



Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning

Planning for the Challenges Ahead



Richard J. Bruckner
Director

July 10, 2014

TO: Esther L. Valadez, Chair
 Laura Shell, Vice Chair
 David W. Louie, Commissioner
 Curt Pedersen, Commissioner
 Pat Modugno, Commissioner

FROM: Connie Chung, AICP, Section Head
 General Plan Development and Housing Section

**SUBJECT: LOS ANGELES COUNTY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE
 PUBLIC HEARING: PROJECT NO. 02-305 (1-5)
 JULY 23, 2014 – AGENDA ITEM #5**

INTRODUCTION

The sixth public hearing in the General Plan Update series will take place on July 23, 2014. At this hearing, staff will update your Commission on the revisions made to the Draft General Plan during the public hearing process to date. The Draft has been revised based on the comments and testimony received from stakeholders, as well as additional consultation with other County departments. Staff will provide you with hardcopies of the revised Draft General Plan to replace the copy provided to your Commission in February 2014. The redlined Draft General Plan can also be found at the following link: <http://planning.lacounty.gov/generalplan/draft2014> (Redlined Version, July 10, 2014). Staff will highlight any subsequent revisions to the Draft General Plan at a later hearing date. Furthermore, as your Commission requested that staff report back on the feasibility of densities and development standards in the Draft MXD zone on May 28, 2014, staff will provide you with an analysis in a supplemental memo on July 17, 2014. Staff will be available to answer questions regarding this analysis at the July 23, 2014 public hearing.

The General Plan Update provides the policy framework to guide development in the unincorporated areas. The current General Plan, adopted in 1980, would be replaced by this update. All elements (except the Housing Element) would be replaced, as well as all figures and maps. The update program also proposes zone changes and amendments to Title 22 to restore consistency between the General Plan and its implementing documents.

PUBLIC HEARING FORMAT

To recap the public hearing format, the schedule below divides five hearings into discrete topics to help you manage the content of the General Plan Update, and to allow the public to attend hearings that are of specific interest to them. This schedule is a suggestion only and can be adjusted to provide additional meetings as needed.

February 26, 2014	Introduction and Planning Areas Framework; Land Use Element; Mobility Element
March 26, 2014	Air Quality Element, Conservation and Natural Resources Element; Parks and Recreation Element; Noise Element; Safety Element; Public

	Services and Facilities Element; Economic Development Element.
April 23, 2014	Significant Ecological Areas (SEA) Program Update and SEA Ordinance, and Hillside Management Area (HMA) Ordinance.
May 28, 2014	Zone changes and amendments to Title 22
June 25, 2014	Community Climate Action Plan SEA Program Update and SEA Ordinance, and HMA Ordinance (continued)
July 23, 2014	Edits to the Draft General Plan
August 6, 2014	SEA Program Update and SEA Ordinance, and HMA Ordinance (continued)
August 27, 2014	Recap/Final EIR/ALUC

After the discussion and receiving testimony from the public, staff recommends that you continue the public hearing to focus on the SEA Program Update and SEA Ordinance, and the HMA Ordinance to August 6, 2014, and the remaining aspects of the General Plan Update to the next date, August 27, 2014, as identified in the above schedule. A continuation to a certain date is necessary to provide adequate public notice of the next hearing.

JULY 23, 2014 DISCUSSION TOPICS

Edits To The Draft General Plan

Since the start of the public hearing process, several stakeholders have provided written comments and/or testified at a public hearing. Staff followed up with several of the stakeholders (which has been documented in the comment matrix), and made edits to the Draft General Plan and other related documents to address concerns and incorporate recommendations. Staff also made edits based on your Commission's recommendations and additional input from other County departments.

The following are highlights of some of the major issues that staff has addressed in the revisions to the Draft General Plan.

Rural Issues

Staff met with Acton residents and members of the Acton Town Council on March 13, 2014 and April 29, 2014. Highlights of the edits to address stakeholder concerns regarding rural issues include: the addition of language to distinguish rural and urban communities in terms of community design, infrastructure and mobility strategies throughout the Draft General Plan; and the addition of language modeled after language in the existing General Plan to describe rural, non-urban character, and the addition of a stand-alone goal for rural issues in the Land Use Element (which also addresses your Commission's recommendation).

Natural Resources

Stakeholder comments on natural resources are primarily focused on two areas: open space/biological resources and mineral resources.

Open Space and Biological Resources

Staff met with the California Native Plant Society (CANPS) and the Puente Hills Habitat Authority (PHHA) on April 2, 2014, and Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains (RCDSMM) on April 3, 2014. Highlights of the edits to address stakeholder concerns regarding open space and biological resources include: refinements to goals and policies in the Open Space Resources, Biological Resources and Local Water Resources sections, and the addition of a new implementation program to address woodlands conservation in the Conservation and Natural Resources Element; and the addition of policies that support the role of native vegetation in mitigating air quality impacts (which also addresses your Commission's recommendation), and policies regarding climate change adaptation in the Air Quality Element.

Mineral Resources

Staff coordinated with Freeport-McMoRan Oil & Gas (FMOG) over the phone to incorporate language regarding the protection of areas used for the drilling for and production of oil and natural gas in the Land Use Element and the Conservation and Natural Resources Element. Staff also worked with RCDSMM to add a policy regarding fracking in the Conservation and Natural Resources Element (which also addresses your Commission's recommendation). Finally, staff met with the California Construction and Industrial Materials Association (CalCIMA) to add additional policies regarding mineral extraction and processing facilities to ensure consistency with state law.

Significant Ecological Area (SEA) Program

Staff updated the SEA descriptions in Appendix E. Staff moved parts of the SEA descriptions for vegetation, wildlife, and sensitive biological resources to the SEA Program Guide.

In addition, staff received numerous comments on the SEA Ordinance and SEA Program from various stakeholders. Staff will address the comments on August 6, 2014.

Additional Recommendations

To address the Commission's recommendations, staff also added a Historic Preservation Ordinance to the Implementation Program, and modified Figure 13.2 Libraries Map to include Topanga Library in the Public Services and Facilities Element. Staff also added a new figure for noise contours in the Noise Element. Staff also made edits to the Draft General Plan based on additional comments from County departments. Furthermore, staff updated statistics with the latest data available, and other edits for clarity and consistency.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT

A Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was released for public review and comments on June 23, 2014. A 45-day public comment period (June 23, 2014-August 7, 2014) is provided pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) reporting requirements, and a Final EIR will be produced that includes all public comments. The Draft EIR was mailed to more than 350 stakeholder individuals and organizations, and emailed to more than 1,900 addresses. The Draft EIR is available on the DRP website, all County libraries, DRP field and main offices. The notice was also published in the Los Angeles Times on June 23, 2014. We anticipate this

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document to be available to you in final form no later than by the suggested August 27, 2014 hearing date.

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff has updated the Commission's matrix to manage stakeholder comments and responses to date. The matrix¹ can be found on the Department's General Plan Update webpage.²

NOTIFICATION

A notice of public hearing and availability of the General Plan Update was mailed in mid-January 2014. The notice was prepared and distributed pursuant to Section 22.60.174 of the County Zoning Ordinance. Notices were mailed to more than 40,000 property owners whose parcels are located in General Plan major policy areas. Notices were also distributed to more than 3,000 stakeholder individuals and organizations, and emailed to more than 1,200 addresses. Furthermore, the Draft was made available on the DRP web site, in all County libraries, DRP field offices and other suggested locations. The notice was also published in 16 newspapers, including one Spanish language newspaper, of general circulation in the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County between January 23, 2014 and January 27, 2014.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

On June 25, 2014, your Commission continued the hearing to August 6, 2014 to focus on the SEA Program and Ordinance and the Hillside Management Areas Ordinance. Staff recommends that you also continue the hearing to August 27, 2014 to discuss the remaining aspects of the General Plan Update.

I MOVE THAT IN ADDITION TO CONTINUING THE HEARING TO AUGUST 6, 2014 TO ALLOW CONTINUED DISCUSSION ON THE HILLSIDE MANAGEMENT AREAS AND THE SIGNIFICANT ECOLOGICAL AREAS PROGRAM, THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION CONTINUE THE REMAINING ASPECTS OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE TO AUGUST 27, 2014.

¹ <http://planning.lacounty.gov/generalplan/comments2014>

² <http://planning.lacounty.gov/generalplan/draft2014>