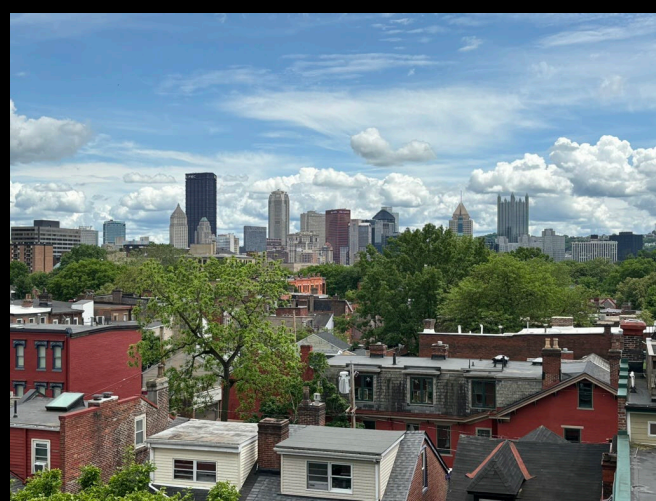


An aerial photograph of San Francisco, California, taken during the golden hour of sunset. The Golden Gate Bridge is visible in the lower foreground, stretching across the water. The city's dense urban landscape is illuminated by the warm, orange light of the setting sun, with buildings and streets glowing. The background shows the hazy, rolling hills of the San Francisco Peninsula under a soft, orange sky.

# A **Blueprint** for Community Aspirations: the California **General Plan** Process

**Napa Valley Community Foundation**

John Rahaim | February 2025



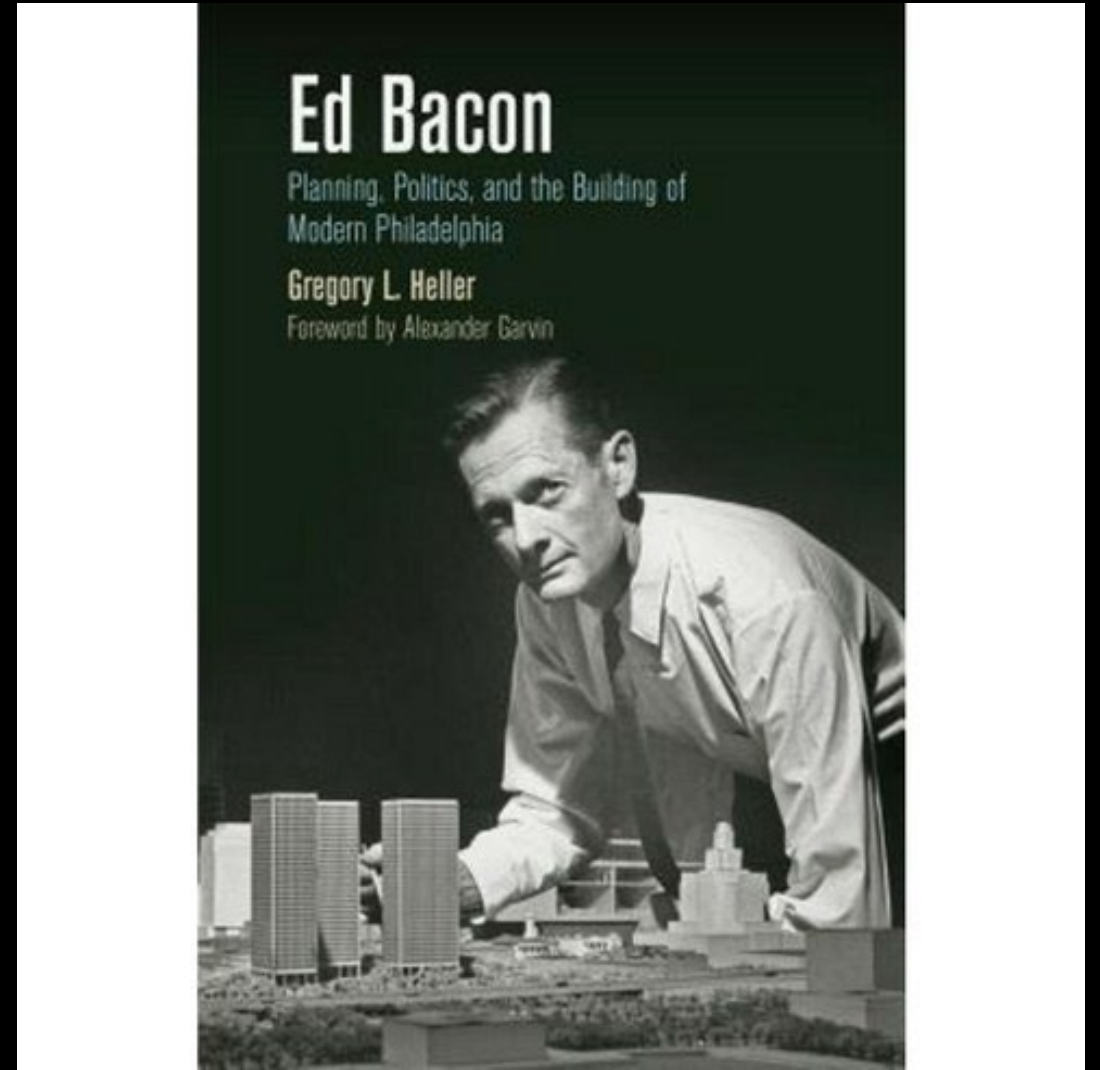
By far the greatest and most admirable form of wisdom is that needed to **plan and beautify cities and human communities**

--Socrates

(From the home page of the General Plan Guidelines, Governor's Office of Planning and Research)



# What is **Planning** in the 21C?



# What is “Planning” in the 21C?

Current Planning (Project Approvals)

Environmental Reviews

Long Range Policy/Neighborhood Planning

Historic Preservation

Urban Design/Public Realm Design

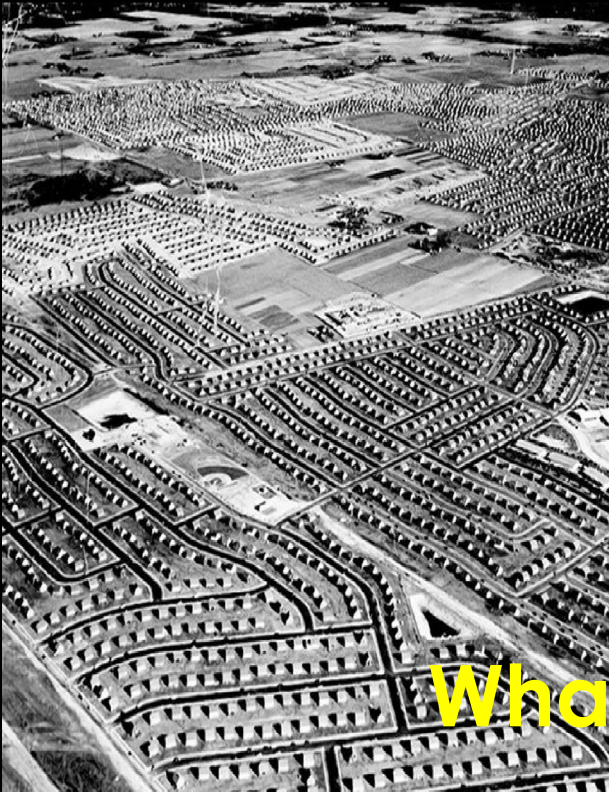
Environmental Sustainability

Growth Projections/Data/Economic Analysis

Transportation Planning

Climate Change/Sea Level Rise Planning

Community Development/Equity Planning



What kind of place do we want to be?



# What's in a General Plan?

Required "Elements" of a GP in California (topic areas)

- Land Use
- Circulation
- **Housing**
- Conservation
- Open Space
- Noise
- Safety
- Environmental Justice
- Air Quality



# Example: Circulation Element

“The circulation element is not simply a transportation plan, but rather a strategy addressing infrastructure needs for the circulation of people, goods, energy, water, sewage, storm drainage, and communications. By statute, the circulation element must correlate directly with the land use element, but also has direct relationships with other elements.”

-- OPR General Plan Guidelines

# Example: Circulation Element

- Gov. Code, § 65302(b)(1) Existing and proposed major thoroughfares
- Gov. Code, § 65302(b)(1) Existing and proposed transportation routes
- Gov. Code, § 65302(b)(2) Public transportation
- Gov. Code, § 65302(b)(2) Bicycle
- Gov. Code, § 65302(b)(2) Pedestrian
- Gov. Code, § 65302(b)(2) Automobile
- Gov. Code, § 65302(b)(2) Commercial goods
- Gov. Code, § 65302(b)(1) Existing and proposed terminals
- Gov. Code, § 65302(b)(1) Military airports and ports
- Gov. Code, § 65302(b)(1) Other local public utilities and facilities
- Gov. Code, § 65302(b)(2) Needs of children, persons with disabilities, and seniors?
- Gov. Code, § 65302(b)(1); Fed. of Hillside & Canyon Assns. v. City
- of Los Angeles (2004) 126 Cal. App. 4th 1180, 1196
- Identified funding for infrastructure identified in circulation element?
- Gov. Code, § 65302(b)(1) Circulation element is correlated with the land use element?

# What's in a General Plan?

Additional Napa County “Optional” Elements in Current GP

- Community Character
- Economic Development



# General Plan Implementation

- Zoning
- Building Codes
- Property Acquisition for public uses
- Capital Projects/Infrastructure
- Findings of Consistency of Land Use Actions with GP
- Implementation Plan
  - **In Napa Co, Implementation Action Items**
-

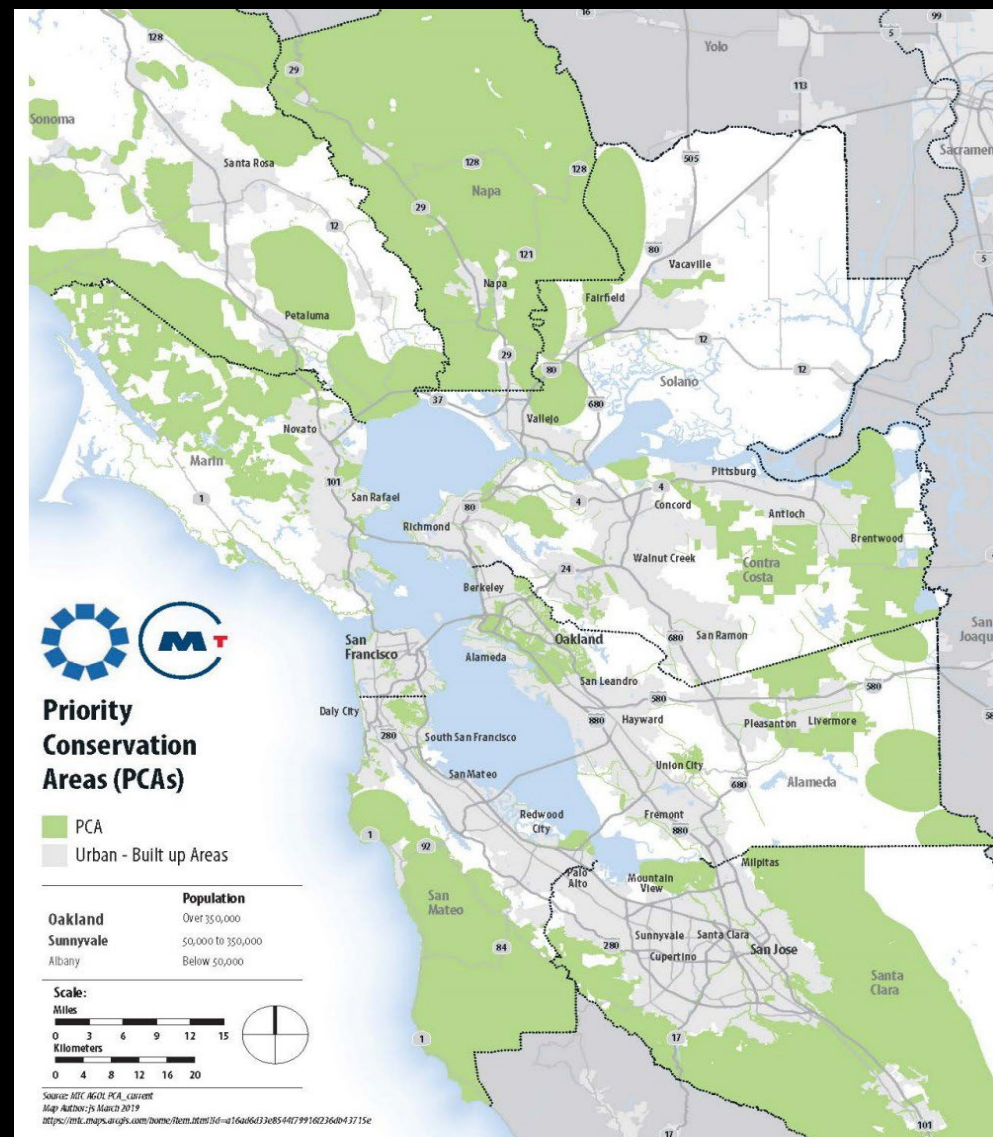
# Challenges

A scenic landscape featuring a large vineyard in the middle ground, with rows of grapevines stretching across the field. In the foreground, there are several trees, some with bare branches and others with green foliage. The background shows rolling hills under a clear, bright blue sky. The overall scene is peaceful and rural.

- High Level aspirations v Direct guidance (“code light”)
- Tension or direct conflicts between elements
- Consistency Findings
- How the GP is used

# Personal Observations

- Value of Agricultural Preserve and Five Towns
- Importance of Region
- Department of *Conservation* Development and Planning



• Thank You!

