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Introduction

1.1 THE CITY OF GUADALUPE

Guadalupe is a city of 8,346 residents (DOF, January 2021) located in northern Santa Barbara County, about nine miles west of the City of Santa Maria. The City is situated in the heart of the fertile Santa Maria Valley, an agricultural region of Statewide and even national importance. To the west is the Guadalupe Dunes, one of the last remaining coastal dune



complexes in California. To the south is the City of Lompoc and Vandenberg Space Force Base. To the north is the Nipomo Mesa and the communities of Arroyo Grande and Nipomo in San Luis Obispo County. [Figure 1-1, Regional Location Map](#), shows the location of Guadalupe in its regional context.

The City incorporated in 1946, but its importance both locally and regionally is much older. In the early 1800's much of the land around the City was used for grazing and cattle ranching by families who were probably descendants of the original Spanish Land Grantees.

With the extension of the railroad in the late 1800's, Guadalupe became the focal point of a prosperous agricultural economy, and a melting pot for farming and ranching families of many diverse nationalities. Guadalupe remained the most important community in the Santa Maria Valley until the late 1920's when the construction of US Highway 101 enabled trucks to replace the railroad as the primary mode for transporting crops to surrounding markets. Although still the center of agricultural activity, the town has lost much of its original prominence to the expanding City of Santa Maria.



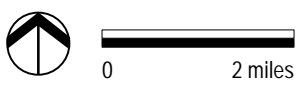
1.2 CITY OF GUADALUPE PLANNING AREA AND SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

The area covered by the general plan is often referred to as the City's planning area, which includes the incorporated limits as well as “. . . all land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgement bears a relation to its planning” (Government Code Section 65300). The City's planning area is shown on [Figure 1-2, Planning Area](#), and extends outward from the City in a loosely defined circle that extends north across the Santa Maria River and east toward the City of Santa Maria. The City reserves the right to review and comment on new development, changes in land use, or other regulatory or environmental activities that may affect the City's Planning Area or the long-term interests of the City.

Figure 1-2 also shows the City's sphere of influence. The Cortese-Knox Act defines a sphere of influence as a “. . . plan for the probable ultimate physical boundaries and service area of a local agency . . .” (Government Code Section 56076). In practice, "ultimate" is often defined as twenty years. Under Government Code Section 56080, a sphere of influence may include an urban service area where portions of a city's sphere of influence contain urban services, or where services are expected to be provided during the first five years of a 20-year sphere of influence and often those services are incorporated into an adopted capital improvement program.



Spheres of influence and other changes to the organization of local governments are decided by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), which consists of representatives from member jurisdictions within the County. In addition to establishing and amending spheres of influence, LAFCO exercises jurisdiction over annexations (adding land to a city or special district), detachment from a city or district, and the incorporation of new cities, among others. Accordingly, LAFCO policies are key to identifying areas for future City expansion.

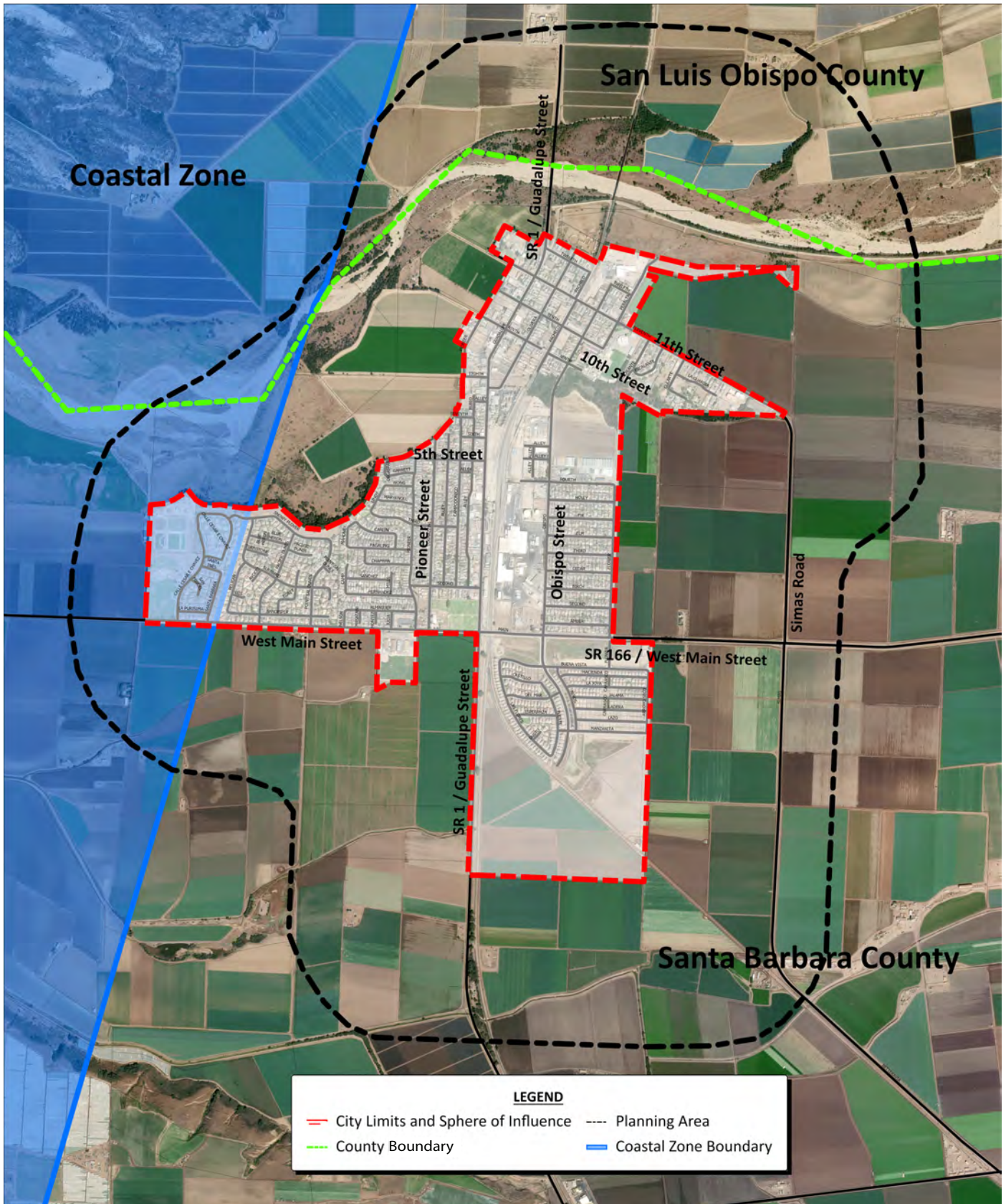


Source: ESRI 2019, Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department 2020



Figure 1-1
Regional Location Map
 Guadalupe 2042 General Plan

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Source: City of Guadalupe 2021

Figure 1-2
Planning Area



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1.3 SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE GENERAL PLAN

A General Plan is required by State Law and serves as a community's blueprint for the use and development of land within its planning area. To provide a consistent framework to address these issues, State law requires that the general plan contain eight interrelated sections, or elements:

- **Land Use.** The Land Use Element describes the various uses to which land within the City may be committed, and designates areas where these uses may take place. In this sense, the Land Use Element is the most basic of the elements. It must be closely coordinated with the other elements to provide consistent policy guidance that results in orderly and logical development.
- **Housing.** The Housing Element describes how safe, affordable housing will be provided to present and future City residents anticipated through the time frame of the General Plan. The Housing Element also provides incentives for the production and rehabilitation of affordable housing within the City.
- **Circulation.** The Circulation Element describes how the transportation needs of the city will be met during the time frame of the General Plan. The Circulation Element identifies where new roadways will be constructed to support the land uses contained in the Land Use Element, and also contains provisions for the use of alternate modes of transportation, including bicycle and pedestrian circulation plans.
- **Conservation and Open Space.** The Conservation and Open Space Element is two separate elements required by state law that are often combined as one General Plan element. This combined element describes the diverse natural and human-made resources in and around Guadalupe, and how these resources will be preserved and protected during the time frame of the General Plan. It also sets forth standards for park and recreation uses and addresses open space for flood protection.
- **Safety.** The Safety Element inventories seismic, geologic, flood, and fire hazards in Guadalupe, and discusses how the effect of these hazards can be minimized.
- **Noise.** The Noise Element describes the existing and projected noise environments for the City and establishes land use compatibility guidelines for various noise levels. On the basis of expected population and traffic growth, the Noise Element establishes policies and standards to protect residents from exposure to excessive noise.
- **Environmental Justice.** The Environmental Justice Element identifies objectives and policies to reduce the unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities. Objectives and policies to reduce the unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities may include but are not limited to:

- Reducing pollution exposure, including improving air quality;
- Promoting public facilities;
- Promoting food access;
- Promoting safe and sanitary homes; and
- Promoting physical activity.

The Environmental Justice Element must also identify objectives and policies to promote civil engagement in the public decision-making process.

Other optional elements may be added as needed to address specific issues. The Guadalupe General Plan contains three such elements: Community Design and Historic Preservation, Public Services and Facilities, and Economic Development.

- **Community Design and Historic Preservation.** The Community Design and Historic Preservation element provides policies and programs aimed at preserving Guadalupe's architectural character and its numerous historic buildings.
- **Public Services and Facilities.** This element summarizes the infrastructure and public facilities needs of the City at buildout of the General Plan.
- **Economic Development.** This Element includes a generalized discussion of expected costs of operating the future city, and potential revenue sources likely to be available to cover those costs. Among other purposes, this element will assist the City in determining whether new development should be subject to different fees or exactions than are currently in place to better cover the costs of growth to the community.

Each element of the General Plan contains goals, policies and programs to provide guidance to decision-makers and the public when questions arise about the appropriate use of individual parcels of land and other resources. A goal is a desirable future condition or state towards which the community will work to achieve. Policies are statements of the community's position regarding a particular issue that provide guidance for decision-making. A program is an action or series of actions, procedures or techniques that the City will employ or undertake to implement the policies contained in the General Plan.

Where possible, the implementation programs specify the agency, department or other party responsible for carrying out and monitoring the actions described, the funding source (when one can be identified) and a time frame for its accomplishment. Quantified objectives are measurable milestones that can be used to judge the effectiveness of the implementation of the Plan. For example, the Housing Element (published separately) provides quantified objectives for the number of dwelling units the City expects to be constructed over the next five years.

1.4 THE PROCESS OF PREPARING THE GENERAL PLAN

The Constitution for Development

The general plan is the primary tool for local and county governments that help guide future development. California Government Code (Section 65300 et. seq.) requires both cities and counties adopt a general plan to guide future development and the general plan outlines goals and policies to guide long-range planning boundaries within a city or county. The general plan acts as the “constitution” for development according the California Governor’s Office of Planning and Research.

The Prior General Plan

The City of Guadalupe last updated its general plan in 2002. The primary issues addressed in the *Guadalupe 2002 General Plan* revolved around issues related to the City’s population having a disproportionate number of low-income households. The principal approach taken in the *Guadalupe 2002 General Plan* to address the issue was to:

- Allow new development, which would increase the overall population and help support local businesses and reduce the “leakage of dollars spent outside the community”;
- Provide better paying jobs for the population than has been provided by farm labor; and
- Provide a wider mix of housing, including a more balanced amount of higher cost units, which would increase average incomes (and thus expenditures and sales tax revenues) and bring in higher property taxes.

2021 Update

The primary motivations behind the *Guadalupe 2042 General Plan* fall into three categories. The first category concerns the practical need to address new requirements in state planning law requiring local jurisdictions to respond to challenges affecting the entire state, such as housing affordability, wildfire safety, environmental justice, climate change, climate adaptation and resilience, and energy. The second category concerns the need to address chronic land-use conflicts from two local sources: nearby agricultural uses (agricultural chemicals, dust, and traffic) and the Union Pacific Railroad, which bisects the town (safety, access, and noise). The third category concerns aspirational goals such as social equity, economic growth, and downtown revitalization.

Since the 2002 update, substantial work has been completed to support the current update process. This work includes:

- *City of Guadalupe Volume I: Background Report (2009)*. This background report, prepared by Cal Poly students, is an integral part of the City of Guadalupe community planning effort. It summarizes the existing (2009) conditions of Guadalupe and describes issues relevant to the update of the General Plan. This background report provides substantial information on Guadalupe’s circulation system.
- *City of Guadalupe: General Plan Update Background Report (2014)*. This background report, also prepared by Cal Poly students, built on the early Cal Poly work from 2009 and provides a more recent account of background conditions in Guadalupe. It too contains a section devoted to existing circulation conditions and issues.
- *City of Guadalupe 2040 Draft General Plan (2018)*. This draft general plan, also prepared by Cal Poly students, synthesized earlier background research into a draft plan that included alternative development approaches, a preferred growth scenario, and formal goals, objectives, policies, and programs for each of the general plan elements. The work that culminated in this 2018 draft plan included a robust public participation program, the results of which are summarized in a community input matrix described below.

Public Participation

A general plan reflects a community's shared vision for the future. Therefore, before the *Guadalupe 2042 General Plan* could be written, it was essential to understand the public's ideas about what they would like the community of Guadalupe to be in the future. To gain these insights, a number of opportunities were provided throughout the plan preparation and adoption process to allow citizens to voice their concerns. These opportunities included public workshops at which relevant issues were discussed and the public was asked to provide direction, and these workshops culminated in public hearings before the City Council. Community input into the development of the *Guadalupe 2042 General Plan* has been summarized in a document entitled: “Community Input Matrix” and is available separately from the City of Guadalupe’s Building and Planning Department.

Recent Changes in State Planning Law

In addition to community input, the general plan team evaluated both the *Guadalupe 2002 General Plan* and the draft update prepared in 2018 by Cal Poly staff and students (referenced above) to determine their consistency with the most recent general plan guidance offered by the California Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR): State of California General Plan Guidelines (OPR 2017). The results of this evaluation have been summarized in a

document entitled: “General Plan Guidelines Matrix” and is also available separately from the City of Guadalupe. A summary of recent changes in state planning law is presented in Appendix A of this general plan update. The summary includes new laws governing tribal consultation, greenhouse gas emissions and climate adaptation, energy, environmental justice, wildfire safety, redevelopment, and complete streets.

1.5 RELATIONSHIP OF THE GENERAL PLAN TO OTHER PLANS

The Guadalupe General Plan governs land use decisions within the incorporated boundaries of the city. Lands outside the city are governed by Santa Barbara County.

Another important regional planning agency is the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG), which was formed to provide a framework for addressing issues of regional importance among its eight members, which are:

- City of Santa Barbara;
- City of Buellton;
- Santa Barbara County;
- City of Santa Maria;
- City of Lompoc;
- City of Guadalupe;
- City of Carpinteria; and
- City of Solvang.

The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, or SBCAG for short, was established in 1966 as a voluntary council of governments under a joint powers agreement executed by each of the general purpose local governments in Santa Barbara County. SBCAG is an independent entity governed by a thirteen-member Board of Directors consisting of a city council representative from each of the eight cities within the county and the five members of the county Board of Supervisors.

The original agreement under which SBCAG was established cited the need "to examine common problems and suggest solutions." SBCAG's central purpose continues to be the collaborative discussion and resolution of problems and issues that are regional or multi-jurisdictional in nature. SBCAG's responsibilities and programs include the following:

- **Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).** SBCAG has been designated by the Governor as the agency responsible for all transportation planning and programming activities required under federal law. This includes the development of long-range transportation plans and multi-year funding programs, and the selection and approval of transportation projects using federal funds.
- **Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA).** Designated by the Secretary of the California Business, Housing and Transportation Agency, SBCAG is responsible for the multi-modal transportation planning, programming, and fund allocation required by state statutes. This includes the annual allocation of Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds.
- **Local Transportation Authority (LTA).** As the Local Transportation Authority (LTA), SBCAG is responsible for administering the 1/2 cent county-wide sales tax authorized by voter approval of Measure D in November, 1989. This tax is projected to generate almost \$500 million for local and regional transportation projects over twenty years. SBCAG is responsible for the annual allocation of more than \$18 million to local agencies as well as the development and construction of fifteen state and regional projects identified in the Measure D plan at a total cost of more than \$132 million.
- **Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC).** SBCAG is designated as the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) and is responsible for protecting public health, safety, and welfare by ensuring that vacant lands in the vicinity of airports are planned and zoned for uses compatible with airport operations. To do this, SBCAG must determine that the adoption of local land use plans and policies will minimize the public's exposure to excessive noise and safety hazards.
- **Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE).** This program is responsible for the installation, operation and administration of the system of approximately 350 roadside call boxes in Santa Barbara County. This system is financed by a \$1 per year fee on all motor vehicles registered within the county.
- **Affiliate Census Center.** SBCAG has been designated by the State Department of Finance to serve as the affiliate census center for Santa Barbara County. As such, SBCAG serves as the conduit for government and public access to census data.
- **Congestion Management Agency (CMA).** As the CMA, SBCAG is responsible for the development and implementation of the county-wide Congestion Management Program (CMP) required in all urban counties in California. The CMP is a comprehensive program designed to reduce auto-related congestion through capital improvements, travel demand management, and coordinated land use planning among all local jurisdictions.

- **Traffic Solutions.** SBCAG also administers an interagency Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program that promotes ridesharing, public transportation, biking, walking, telecommuting, and other transportation alternatives on a county-wide basis. Traffic Solutions also works directly with employers to assist in developing employee transportation programs. Traffic Solutions administers the Clean Air Express, a commuter subscription bus service.

Other planning documents that affect Guadalupe include the Air Quality Management Plan to comply with State and federal clean air laws, and the Congestion Management Plan which is intended to reduce traffic on the county's highways. The *Guadalupe 2042 General Plan* contains policies and programs to supplement the requirements of each of these plans.

In addition to the City, there are two school districts closely involved with shaping Guadalupe's future: the Guadalupe Union School District (GUSD) and the Santa Maria Joint Union High School District. The GUSD provides educational facilities and services with Mary Buren Elementary for grades K-4 and Kermit McKenzie for grades 5-8. All high school students, Grades 9-12, primarily attend Ernest Righetti High School in Orcutt.

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