

A M A D O R C O U N T Y



2005-2007
STRATEGIC ADMINISTRATIVE
PRIORITIES

Prepared Fall 2004-Spring 2005

AMADOR COUNTY: STRATEGIC ADMINISTRATIVE PRIORITIES

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BACKGROUND

Amador County is a Sierra Nevada Foothill County on the verge of significant population growth. In his book, "Guide to California Planning," William Fulton describes a continuing population trend in which increasing numbers of commuters and Bay Area retirees relocate to the foothill counties. While there remains some debate over the nature of population shifts and growth specific to Amador County, it has become clear that land use and development decisions will have a critical impact on the community and its service needs. Increasing population and diversity along with an aging population and decreased funding stability will bring new challenges to local government.

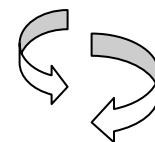
During this period of change, Amador County will also experience a significant workforce turnover, since the majority of County Managers have expressed plans to retire within the next two to four years. In addition, the impact of technology on government services has created a new set of workforce expectations. In order to address these challenges, Amador County Managers, Administrative staff and Board members have worked together to develop Administrative Priorities and associated action plans.

While Amador County's Administrative Priorities will be revised and updated on an annual basis, first year (2005/2006) "Priority Areas" should guide planning over the next several years. This plan is meant to be a flexible document; each year the Amador County Board of Supervisors will review management recommendations and make formal revisions and/or additions to the plan prior to the allocation of funds.

An ongoing cycle of planning will allow Amador County Managers and Board Members to "review and renew" rather than starting from scratch each year. At least two months prior to the end of each implementation year, Amador County Managers will meet together and with Board members to evaluate progress and make strategic planning recommendations for the upcoming year. In addition, ongoing Administrative Agency updates will include progress to-date on Administrative priorities and objectives.

Every Year, Amador County will:

- Review progress made in achieving objectives (progress review will be conducted through quarterly Managers' Group and Board updates).
- Discuss progress made and make revisions to objectives and strategies as needed;
- Align resources and departmental priorities with revised objectives and strategies;
- Implement strategies.



Every Three to Five Years, Amador County will:

- Adopt a process and timeframe that is likely to include the following components:
 - Management assessment of strengths and challenges (past and current)
 - Development of responses or priority areas to address assessment findings
 - Identification of key objectives/initiatives to support the attainment of goals
 - Alignment of existing activities or initiatives with goals as necessary (could mean ending, postponing or revising initiatives)

AMADOR COUNTY MISSION

The Mission of Amador County is to provide leadership, accountability, and fiscal integrity to maintain a high quality of life for all our citizens.

AMADOR COUNTY VISION STATEMENT

It is the vision of Amador County to allow the elected Board, Commissions, appointed advisory committees, and departments to focus on their services through the following values:

- Amador County understands the importance of professional ethical standards and is dedicated to providing high quality services in a courteous and timely manner.
- Amador County strives to ensure the safety of our citizens and treat them with dignity and respect.
- Amador County strives to maintain an economical structure to ensure cost effective services.
- Amador County believes in working together through cooperation, partnership, and innovative means to resolve issues and provide services to our citizens.
- Amador County understands the need for protecting our environment, agricultural, historical, and open space areas.

PLANNING PARTICIPANTS

Amador County Managers and Board members worked collaboratively to develop these Strategic Administrative Priorities.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Phase I—Trend Mapping and SWOT Analysis:

In September, 2004 County Managers met to identify historical factors and current trends that impact the provision of County services. They also worked together to update a 2002 analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT). In November, members of the Management Planning Subcommittee presented the Board of Supervisors with management input on long-range planning priorities. Emerging “Priority Areas” included:

1. Growth (*population growth and development results in an increased demand for services and increased workload*)
2. State and Federal Impacts (*regulatory issues, funding constraints, etc.*)
3. Personnel/Workforce/Staffing
4. Public Service Expectations
5. Financial Planning/Resource Management

Phase II—Development and Prioritization of Objectives:

In the second phase of planning, Amador County managers worked together to identify and prioritize some short, mid-range, and long-term objectives and strategies designed to address challenges and needs over the upcoming years. As a part of this planning phase, Management Planning Subcommittee members met with the Board of Supervisors in a study session to share perspectives on potential objectives and strategies. As a follow-up to this session, Administrative staff members were asked to prepare a planning document for review.

Phase III—Development and Strategies and Board Approval:

This document represents the third and final phase of the planning process. Administrative staff organized goals and objectives into a comprehensive Administrative Action Plan for consideration by managers and the Board of Supervisors. The Action Plan includes objectives, strategies, timeframes, and potential costs for each Priority Area.

ADMINISTRATIVE PRIORITIES FOR 2005-2007

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT: Methods for addressing rapid changes in community population and land use.

BUDGET AND FINANCE: Strategies to support improved resource planning, greater financial efficiencies, and expanded revenue opportunities.

PERSONNEL/WORKFORCE: Strategies to support the recruitment and retention of employees during a period of significant workforce change.

STATE AND FEDERAL IMPACTS: Methods designed to offer or increase reimbursement for mandated costs.

PUBLIC SERVICE EXPECTATIONS: Strategies to support improved alignment between public service expectations and County services.

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT: Methods for addressing rapid changes in community population and land use.

Objectives	Strategies & Timeframes	Responsible Dept./Agency	Required Resources
<p>Conduct a comprehensive General Plan review.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form a Staff General Plan Steering Committee (March 2005). • Review General Planning processes used by other Counties (March-May, 2005). • Recommend a basic General Planning Process for Board approval—include mechanisms for broad community input and review (June, 2005). • Draft an RFP for General Plan consultant (July-August, 2005). • Release RFP (September, 2005). • Conclude RFP process and select/hire consultant (November-December, 2005). • Work with consultant to refine and complete General Planning process for Board approval—consultant will develop strategies for input, data collection, analysis, reporting, etc. and Steering Committee members will help to develop methods for incorporating regional planning and community input (Spring, 2006). • Conduct General Plan Update process (Summer, 2006-Spring, 2008). • Consultant works with Steering Committee to prepare updated General Plan draft (Summer, 2008). • Present General Plan updates for review, revision and adoption (Fall, 2008). 	<p>A General Plan Steering Committee will include Administrative and County Counsel staff, and managers from Land Use and Public Works agencies. This committee will meet regularly and will be responsible for monitoring and overseeing planning progress.</p>	<p>\$175,000-\$200,000 for consultant, County staff time, travel, and planning resources (e.g. texts, report preparation, etc.).</p> <p>This same funding may be necessary each year until the General Plan update is completed in 2007/08.</p> <p>This cost includes the transition of the Deputy CAO into a role focused on general planning, county service growth and associated agency and departmental assessments and reorganization. A portion of monies will be used to cover the costs of a Human Resources Director to take over the Deputy CAO's human resources responsibilities.</p>

Objectives	Strategies & Timeframes	Responsible Dept./Agency	Required Resources
Review Land Use and Public Works Agency strategies and fee structures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Land Use and Public Works Agency functions and responsibilities—consider opportunities for increased efficiencies (January, 2006-March, 2006). Seek input from Land Use and Public Works Agency staff (April-May 2005). Conduct regular fee studies and recommend fee revisions—this will be an ongoing responsibility for Land Use and Public Works agencies (Spring, 2005-ongoing). Review Mitigation Fee options as a part of the General Plan update process (January, 2006-ongoing). 	Administrative, Public Works and Land Use staff.	.25 Administrative FTE (Deputy CAO)
Develop infrastructure and County services needed to support anticipated growth (based on updated General Plan).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County programs and services align priorities and budgets with anticipated growth and general plan (Beginning in Spring, 2009-ongoing). The County/the Board develops policy to help ensure that new development pays its share for County services. Conduct educational outreach programs regarding infrastructure and services with County entities and regional partners (Beginning in Spring, 2009—ongoing). 	All departments.	.25 FTE: both Public Works and Planning staff .15 FTE: Administrative Agency staff Ongoing county costs incorporated through the budget process.
Follow the new General Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide General Plan updates to staff, Board members, and Planning Commissions at least annually (Beginning in Spring, 2009-ongoing). Agencies and departments are responsible for ensuring consistency and alignment with General Plan (Ongoing). 		

BUDGET AND FINANCE: Strategies to support improved resource planning, greater financial efficiencies, and expanded revenue opportunities.

Objectives	Strategies & Timeframes	Responsible Dept./Agency	Required Resources
Tie the budgeting and planning processes together (link goals to budget decisions).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop any new budget priorities based on alignment with this Administrative Plan (Beginning in Spring, 2005-Ongoing). Prioritize agency or department budget requests that are aligned with this Administrative Plan or with a detailed service plan—see Priority Area V below (Beginning in Spring, 2005-Ongoing). 	Administrative Agency, Auditor, and Board of Supervisors	To be determined by Board on an annual basis.
Allow and protect the accrual of funds to support long-term projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide rewards/incentives for departments that demonstrate cost-savings—the Board allows end of year surplus to go into a trust or reserve account to support long-term projects such as major equipment purchases, technology expansion, facilities improvements, etc. (Beginning during 2006/07). 	Administrative Agency, Auditor, and Board of Supervisors	A shift in resource usage
Invest in County infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to invest in buildings, equipment and technology (Ongoing). Seek outside community support for infrastructure where possible—e.g. Animal Shelter and Library projects (Ongoing as needed). 	Board, Administrative Agency, GSA, and other agencies or departments with new facilities in progress.	Ongoing capital improvement costs
Determine whether/how to address grant opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey grant practices in other counties and agencies (Spring, 2006). Evaluate grant survey and develop a cost-effective proposal for obtaining and administering grants (Spring, 2006). Present grant proposal to the Board for approval (Summer, 2006). Recruit or contract as necessary to support proposal (Summer, 2006). Implement grants activities (Fall, 2006-Ongoing). <p><i>* This process will be expedited if possible.</i></p>	Administrative Agency will conduct research and prepare recommendations.	<p>.25 Administrative staff time for research and the development of a proposal</p> <p>Findings may result in the need for an additional grants position or contract in 2006/07.</p>

Objectives	Strategies & Timeframes	Responsible Dept./Agency	Required Resources
Expand energy related savings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Facilities & projects Manager will help to increase energy savings relative to vehicles and facilities. 	General Services Administration, the Administrative Agency and the Board	\$75,000 has already been approved for the addition of a General Services Facilities & Projects Manager.

PERSONNEL/WORKFORCE: Strategies to support the recruitment and retention of employees during a period of significant workforce change.

Objectives	Strategies & Timeframes	Responsible Dept./Agency	Required Resources
Conduct Countywide classification and compensation surveys.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and revise outdated job descriptions as part of a classification study conducted by an external agency/firm (Summer-Fall, 2005). Develop a consistent annual process for promotions and reclassifications—as a part of General Unit negotiations (Summer, 2005). Conduct a compensation study for the majority of General Unit positions as a part of 2005 negotiations (Fall, 2005). Conduct a compensation study for all Elected Officials as a part of 2005 negotiations (Fall, 2005). Conduct an updated compensation study for the Management, Mid-Management, and Confidential Units based on previous year’s model and performance/merit achievements (Fall, 2005). Submit compensation study findings and recommendations to Board for review (Late Fall, 2005). Negotiate relative to compensation study findings (Late Fall, 2005-?). 	Personnel Department, Administrative Agency, and outside Human Resources firm.	\$45,000 for the completion of a classification study and up to 300 hours of staff time beyond what the Personnel Department is currently capable of providing.

Objectives	Strategies & Timeframes	Responsible Dept./Agency	Required Resources
Provide professional development opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training opportunities for current managers and employees—particularly training in team development and conflict resolution (Spring, 2005-Ongoing). • Develop training expectations that address a changing workforce—provide growth opportunities for employees who could become future managers (Spring, 2005-Ongoing). 	The Personnel Department will coordinate training opportunities and offset some training costs; agency and department heads will need to ensure participation and provide some training funds.	\$5,000 in additional training funds
Recognize employee achievements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link management performance to annual opportunity for merit-based wage adjustment—see compensation section above (Fall, 2005-Ongoing). • Continue to sponsor and promote employee and volunteer recognition activities (e.g County BBQ, Longevity Brunch, volunteer recognition mailings, etc.). 	The Personnel Department with support from Board members.	Merit-based wage adjustments dependent on negotiated agreement.
Coordinate Succession Planning Activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with retiring employees to transfer knowledge and plan for departmental or agency restructuring—e.g. Public Works, General Services, and Health & Human Services reorganizations (Spring, 2005-Spring, 2006). • Conduct training sessions for employees who may become future managers—see above. • Improve recruitment techniques—review announcement strategies, and streamline existing recruitment process (Spring, 2005). 	The Personnel Department and Administrative Agency	No additional cost, although increased recruitments associated with a high retirement rate will add pressure to existing Personnel staff.
Establish ways for the Board of Supervisors and Managers to communicate attitudes and policies more effectively to each other and to County staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold periodic study sessions with Board and Management representatives (Spring, 2005-Ongoing). • Review and update County Administration Plan on an annual basis (Spring, 2006-Ongoing). • Research alternative methods for communicating with employees—e.g. online, via labor/manag. lunches, etc. (Spring, 2006). 	The Administrative Agency will help to facilitate these communications.	No additional cost.

Objectives	Strategies & Timeframes	Responsible Dept./Agency	Required Resources
Create a Human Resources Agency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link Personnel, Benefits, and Risk Management under a Human Resources Department structure (Late Spring, 2005-ongoing). • Recruit a Human Resources Manager—as Deputy CAO transitions to role in general planning, organizational restructuring, and grants planning (April-June, 2005). 	Administrative Agency and new Human Resources Department.	The cost of a new Human Resources Director is included in the Growth and Development total since the Deputy CAO will begin work related to general planning and organizational restructuring.

STATE AND FEDERAL IMPACTS: Methods designed to offer or increase reimbursement for mandated costs.

Objectives	Strategies & Timeframes	Responsible Dept./Agency	Required Resources
Use lobbyist(s) to advocate for County's position on State mandates and reimbursements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency and department heads help to define impact of unfunded/poorly funded mandates—as a part of response to mandates and casinos (Winter, 2005-Ongoing). • Agency or department heads contact Administrative Agency staff if they become aware of any significant new reimbursement opportunities (Spring, 2005-Ongoing). • County lobbyists communicate with lobbyists from special districts and associations. • Hold an annual legislative workshop with lobbyists, Board, and department heads (Fall, 2005-Ongoing). 	Administrative Agency, Board, and participating department heads.	Approximately \$20,000 has already been allocated to expand the scope of the County's Federal lobbyist.
Actively pursue reimbursements for mandates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to pursue reimbursements. • Consider linking departmental reimbursement-related cost-savings to merit-based management incentives (Spring, 2006-Ongoing). 		

PUBLIC SERVICE EXPECTATIONS: Strategies to support improved alignment between public service expectations and County services.

Objectives	Strategies & Timeframes	Responsible Dept./Agency	Required Resources
Determine public needs and prioritize them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess basic service level needs (e.g. service priorities, hours of operation, preferred contact methods, etc.) at the department level—consider customer/client surveys and focus groups (Fall, 2006-Ongoing). Develop broad public service expectation survey methods in coordination with General Plan activities (See Priority Area I above)—consider mailings, internet surveys and focus groups (Fall, 2006-Summer, 2007). 	Administrative Agency staff will work with agency and department heads to develop surveys and analyze findings.	An additional 80 hours of staff time added to costs of public survey component of the General Planning process
Develop plans/strategies to better match services with public needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strategies for improving the match between services and public needs at the departmental level—consider reorganization, improved technology resources, revised hours of operations, etc. (Ongoing). 	Agency and department heads	No additional cost.
Expand internet-online services to the public. Continue using plans/strategies to address public needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess department-specific services and public needs to determine whether more services can be provided via more interactive web sites (Fall, 2005). Complete ‘Online Service Plans’ for each department—these plans should provide IT staff with increased public information, applicable forms, communications, etc. (Spring, 2006). Provide more web training for IT staff (Spring, 2006). Create new IT Web Master position or contract out for additional web services (Summer, 2006). Expand e-government opportunities based on “Online Service Plans” (Fall, 2006-Ongoing). Promote use of online services in the community (Spring 2007-Ongoing). 	Agency and department heads; IT staff	Existing IT staffing levels may not be sufficient; an additional web employee or outside contract may be necessary to support expanded online services.

ADMINISTRATIVE PRIORITY COSTS FOR 2005/06

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT:	<p>\$175,000-\$200,000 (a similar funding amount may be necessary each year until the General Plan update is completed in 2007/08). *</p> <p>The above funding amount includes the transition of the Deputy CAO into a role focused on general planning, county service growth and associated agency and departmental assessments and reorganization. This change would be made in an effort to reduce the costs of outside consultants. A portion of these funds would then be used to cover the costs of a Human Resources Director to take over the Deputy CAO's human resources responsibilities.</p>
BUDGET AND FINANCE:	<p>\$75,000 has already been approved for the addition of a General Services Facilities & Projects Manager. The individual in this position will help to increase energy savings and ensure cost-effective facilities contracts.</p> <p>The Deputy CAO will conduct an assessment of potential grant practices in spring 2006 or earlier if possible. Findings may result in an additional grants position or contract in 2006/07.</p>
PERSONNEL/WORKFORCE:	<p>\$50,000 would cover the costs of a Classification & Compensation Study and increased employee training opportunities.</p> <p>The cost of a new Human Resources Director is included in the Growth and Development total since the Deputy CAO will begin work related to general planning and organizational restructuring.</p>
STATE AND FEDERAL IMPACTS:	<p>Approximately \$20,000 has already been allocated to expand the scope of the County's Federal lobbyist.</p>
PUBLIC SERVICE EXPECTATIONS:	<p>No new cost in 2005/06; assessments of online service benefits may result in need for additional IT position or contract in 2006/07</p>
TOTAL COST OF PROPOSED ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN: (Includes General Plan Update)	<p>\$320,000-\$345,000</p>

* General planning expert, William Fulton estimates that even the smallest California cities must spend between \$200,000 and \$300,000 to complete an adequate general planning process. Placer County spent over \$2 million to complete its general plan update; Yolo County spent approximately \$775 thousand on its general plan update.