



COUNTY OF PLACER
Community Development/Resource Agency

**PLANNING
SERVICES DIVISION**

Michael J. Johnson, AICP
Agency Director

Paul Thompson, Deputy Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors
FROM: Michael J. Johnson, Agency Director
DATE: May 8, 2012
SUBJECT: **Sheridan General Plan Update Opportunities/Work Program**

ACTION REQUESTED

The Planning Services Division is providing the Board with a discussion about the proposed Sheridan General Plan Update work program for review and direction on update options.

SUMMARY

As the Board of Supervisors begins to discuss the adoption of the FY 2012/2013 Budget, Planning Services Division staff is looking for direction to initiate an update of the Sheridan General Plan in 2012. The entire work program is projected to take approximately two years. General fund support for contract services is not anticipated for FY 2012/2013 as the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) process is projected to begin in FY 2013/2014, midway through the work program.

BACKGROUND

Sheridan Townsite History

The Sheridan townsite was settled in 1855 along a stagecoach line that connected the region north to Marysville, south to Roseville and Sacramento, and east to foothill communities. The area east of Sheridan was the location of the Johnson Rancho, a 22,000-acre ranch that was one of the earliest European settlements in the area and the location of the Donner Party's original destination in 1847, and the site from which the rescue efforts were organized. Initial growth was healthy due to surrounding agricultural operations and the townsite being at a crossroads for surface transportation to points north and west. Ultimately, growth was hampered by a devastating fire and by the construction of the rail line that replaced many of the wagon trains that stopped in the town.

The townsite was subdivided by the December 16, 1911 plat in Book C of Maps, Page 56. The Plan area is approximately 2.6 square miles in area. The original townsite plat has created separately saleable parcels; most of which are 25' x 190' in area. Through lot consolidations, the average building site is around 10,000 square feet in area. That pattern of development has defined the townsite to this date with the commercial areas located along the original rail line, now State Route 65, and the townsite residential areas to the east. During the early years, homes were built on groups of lots depending on how much land a homeowner wanted. The homes had individual wells and septic systems, mostly using seepage pits. By the 1960s, the majority of structures in Sheridan had wells that were contaminated by the seepage pits. A federal loan/grant was secured to address the problem and in 1973, led to the construction of two public water wells, a water distribution system, a sewage

collection system, and two wastewater treatment ponds. Once completed, connection to both the sewer and water system within the townsite was required.

The Sheridan General Plan was originally adopted in 1976 (Attachment 2). The Sheridan General Plan provides plan assumptions, along with goals and objectives, which provide the County and Sheridan residents and businesses with policy guidance about the physical development of the Plan area. However, the 1976 Sheridan General Plan has done little to affect development; largely due to infrastructure constraints associated with the need for treated sewer and public water.

Between 1973 and 1985, several small sewer extensions were constructed, and approximately 50 new homes were built in the community. Then, due to lack of capacity in the wastewater treatment ponds, a moratorium was placed on new connections to the sewer system by the State of California. The moratorium and the lack of land and soil for leach fields resulted in no new homes built in Sheridan since 1985 with the exception of homes built where existing homes were removed. In general, growth has been static, and it is estimated that there are approximately 294 existing residential dwelling units in the Plan area today.

For non-residential land uses, there are approximately 15,000 square feet of commercial development located along Riosa Road and along the SR 65 frontage (13th Street). Sheridan's 42 acres of industrially zoned land straddles the existing SR 65 alignment. Current uses include recreational vehicle storage, polymer manufacturing, a landscape supplier, construction storage, and a port-a-potty servicing company. Other public/quasi-public land uses include the community center, fire station, churches, and the Sheridan Elementary School.

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Infrastructure constraints have affected development of the townsite since the 1976 Sheridan General Plan was adopted. Placer County Department of Facilities Services operates a treated public water supply and wastewater services system. Treated water is provided by a system of three public water wells connected to a central water distribution system. Water treatment is achieved at individual well heads. Facilities Services is currently upgrading the public water system. The upgrades include a new groundwater well, water storage tank, pumps and other supporting infrastructure. Wastewater treatment service includes a central collection system and treatment plant consisting of settlement ponds and spray fields. Upgrades to the existing wastewater treatment system have added approximately 70 equivalent dwelling unit connections.

State Route 65, a two-lane north-south arterial highway supporting regional traffic flows between Marysville/Yuba City and Sacramento, currently runs through the Sheridan General Plan area along the western margin of the town core. In 2006, the California Department of Transportation approved the State Route 65 Bypass Project, which will re-route regional traffic to the Bypass from a point approximately one-mile north of town and approximately one-half mile west of the current State Route 65 right-of-way. The Bypass is scheduled to be completed this spring. The Bypass will include an at-grade interchange with Riosa Road, which will connect to the current SR 65 right-of-way 100 yards north of the Union Pacific Railroad crossing northwest of the town core.

Lastly, in the past few years, the declining population of families with school age children in the area has resulted in the threat of closing the Sheridan Elementary school. However, to date, the school has remained open with a population of 85 students. There is a significant level of community support for the school, and sustaining and/or growing the student body population is of interest to the community.

Surrounding Area

The areas surrounding the townsite of Sheridan are dominated by agriculture and rural residential land uses. This has been the dominant land use pattern since the area was originally settled as evidenced by numerous old homesites and structures in the area. To the west lies a larger area of the County

(90+ square miles) designated Agriculture 80- acre minimum on the County's General Plan and is largely utilized for pastureland and rice production. The area to the north and northwest is one of the few areas of the County that has alluvial soils (from the Bear River) that are conducive to orchard production. To the east, northeast, and southeast, the zoning allows for more rural residential activities (20-acre minimum), but agriculture is still present in the form of irrigated and non-irrigated pasture. The Teichert aggregate and hard rock mine lies to the southeast, covers approximately 3,400 acres in area, and will be the dominant land use in this area for 40+ years once the project is initiated. The Cemex sand and gravel operation is located to the northeast adjacent to the Bear River.

The purpose of this update is to revisit the Sheridan General Plan to: evaluate whether the 35-year old *Assumptions and General Community Plan Goals and Policies* remain valid; determine what changes, if any, are needed to the document to ensure that it is internally consistent with the 1994 General Plan and other related policy documents; ensure consistency with land development programs and ordinances; and ensure that the Plan accurately reflects the community's sentiments about the pattern and form of community growth.

DISCUSSION

The "information gathering" phase of the General Plan review process has just started and staff will need to begin public outreach efforts through the Sheridan Municipal Advisory Council (MAC). The public outreach efforts will include the review of existing conditions in the community as compared to those conditions when the Plan was originally prepared (i.e., population, holding capacity, public services, traffic, infrastructure, changes in environmental conditions). It is anticipated that this work will take one year.

Staff is prepared to discuss with the Board of Supervisors a range of community plan update options and the necessary resources to complete the work program for this community plan update. A complete draft work program for Options 1 and Option 2 is provided in Attachment 2. Each alternative details necessary staffing, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements, and potential fiscal impacts. The options are listed below:

Option 1: Land Use and Policy Update:

Option 1A: Update Plan Based on Existing Community Plan Boundary: For this option, staff would make recommendations on various land use and zoning modifications based on community input and an analysis of the environmental and infrastructure constraints for the Plan area. Under this option a new policy document would be prepared and land uses within certain parts of the Community Plan would likely change based on recommendations from the community and in consideration of the Community Study Team. This is the general direction staff has taken on this effort to date in light of treated water and wastewater service enhancements undertaken by the Department of Facilities Services. An assessment of potential changes in land use is also appropriate given the new challenges and opportunities resulting from construction of the State Route 65 Bypass. The Option 1A work program (Attachment 2) would include a public outreach program utilizing the Sheridan MAC and would likely require an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to be prepared. The cost for this option is projected to be between \$150,000 to \$250,000, which would cover preparation of an EIR by a consultant.

Option 1B: Update Plan Based on Modified Community Plan Boundary: This option is similar to Option 1A, except that Community Plan boundary modifications could be considered. The modification to the Community Plan boundaries would change the footprint of the community plan to encompass the surrounding area, which has an influence on the township. The surrounding area to be considered encompasses the area from the north and west county line, east to McCourtney Road and south to Wise Road. Boundary changes would be based on recommendations from the Community Study Team and County staff. This option would

examine existing and future constraints and would evaluate the potential need to shift land use patterns due to Bypass construction. The scope of work would be the same as option 1A. The fiscal cost for this option would be the same as option 1A and is projected to be between \$150,000 to \$250,000, which would cover preparation of an EIR by a consultant.

Option 1C: Fairgrounds Relocation Option: This option is similar to Option 1B and would provide for a Community Plan boundary modification; however this option would also provide for an alternative that examines the feasibility of relocating the Placer County Fairgrounds Facility into the Sheridan Area. The existing Fairgrounds Facility is located in the City of Roseville off Washington Boulevard. In 1994, the County examined the feasibility of moving the Fairgrounds to a new location, but no specific location was identified. In 1997, the County prepared the Sunset Industrial Area Plan, and that Plan included a land use designation for a potential relocation of the fairgrounds operations. With the update of the Sheridan General Plan, a feasibility study could be prepared examining one or more sites within the new community plan area boundary where the fairgrounds could be located. The feasibility study would primarily focus on environmental and infrastructure constraints (particularly sewer and water) as well as the costs associated with providing access to the site. A land use designation could be applied to the Sheridan Area that would be similar to the Agricultural/ Fairgrounds Relocation Area identified in the Sunset Industrial Plan Area in 1997.

The scope of work for this option would be very similar Option 1A/B. The cost for this option would be the same as Option 1A and is projected to be between \$150,000 to \$250,000, which would cover preparation of an EIR by a consultant. Staff estimates that an additional \$100,000 may be required for a Fairgrounds Relocation Study and staff will evaluate the potential for cost sharing with stakeholders and other interested parties.

Option 2: Update Policy Document Only

Under this option, no changes to land use would be considered; only the policy document would be updated. This is similar to the update and adoption of the Meadow Vista Community Plan in 1996 and the Granite Bay Community Plan in 2012. The fiscal cost for this option is projected to be limited to staff time only, and CEQA requirements would likely be a Negative Declaration. Staff costs for the recent Granite Bay Community Plan Update was approximately \$200,000 expended over three years.

MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

At the April 11, 2012 Sheridan MAC meeting, staff presented the draft Sheridan Community Plan Update work program as an information item to the MAC. The community expressed support for the work program and expressed interest in a modified community boundary option that would be expanded into the surrounding area.

FISCAL SUMMARY

The Planning Services Division's FY12/13 budget has sufficient revenues to support the efforts of staff for options 1A (Existing Community Plan Boundary), 1B (Modified Community Plan Boundary and 2 (Policy Document Only). However, the Fairgrounds Relocation Study proposed in option 1C would require additional funds (estimated to be \$100,000) if initiated in FY12/13.

In addition, for options 1A, 1B, and 1C, it is expected that the Planning Services Division's FY13/14 budget will require General Fund monies for consultant contracts for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). EIR cost estimates range from \$150,000 to \$250,000 and will depend on the proposed land use changes with the Community Plan Update. Option 2, would not likely require additional funds beyond County staff time for FY13/14.

CONCLUSION

Upon receiving direction from the Board of Supervisors, Planning Services Division staff will prepare the final Sheridan Community Plan Update work program and will return to the Board with a projected budget for the work program.

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Services Division recommends the Board discuss the proposed Sheridan General Plan Update work program options and provide staff with direction on the preferred update option.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 – Sheridan Community Plan Work Program

Attachment 2 – Sheridan Community Plan Land Use Diagram (1976)

cc: Jim Houck, Chairman - Sheridan MAC
Mary Dietrich, Deputy Director of Facility Services