



COUNTY OF PLACER
Community Development/Resource Agency

Michael J. Johnson, AICP
Agency Director

PLANNING
SERVICES DIVISION

Paul Thompson, Deputy Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors
FROM: Michael J. Johnson, AICP
Agency Director
DATE: May 21, 2013
SUBJECT: PLACER COUNTY TARGETED GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT (PGCP T2012 0356)

ACTION REQUESTED

1. Conduct a Public Hearing to consider amendments to the 1994 Placer County General Plan,
2. Adopt the Negative Declaration for the Targeted General Plan Update, and
3. Adopt a Resolution amending the Placer County General Plan.

There is no net County cost associated with these actions.

BACKGROUND

The Placer County Planning Services Division requests that the Board of Supervisors adopt revisions to the 1994 Placer County General Plan. After a review of the Plan, staff is proposing a technical update that consists of edits, corrections, status updates, revised figures, and several new programs and policies necessary to comply with new State and Federal laws and associated requirements. The previously Board-adopted 2009 Housing Element will be incorporated into the new General Plan document as well. The proposed amendments do not modify General Plan land use designations, the land use map or the Capital Improvement Program.

It is expected that a more comprehensive rewrite of the General Plan will be commenced in Fiscal Year 2013/14 after the completion of the Placer County Conservation Plan and its associated environmental document. That work program is expected to be a two- to three year-effort that will result in a substantially new document.

State Government Code Section 65300 requires that each jurisdiction prepare and adopt a comprehensive, long-term plan (General Plan) for the physical development of the county or city. Government Code Section 65302 provides that "the general plan shall consist of a statement of development policies and shall include a diagram or diagrams and text setting forth objectives, principles, standards, and plan proposals."

State law requires that General Plans include the following seven mandatory elements:

- The *Land Use Element* designates the type, intensity, and general distribution of uses of land.

- The *Circulation Element* identifies the general location and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes and other local public utilities and facilities.
- The *Housing Element* assesses current and projected housing needs for all economic segments of the community.
- The *Conservation Element* addresses the conservation, development, and use of natural resources.
- The *Open Space Element* details plans and measures for the long-range preservation and conservation of open-space lands.
- The *Noise Element* identifies and addresses issues related to noise.
- The *Safety Element* establishes policies and programs to protect the community from risks associated with such things as seismic or geologic hazards, flooding, and wildfires.

In addition to these mandatory Elements, a community may also include optional Elements in its General Plan. Placer County's 1994 General Plan contains a Recreation and Cultural Resources Element, and issues associated with Public Facilities and Services are addressed a stand-alone chapter.

The objective of this update amendment is to keep the County's General Plan current by making adjustments to reflect changes in conditions and to incorporate state law and local policies and programs. The targeted update consists of technical modifications to the Policy Document, including revisions to diagrams, goals, policies and programs. The chief purpose for the modifications to text is to insure that the Policy Document is consistent with State law, and that the status, responsible departments and content of implementation programs are accurate. The 2009 Housing Element, adopted by the Board in May 2009, will be incorporated into the reprinted General Plan document and is not the subject of any amendments proposed herein.

Recommended modifications and additions to the General Plan are not intended to create physical changes to the physical environment that would have environmental impacts which cannot be avoided or mitigated. Changes that have the ability to create physical environmental impacts such as changes in land use designations or modification of the circulation policies have not been included in this update.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENTS SUMMARY

The General Plan contains detailed quality-of-life standards, an overall vision for build-out of the County, policies for guiding decision-makers, assessments of issues affecting the community, and supportive documentation such as maps and tables. Key to each Element are goals and policies which provide the basis for the General Plan being a long-range policy document. Many of the goals and policies from the 1994 General Plan are still applicable today and remain in the updated document. Other goals and policies have been changed or added to address new/changed conditions.

Edited policies or programs reflect conditions that have changed since the General Plan was adopted in 1994, such as an implementation program that has now been completed or a policy calling for an ordinance or other action that has since been implemented. Revised and new target dates for implementation measures were made where appropriate.

Deleted policies or programs were out of date, unable or inappropriate to be implemented based on changed conditions, legislation or circumstances, or consolidated in another policy.

New text has been added throughout the General Plan to reflect trends in planning (i.e., fire-safe and Complete Streets principles), reflect new legislation that will be subject to separate environmental review upon implementation, and previous General Plan

amendments that have been subject to prior environmental review upon Board of Supervisors' adoption.

Basic grammar, spelling and punctuation revisions and elimination of redundancy. Department or division names were also updated.

A summary of the proposed changes is provided in Attachment 2. Actual proposed changes to the General Plan are provided in Attachment 3, where changes are shown as underlined and deleted sections are ~~stricken~~.

FUTURE GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

It is anticipated that the County will begin a comprehensive update to the 1994 General Plan in 2014. That work program is expected to be a multi-year effort.

CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence received to date (Attachment 6) includes a letter from the Central Valley Flood Protection Board seeking assurances the County complies with AB 162 that requires that the land use, conservation, safety and housing elements of General Plan address flood related matters. The County complies with current requirements. Caltrans submitted a letter suggesting ramp metering along Highway 65 be added to Policy 3.A.15. This change has been made.

Letters were also submitted by the Sierra Club, Placer Group and the Public Interest Coalition. Most of the issues raised dealt with programs and policies contained in the Housing Element that was reviewed and adopted by the Board in 2009. The Sierra Club identified a mistake in the public review draft General Plan document that eliminated the 160 acre Agriculture and 640 acre Timberland land use designation. This has been corrected in the document currently under review.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

On April 11, 2013, the Placer County Planning Commission adopted a motion (6-0-0-1 with Commissioner Sevison absent) to recommend that the Board of Supervisors adopt the Targeted General Plan Update and adopt a Negative Declaration. No members of the public spoke at this hearing.

Commissioners had questions regarding the hierarchy of County policy documents (General Plan versus Community Plans), the program in the 2009 Housing Element that recommended the County study increasing as-right occupancy of various special needs housing from six occupants to eight, and details on the new Program 4.11 encouraging consolidation of wastewater facilities.

Commissioners asked for an explanation of the Legacy and Disadvantaged Community discussion found on pages 60 and 61 of the strike-through document and minimum zoning requirements on Forest and Timberland-zoned properties. Additional information was provided to Commission members.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

Many of the proposed changes to the General Plan document have been subject to previous environmental review when they were adopted. A Negative Declaration has been prepared for this project and has been finalized pursuant to CEQA (Attachment 5). The Negative Declaration was released for public comment on January 15, 2013, and the public comment period ended on February 14, 2013. Based on the environmental assessment, the proposed project is not anticipated to have a significant impact on the environment. The Negative Declaration must be found to be adequate by the decision-making bodies to satisfy the requirements of CEQA, and findings for this purpose can be found at the end of this report.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Board of Supervisors take the following actions:

1. Adopt a Negative Declaration for the Targeted Placer County General Plan Amendment based on the following findings:
 - A. The Negative Declaration has been prepared as required by law. The Project is not expected to cause any significant adverse impacts.
 - B. There is no substantial evidence in the record as a whole that the project will have a significant effect on the environment.
 - C. The Negative Declaration for the project reflects the independent judgment and analysis of Placer County, which has exercised overall control and direction of its preparation.
 - D. The custodian of records for the project is the Placer County Planning Director, 3091 County Center Drive, Auburn CA, 95603.

2. Adopt a resolution amending the Placer County General Plan as set forth in Attachment 3 based on the following findings.
 - A. The proposed technical General Plan amendments promote the public health, safety, comfort, convenience, and general welfare of the citizens of Placer County.
 - B. The amendments are consistent with the provisions and applicable policies of the General Plan and are in compliance with applicable requirements of State law.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Proposed Resolution

Attachment 2: Summary of Proposed Changes

Attachment 3: Strikethrough/Underline Document (provided under separate cover and available at Clerk of the Board's office)

Attachment 4: Updated General Plan Document

Attachment 5: Negative Declaration

Attachment 6: Correspondence

- cc:
- Michael J. Johnson - CDRA Director
 - Paul Thompson - Deputy Director of Planning
 - Karin Schwab - County Counsel
 - Andrew Gaber, Public Works
 - Andy Fisher, Parks Division
 - Janelle Heinzler, Facility Services
 - Joshua Huntsinger, Agricultural Commissioner
 - Laura Rath - Environmental Health Services
 - Rebecca Taber - Engineering and Surveying Division
 - Rod Rodriguez, Office of Emergency Services
 - Tim Wegner - Chief Building Official