

General Plans

Under California law, the management of land use is the responsibility of local government. City and county general plans and the associated goals, policies, objectives, and programs define land use planning requirements for each jurisdiction. By law, general plans guide land use decisions at the city and county level, and by their very nature, are comprehensive and integrated across the full spectrum of land, water, and natural resources management elements. The breadth of the general plans may result in less detailed or comprehensive review of regional water issues. The city and county general plans, and the land use planning process, provide local government with an opportunity to integrate land use and water supply decisions and meet the goals of the cities and counties.

The city and county general plans within the Kings Basin were reviewed as part of the Kings Basin Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (adopted October 2012). The findings and observations of the reviews included the following:

- **County general plans are characteristically more regional in their viewpoint**
- **City general plans do not typically focus on regional overdraft issues and solutions**
- **City general plans do not generally identify impacts to irrigation district facilities as a result of development in terms of infrastructure and flood water releases**
- **Water supply reliability and safety is usually discussed in the general plans but in generalities; the plans should be more specific in directives toward how water supply shall be provided and verified**
- **Most general plans do not specifically discuss new water supply development and suggestions for groundwater management**
- **Many general plans do discuss integrated land use and water supply planning**
- **The more recent general plan updates focus on more regional efforts overall due in part to new requirements for general plans; however they still discuss water issues in generalities, not specifics**
- **MSRs typically discuss general information regarding recharge and growth, without listing specific plans toward reaching these goals**