cases, the general plan becomes a forgotten document only to be pulled out when a major land use dispute erupts in the community.

The Land Use and Circulation Elements of Exeter’s General Plan were adopted in 2003. They will guide growth and development in Exeter through 2020. Exeter’s other major element, the Open Space, Parks and Recreation Element was adopted in 1991. It identified Exeter’s open space and park needs as well as the recreation needs of its children, adults and senior population. The Open Space, Parks and Recreation Element was designed to be relevant through 2011.

This Evaluation will only cover Exeter’s land use, circulation, open space and conservation elements. Exeter’s housing element will be evaluated through a process established by the State Department of Housing and Community Development, and the safety and noise elements need to be updated because of their age.

Exeter General Plan, 2000 to 2020 Evaluation

What Considerations Went Into Preparing the General Plan?

The General Plan elements that will be evaluated in this document contain a number of carefully crafted goals, policies and action plans that had the support of the local decision-makers and the community at-large. Some key objectives that were considered when the General Plan was being drafted included:

- stimulate local economic development through increased tourism and agricultural tourism and assist existing businesses to expand their operations and attract technologies that have a relationship with agriculture.
- improve Exeter's employment picture by diversifying the employment base, attract industries that are compatible with the existing work force and promote businesses that provide year-around employment.
- provide a wide range of housing types that are affordable to various income groups; ensure that Exeter's housing stock remains in good condition; promote energy conservation in new housing developments to ensure the long-term affordability of the dwellings; and promote safe and decent housing for all economic groups.
- improve Exeter's fiscal condition by reducing sales tax leakage to surrounding cities, promote development inside Exeter's redevelopment district; assess development impact fees on development in order to finance infrastructure and road improvements as well as other public facilities; and encourage a strong transient occupancy tax.
- ensure that Exeter's infrastructure master plans are updated and that the necessary development impact fees are in place to finance improvements detailed in each master plan.
- conserve natural (air, water and agricultural land) and man-made (historic neighborhoods) resources.
- preserve land outside the city limits of Exeter in large-lot agricultural parcels, which will maintain the land in sizes that support support agriculture while also making it easier to develop once the property is annexed into Exeter.
- revitalize existing neighborhoods while developing new neighborhoods that are attractive, well-maintained and promote conservation of resources.
- Maintain the downtown as the government, civic and retail/office center of Exeter while creating a safe and comfortable environment where pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicular traffic and parking work in harmony.

Exeter General Plan, 2000 to 2020 Evaluation

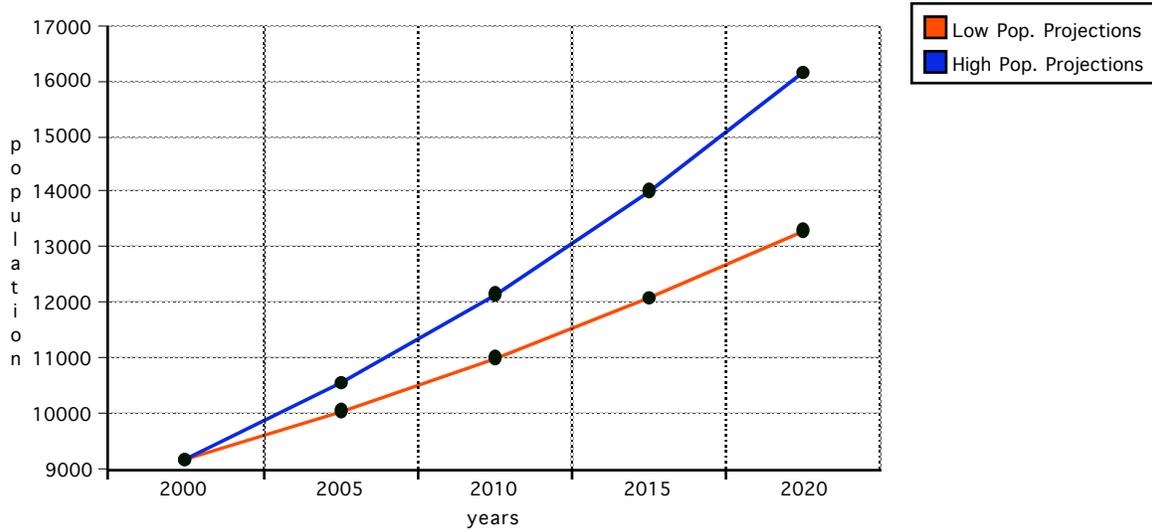
- Diversify Exeter's industrial base and attract technologies that are related to agriculture, including irrigation, plant science, and pest management.
- Ensure that Exeter's schools are easily accessible and free from land use and circulation conflicts, and have adequate land for future expansion.
- Foster a safe community that is free of crime and fire hazards and has an efficient medical emergency delivery system.
- Forge partnerships with other public entities in the financing and construction of public facilities, and where possible, public facilities should have multi-purpose uses.

How Do the General Plan's Population Projections Compare with Population Growth that has Actually Occurred Since 2000?

The General Plan utilized two annual population growth rates (1.88 percent and 2.88 percent) to calculate Exeter's demand for urban land needs through the year 2020. Figure 1 below shows the General Plan's two population projections. The high population projection for 2010 was 12,178 and the low population projection was 11,044. Exeter's actual 2010 population, according to the US Census Bureau, was 10,752. Exeter's actual population growth is actually tracking below the low population projection outlined in the General Plan. Exeter has always sought "slow" growth rates as a public policy position. This chart confirms that this policy of slow growth has been implemented since 2000.

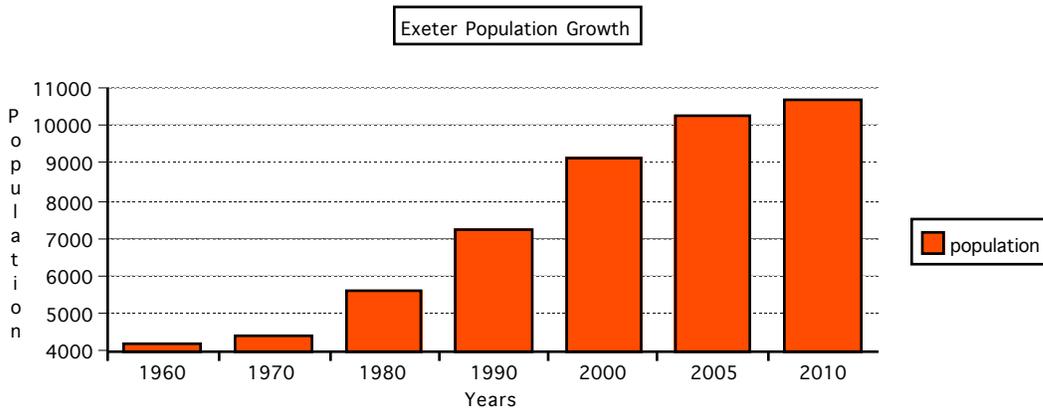
Exeter General Plan, 2000 to 2020 Evaluation

Figure No. 1
Exeter General Plan Population Projections, 2000 to 2020



Source: Exeter General Plan 2000 to 2020.

Figure No. 2
Population Growth in Exeter



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Exeter General Plan, 2000 to 2020 Evaluation

Since 2000, Exeter has actually grown at an average annual rate of 1.73 percent - slightly less than the General Plan's low population growth rate projection (1.88 percent). It is important to note that this ten year period included one of the region's largest residential building booms ever experienced. During the years 2000 to 2005, Exeter's average annual growth rate was 2.5 percent. Since 2005, the average annual growth rate has leveled off to a sub average .8 percent.

How Much Residential Growth has Actually Occurred in Exeter Since 2000?

The Exeter Planning Department has been charting subdivision activity in Exeter since 1991. Since that year, 849 single family residential homes have been constructed in the community. The number of vacant lots that could support additional residential development has vacillated around the 100-lot mark during that time period. The number of tentative map lots (maps that do not have an approved final map) has fluctuated greatly over the years. In 2010, Exeter had approximately 360 tentative map lots on the books. When the residential market turns more positive, these lots will be converted from tentative to final lots and thus will be available for home construction.

Figure No. 3 Lot Activity in Exeter

Source: Exeter Planning Department

Between 2000 and 2005, 363 single family homes were constructed in the community, averaging 72 dwelling units per year. From 2006 to 2010, single family home construction fell to an average of 10 units per year and since 2009, only one building permit has been issued for a single family dwelling and only two multi-family units were constructed.

Since 2000 Exeter has approved ten single family residential subdivisions that consumed approximately 84 acres of land. Most of these subdivisions were located in the north, southwest, and northwest sections of Exeter. Very few apartments have been constructed in Exeter since 2000. Most of the apartments are part of a small apartment complex (duplex or tri-plex units).

Exeter General Plan, 2000 to 2020 Evaluation

How Much Urban Growth has Actually Occurred in Exeter Since 2000?

Most of the urban growth that has occurred in Exeter since 2000 falls into the residential category, followed by industrial development. Over the past ten years, approximately 97 acres of land has been urbanized.

**Table No. 1
New Urban Growth in Exeter, 2000 to 2010***

<u>Urban Use</u>	<u>Acres/Square Feet</u>	<u>Years Constructed</u>
Single-family uses	84.00 acres	2000-2010
Multi-family uses	.5 acres	2000-2010
Subtotal	84.5 acres	

Exeter General Plan, 2000 to 2020 Evaluation

Office/Retail Commercial		
Java Coffee	.2 acres	2003
Citrus Plaza	2.63 acres	2004
Railroad Diner	.025 acres	2004
Exeter Station	1.0 acre	2003
Newman Office	.256 acres	2003
Subtotal	4.11 acres	
Service Commercial		
Haggard Clinic	.57 acres	2005
Firestone Tire	.803 acres	2002
Monarch Ford	.34 acres	2004
Subtotal	1.71 acres	
Industrial		
Garuda	.97 acres	2006
Blumer Welding	1.75 acres	2002
Hobbs Storage	.34 acres	2007
Fedele	.61 acres	2005
Harris	1.81 acres	2008
Hammersleigh	.61 acres	2003
Brite Manufacturing	.61 acres	2008
Subtotal	6.7 acres	
Total	97.03 acres	

* New urban development does not include buildings or properties that have been remodeled or converted from one type of use to another.

How Have the General Plan's Land Demand Projections Compared with Actual Growth?

The General Plan included projections of how much undeveloped land would be needed to accommodate a low and high population growth scenarios expected to occur through the years 2010 and 2020.

**Table No. 2
General Plan Land Demand Projections**

Land Use Category	2010		2020	
	Low	High	Low	High

Exeter General Plan, 2000 to 2020 Evaluation

Residential	152 acres	245 acres	335 acres	568 acres
Office/Retail	9	15	20	34
Service Commercial	3	5	7	11
General Industrial	13	21	29	49
Park Land	15	24	30	44
School Land				
K-6		10-20 acres		10-20 acres
7-8				
9-12				40 acres
Total*	192 acres	320-330 ac.	421 acres	716-726 ac.
Total without flex-factor**	162 acres	271-281 ac.	354 acres	632-642 ac.

* Exeter's general plan land demand figures contain a flex-factor of 25 percent. In other words, the actual land demand figure is multiplied by 1.25 to ensure that the real estate market is not overly restricted.

** These land demand acreage figures are potentially the actual amount of land that will be urbanized over the 20-year planning period. It will be these acreage figures that are discussed and analyzed in the General Plan Environmental Impact Report.

The amount of actual land developed in Exeter from 2000 to 2010, 97 acres, was well below the acreage the General Plan projected for the low population land demand figure in 2010, 162 acres, and significantly lower than the high population land demand figure in 2010 of 271 acres. It is evident that Exeter's population growth and land demand for development is well below the general plan's population and land demand projections. Based on the current economic climate, it is unlikely that in Exeter's next decade the population growth or amount of development will exceed that of the previous decade.

How Much Undeveloped Land Remains in the Planning Area?

There are two subareas in Exeter's General Plan planning area that contain undeveloped land - land within the city limits and land within Exeter's urban development boundary (UDB) line but outside its city limits. Table 3 shows that Exeter

Exeter General Plan, 2000 to 2020 Evaluation

has ample undeveloped land for a wide range of urban uses within its city limits. For example, given that approximately 85 acres of land in Exeter was developed to residential uses from 2000 to 2010, it seems reasonable to assume that the 107 acres of vacant residential land within the city limits can easily accommodate Exeter's demand for residential land through the Year 2020.

**Table 3:
Undeveloped Land Inside the City Limits Zoned for Development**

<u>Zoning Classification</u>	<u>Undeveloped Acres in City Limits</u>
R-1-6 (Single Family Residential, one unit per 6,000 sq. ft.)	49.70 acres
R-1-7.5 (Single Family Residential, one unit per 7,500 sq. ft.)	23.08 acres
R-1-10 (Single Family Residential, one unit per 10,000 sq. ft.)	29.38 acres
RM-3 (Multi-Family Residential, one unit per 3,000 sq. ft.)	2.0 acres
RM-1.5 (Multi-Family Residential, one unit per 1,500 sq. ft.)	3.49 acres
CN (Neighborhood Commercial)	11.67 acres
CH (Highway Commercial)	3.44 acres
CS (Service Commercial)	4.23 acres
CC (Central Commercial)	1.0 acres
I (Industrial)	54.50 acres
Public (Parks and Open Space)	7.73 acres
Public (School)	23.0 acres
Urban Reserve	16.33 acres
TOTAL	229.55 acres

Table 4 shows land designated for urban development that is outside Exeter's city limits but within the UDB (20-year growth boundary) line. For this land to be developed, annexation into the city would be required. This land is located on the fringe of the community and is generally under agricultural production.

Most of this land that is suitable for future development is found in the planning area of Exeter's Southwest Exeter Specific Plan. The Specific Plan, adopted in 2006, covered a 320-acre planning area located in the southwest quadrant of Exeter. The Plan has a time line of 20 years; however, given the slow housing market, it is conceivable that the Specific Plan would not be built out for 30 years or more.

**Table 4:
Undeveloped Land Inside Exeter's Urban Development Boundary Line Designated
for Development**

Exeter General Plan, 2000 to 2020 Evaluation

Very Low Density Residential	15.0 acres
Low Density Residential	41.5 acres
Medium Density Residential	162.8 acres
High Density Residential	6 acres
Mixed-Use	7 acres
General Commercial	14 acres
Industrial	74 acres
Parks/Trails	13.03 acres
TOTAL	333.33 acres

Map 1 shows undeveloped land inside Exeter's Urban Development Boundary line that is designated for various types of development. The UDB line includes land inside and around Exeter that is designated for development by the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

For clarity the map shows undeveloped land inside Exeter's city limits as well as undeveloped land outside the city limits (but within the Urban Development Boundary). This distinction is important because land inside city limits can usually be developed readily, whereas land outside city limits must first be annexed.

Are the General Plan's Land-Demand Projections Still On Track Through 2020?

Table 5 shows an analysis comparing the General Plan's low population land demand projections with the amount of land that is left in the planning area (inside the UDB line). It is apparent that Exeter has a surplus of land zoned and designated for residential, retail/office and industrial uses. There is a slight shortfall of land designated for parks and open space by 2020; however, this could be offset with additional park and recreation improvements in Dobson Park and in some of Exeter's smaller parks.

Table 5: Vacant/Undeveloped Land Needed Analysis

Exeter General Plan, 2000 to 2020 Evaluation

Land Use Category	A. Acres Projected to be Needed (Projected thru 2020)	B. Acres Developed between 2000 and 2010	C. ("A - B") Adjusted Land Demand	D. Existing Vacant Acres Zoned (already inside city limits)	E. Existing Undeveloped acres outside city limits but within Urban Development Boundary	F. ("D + E") Total "available" acres	G. ("C - F") Adjusted Land Demand (vacant land needed outside existing city limits)
Residential: (single and multi-family)	335 acres (this includes land for single- and multi-family residential)	84.5 acres	250.5 acres	107.6 acres	225.3 acres	332.9 acres	0 acres
Commercial	27 acres	5.8 acres	21.2 acres	20.3 acres	21 acres	41.3 acres	0 acres
Industrial	29 acres	6.7 acres	22.3 acres	54.5 acres	74 acres	128.5 acres	0 acres
Parks	30 acres	0 acres	30 acres	7.7 acres	13 acres	20.73 acres	9.3 acres
Schools	20 acres	0 acres	20 acres	23 acres	0 acres	23 acres	0 acres
TOTALS	441 acres	97 acres	344 acres	213.1 acres	333.3 acres		9.3 acres

When Might the City Need to Annex Additional Land?

Judging from the amount of undeveloped/vacant land inside Exeter's city limits and UDB line (see Table No. 5 above), annexation of additional land will not be warranted for many years. As an example, between 2000 and 2010, Exeter developed about 8 acres of residential land per year. Using that same rate of development, Exeter would not be required to annex land for residential uses for another 13 years! Adding the 225.3 acres of residentially designated land outside the city limits but within the UDB line, Exeter could accommodate another 28 years of residential growth. This takes Exeter to the year 2051!

What is the Conclusion on Growth and Expansion of the City's Boundaries?

Exeter should continue to monitor growth trends in the community, however, it is apparent that Exeter has an ample supply of land for all land use categories for the next 20 years. This ensures that Exeter can accommodate any type of new land use in the future. These new land uses could include an affordable housing project, a new industry, a retail outlet to an office.

What Progress Has Been Made Implementing the General Plan's Action Plans?

Exeter General Plan, 2000 to 2020 Evaluation

The General Plan contains numerous action plans spread throughout the four elements listed below.

- Land Use
- Circulation
- Conservation, Open Space, Parks and Recreation
- Housing

Exeter's progress towards implementing the actions plans contained in these elements is detailed in the following section of this report.