*"We are a welcoming, active and business-friendly rural foothill community built on California's rich gold rush history."*

# Planning Commission Staff Report

**Meeting Date**: October 6, 2026
**Prepared By:** Carole Kendrick, Director of Development Services

**PROJECT INFORMATION SUMMARY**

**Case File:** General Plan Amendment (GPA) 26-05 – To comply with SB 1425 and AB 1889 Regarding Open Space and Conservation Policies

**Request:** Conduct a public hearing and consider a recommendation to the City Council to adopt the proposed notice of exemption (NOE) and amendments to the City of Placerville General Plan updating the Transportation, Public Facilities and Services, and Natural, Cultural, and Scenic Resources Elements to comply with Government Code Section 65565.5 (Senate Bill (SB) 1425 (2022)) and Government Code Section 65302(d) (Assembly Bill (AB) 1889 (2024)).

**Summary Recommendation:** Recommend that the City Council: Adopt the proposed notice of exemption and the amendments to the City of Placerville General Plan Transportation, Public Facilities and Services, and Natural, Cultural, and Scenic Resources Elements to comply with SB 1425 and AB 1889; and Direct staff to file the adopted General Plan amendments with the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation pursuant to Government Code Section 65300.5.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The proposed General Plan Amendment updates the City's Transportation, Public Facilities and Services, and Natural, Cultural, and Scenic Resources Elements to comply with recently enacted State legislation governing General Plans.

Senate Bill (SB) 1425 (2022) requires every city and county to review and update its General Plan to include equitable access to open space, climate resilience, co-benefits of open space, and opportunities for rewilding and ecological restoration.

Assembly Bill (AB) 1889 (2024) amended Government Code Section 65302(d) by requiring local General Plans to evaluate wildlife connectivity, habitat permeability, wildlife movement corridors, existing and planned wildlife crossing features, barriers to wildlife movement, and opportunities to improve ecological connectivity.

A review of the 2017 *City of Placerville Area Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update* found that many of its existing goals, recommendations, and implementation strategies—including those related to trail connectivity, natural resource protection, open space preservation, and recreational access—already support the intent of these updated State requirements. Accordingly, the proposed amendments are primarily policy-oriented, building upon and refining the City's existing planning framework while preserving the overall vision and policy direction of the General Plan. The amendments do not redesignate land uses, modify zoning, or authorize new development.

Consistent with the project scope, the update includes:

- Review of existing General Plan goals, policies, and implementation measures;
- Consolidation of existing Open Space and Conservation policies located throughout multiple of the City's existing General Plan elements;
- Preparation of updated background information;
- Development of new goals, policies, and implementation programs addressing wildlife connectivity, open space equity, climate resilience, and rewilding opportunities;
- Consultation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), local tribal governments, and applicable open space agencies; and
- Preparation of environmental documentation pursuant to CEQA.

Unlike many General Plan amendments, the proposed update is focused solely on maintaining consistency with State planning law and does not modify the City's land use framework or development capacity.

**BACKGROUND**

The City's General Plan currently addresses State required Open Space and Conservation policies across several General Plan elements, including the Transportation, Public Facilities and Services, and Natural, Cultural, and Scenic Resources Elements, among others. While these policies continue to support the City's long-standing conservation goals, recent changes in State law require additional policy direction related to climate resilience, equitable access to open space, and wildlife connectivity.

**Discussion**

The proposed amendments focus on updating the City's Transportation, Public Facilities and Services, and Natural, Cultural, and Scenic Resources Elements to address new statutory requirements. Rather than creating an entirely new policy framework, staff proposes targeted revisions to existing policies and implementation measures that build upon the City's current General Plan.

A detailed summary of all proposed revisions is provided in **Attachment C** (Consolidated List of Draft Transportation, Public Facilities and Services, and Natural, Cultural, and Scenic Resources Element Revisions)**.**

**Open Space Element Policy Updates (SB 1425)**

SB 1425 requires local agencies to address:

- Equitable access to open space;
- Climate resilience;
- Co-benefits provided by open space; and
- Rewilding opportunities.

To address these requirements, staff proposes revisions that:

- Update background information to reflect current State planning requirements;
- Add policies promoting equitable access to parks, trails, and open space;
- Expand policies recognizing the role of open space in climate adaptation and community resilience;
- Add implementation actions supporting habitat restoration, grant funding opportunities, and long-term stewardship; and
- Improve the organization and readability of existing Open Space policies.

**Conservation Element Policy Updates (AB 1889)**

AB 1889 requires local agencies to address:

- Wildlife connectivity;
- Wildlife movement corridors;
- Habitat permeability;
- Existing and planned wildlife passage features;
- Barriers to wildlife movement; and
- Opportunities to improve ecological connectivity.

To address these requirements, staff proposes revisions that:

- Update biological resource background information;
- Incorporate new policies supporting wildlife connectivity and habitat conservation;
- Add implementation measures encouraging coordination with CDFW and other resource agencies;
- Recognize opportunities to improve habitat connectivity through future planning efforts; and
- Maintain consistency with existing conservation policies while incorporating current State requirements.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

Because the proposed amendments are policy-oriented and do not authorize physical development, staff has prepared a Common Sense Exemption (CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3)), included as Attachment A.

**PUBLIC OUTREACH**

Consistent with the project scope and State requirements, outreach to amend the General Plan for consistency with updated State required policies update included consultation with agencies and organizations identified in SB 1425 and AB 1889. Consultation efforts included:

- Native American tribes in accordance with applicable State law;
- Public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council.

Notice of the Planning Commission public hearing was published on September 18, 2026, in accordance with State law. Any public comments received prior to the hearing have been provided to the Planning Commission and will be forwarded to the City Council as part of the administrative record.

**RECOMMENDED PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION**

Hold a public hearing and take public testimony; and,

1) Forward a recommendation of approval to the City Council
2) Forward a recommendation of approval with modifications to the City Council
3) Forward a recommendation of denial to the City Council

**ATTACHMENTS**

A. CEQA Notice of Exemption
B. Draft Planning Commission Resolution Recommending Approval of GPA 26-05
C. Consolidated List of Draft Transportation, Public Facilities and Services, and Natural, Cultural, and Scenic Resources Element Revisions

**INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE**

City of Placerville General Plan
City of Placerville Zoning Ordinance
Placerville Area Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update (2017)
Contents of City of Placerville Planning Department Project File GPA26-05