

**COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO
CALIFORNIA**

For the Agenda of:
March 14, 2007
Timed: 2:00 pm

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Department of Planning and Community Development

Subject: **WORKSHOP #23 ON THE COUNTY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE:
DISCUSSION ON AGRICULTURE & CONSERVATION THEMES, LAND
USE THEMES, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THEMES & MOBILITY
THEMES**

Contact: Surinder Singh (916) 874-5462
Lori Parrington (916) 874-8371
David Defanti (916) 874-6155

Overview

During the last Board Workshop, held on February 13, 2007, land use themes of the Public Review Draft General Plan 2030 (Draft Plan) were discussed. The Board took action on all of these themes except one: a request to expand the USB to include approximately 3,400 acres along the Sacramento County-El Dorado County border. Today, Planning Staff will report back on this final outstanding land use issue. In addition, staff will introduce other key themes of the Draft Plan, including Agriculture and Conservation themes, Human Services themes, Economic Development themes, and Mobility themes. There is one additional workshop scheduled (tentatively set for April 11th) prior to the beginning of the environmental review process.

Recommendations

1. Consider the results of the public outreach program and additional public testimony during workshops on the Public Review Draft General Plan Update.
2. Direct Planning staff to transmit the draft updated General Plan to the Department of Environmental Review and Assessment for environmental analysis after the final General Plan Workshop (tentatively scheduled for April 11, 2007) and direct the Department of Environmental Review and Assessment to initiate environmental review.
3. Deny request to expand the USB to include approximately 3,400 acres situated along the Sacramento County - El Dorado County border.

Measures/Evaluation

Not applicable.

Fiscal Impact

None.

BACKGROUND:

During the last Board Workshop, held on February 13, 2007, Planning staff revisited key land use themes of the Public Review Draft General Plan 2030 (Draft Plan). The Board took action on all of these themes except one: a request to expand the USB to include approximately 3,400 acres along the Sacramento County-El Dorado County border. Your Board directed staff to report back during today's workshop with more information regarding this request, including details about land use and transportation plans in El Dorado County for land adjacent to this area.

During the previous workshop, your Board also directed staff to initiate a General Plan Amendment to designate the segment of White Rock Road from Sunrise Boulevard to the Rancho Cordova city boundary as a pre-2010 roadway and designate the segment from Rancho Cordova city boundary to the Sacramento-El Dorado County line as a pre-2010 arterial roadway. Finally, your Board directed staff to begin preliminary project development and environmental analysis of the White Rock Road project.

Today, Planning staff will provide detailed information regarding the final outstanding USB expansion request. In addition, Planning staff and representatives of other County departments will walk through a number of new chapters for the Board of Supervisors' Workbook (Attachments "A," "D", "E" and "F") to present additional key themes of the Draft Plan, including:

- Agriculture, Open Space and Conservation Themes
- Human Services Themes
- Economic Development Themes
- Mobility Themes – Policy Discussion

The Economic Development and Mobility themes of the Draft Plan were originally scheduled to be discussed during previous workshops (Workshop #21 on January 31st and Workshop #22 on February 13th respectively), but due to lack of time, these themes were continued to today's Workshop. Key discussion points on these themes have been summarized below. For more detailed information, please refer to the staff reports from these previous workshops. They will be made available at today's workshop and can also be downloaded on the General Plan Update website at: www.saccounty.net/planning/gpupdate/gpu-index.html. The Draft Transportation Plan, which compliments the Draft Land Use Diagram, will be introduced and discussed at the next workshop.

There is one additional workshop tentatively scheduled prior to the beginning of the environmental review process. This workshop date has been moved from March 28th to the tentative date of April 11, 2007.

DISCUSSION:

1) AGRICULTURE AND CONSERVATION THEMES

Board of Supervisors' Workbook – Agriculture and Conservation Themes Chapter

During Workshop #6, held on March 3, 2005, Planning staff discussed several issues to be addressed in the Agricultural, Open Space and Conservation Elements of the General Plan. Subsequently, the Board directed staff to include revised and new policies in these elements. A brief summary of the Public Review Draft Agricultural, Open Space and Conservation Elements were presented to the Board during General Plan Workshop #19, held on November 15, 2006.

Planning staff have created a new Workbook chapter (Attachment “A”) that focuses on the key themes of these draft Elements. This Workbook chapter is set up to highlight key policy changes with specific references to relevant information found in the Draft Plan. In addition, pertinent public input found in the *General Plan Update Public Outreach Process Summary Report*, provided to your Board on October 31, 2006 has also been included. In the Workbook, the “References” sidebar lists all related policies for a subject topic. Individual key policies are also called out in the text description and provided in parenthesis.

A primary component of updating the conservation themes of the Draft Plan is to support the goals of the South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan (SSHCP). The information in the Workbook chapter aims to introduce some of these concepts that support the SSHCP. Realizing that draft SSHCP will be released soon, a great deal more information will be available when the General Plan returns to your Board during the public hearing process.

The following is a list of the key topics covered in the Elements:

Agriculture Themes

- Protection of Important Farmland
- Agri-Tourism

Conservation Themes

- Open Space Definition/Types of Open Space
- Open Space Vision Diagram
- Trails and Greenbelts
- Water Supply, Quality and Conservation
- Mineral Resources - Hardrock Mining
- Habitat Protection and Management
- Stream and River Restoration and Management
- Protection of Floodplains
- Tree Resources

For the Open Space Vision Diagram, Planning staff is recommending that the following clarifying statement be added to the Open Space Element text that describes this Vision Diagram (page 3 of the Open Space Element). Staff's proposed text is underlined below:

“The Open Space Vision Diagram serves as an illustrative representation of lands that Sacramento County views as supporting its overall conservation vision. It identifies existing and protected conservation sites, parks and agricultural lands, as well as general areas where future conservation may be directed. This Diagram serves as a policy guide that identifies known habitat resources and is not a plan for acquisition. The identification of public and private lands on the map does not imply a designation of permanent open space or a loss of property rights. Future mitigation and conservation will only be directed towards willing landowners. The map was compiled from a review of the County’s Open Space Component Maps which offer more specific delineations of important farmlands, ranchlands, environmental constraints, natural resources, and valuable habitat.”

Staff from the Planning Department’s General Plan and Open Space teams will be on hand today to introduce your Board to the key themes in your Workbook. The County’s Agricultural Commissioner is also in attendance to help answer any questions related to agricultural issues.

East Sacramento County Open Space Project Report

During the November 15, 2006 General Plan Workshop, Supervisor Nottoli asked staff whether or not the outcomes of the East Sacramento County Open Space Project Report (East County Report), namely the recommendations within the “toolbox,” were incorporated into the Draft Agricultural, Open Space and/or Conservation Elements.

Planning staff has evaluated the East County Report and its recommendations, presented to your Board in June 2002, against the policies included in these Elements. Attachment “B” indicates which Draft Plan policies and implementation measures address the concepts or “tools” identified in the East County Report. Several of these tools were part of the existing 1993 General Plan and have been carried over to the Draft Plan, including:

- Conservation easements
- Cluster zoning
- County purchase of property to preserve open space
- Sale to private land trust
- Public and private recreation

The Draft Plan introduces an Implementation Measure for Safe Harbor agreements, which was also identified in the East County Report. In addition, the revised Williamson Act policies and new Agri-tourism policies in the Draft Agricultural Element also work toward many of the ideas raised in the East County Report.

Planning staff reviewed Appendix B in the East County Report, which outlined the recommended General Plan modifications to the Agricultural and Open Space Elements. Staff considers many of the proposed policy changes too specific for the General Plan. For example, one of the proposed policies addressing conservation easements stated that, “The value of the easement is subject to negotiation”. This language is better suited to setting up individual easements with property owners, and possibly to be used as part of a conservation easement agreement, rather than functioning as General Plan policy language.

2) RESPONSE TO BOARD COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS RE: LAND USE THEMES

USB Expansion Request near Sacramento County-El Dorado County Line

During the last Board workshop, your Board briefly discussed a private property owner’s request to expand the Urban Services Boundary (USB) to include approximately 3,400 acres along the Sacramento County-El Dorado County border so that it may be developed with urban uses during the 2005-2030 planning period. This area (herein referred to as the “County Line Area”) stretches approximately 8 miles along the County line, from White Rock Road to the Cosumnes River.

As indicated in previous staff reports and discussed during past General Plan Update Workshops, staff does not support any expansion of the USB. However, staff did not have adequate information on hand at the last Board Workshop to answer detailed questions regarding pending or approved land use and transportation plans in El Dorado County adjacent to this property. As such, your Board asked staff for more information so that an informed decision could be made during today’s workshop. In response, staff met with El Dorado County planning staff to discuss development on the ground today, current applications that may result in additional development, as well as their plans for future growth. In addition, staff conducted a detailed analysis of the USB expansion request, including its potential impacts. This analysis, as well as the outcome of the meeting with El Dorado County planning staff, is provided in Attachment “C”. A synopsis of staff’s analysis of this USB expansion request is provided below:

- **Compatibility with SACOG’s adopted Blueprint Vision** - The County Line Area is inconsistent with SACOG’s adopted 2050 Blueprint Vision, as the Vision shows this area as open space through 2050 and beyond. Expansion of the USB in this area also contradicts the core principles on which the Blueprint was founded.
- **Traffic Impacts** – Development in this area will result in a considerable increase in traffic in a sparsely populated rural area far from the urban core, necessitating numerous roadway improvement projects while providing limited potential for public transit.
- **Holding Capacity** – Two identified UPA expansion areas (the 12,500 acre Jackson Highway area and 8,000 acre area east of Grantline) will provide far more acreage than is needed to accommodate the target of 23,000 new residential units by 2030.

- **Infrastructure and Municipal Services Costs** – Developing this area would require Sacramento County to make unanticipated and potentially costly investments to provide residents with municipal services and necessary infrastructure.
- **Affects on Environmental Review Process** – Including this area in the USB will expand the scope of the EIR, prolong the EIR preparation process, and ultimately lead to a more complex and costly environmental analysis of the draft General Plan.

Comments Received on Land Use and Public Health

During the last Board Workshop, comments were received by Sacramento County's Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regarding the draft Land Use Element. DHHS staff suggested changes to the draft Element that would highlight the importance of addressing public health via land use planning. This focus on the role of public health in land use planning has become an increasingly visible connection, including pending legislation that allows local health officers to participate in the local land use and transportation planning process, sponsored by the Health Officers Association of California in AB 437. With your Board's consent, staff will make minor changes to the Land Use Element to underscore the need to address public health through land use planning processes. Staff will incorporate only those components of the comments that are consistent with direction already established by your Board.

3) HUMAN SERVICES THEMES

Board of Supervisors' Workbook – Human Services Themes Chapter

A preliminary draft Human Services Element was presented to the Board of Supervisors during the Sept. 21, 2005 workshop on the General Plan Update. During this workshop, your Board conceptually endorsed the concept and need to be proactive in planning for human service facility siting. The existing Human Services Element, as adopted on March 2, 1994, provides an outline for the delivery of social services in Sacramento County. Your Board requested that this Element be updated to focus on the integration of human services planning with land use and transportation planning.

The Human Services Element of the Public Review Draft General Plan proposes an approach for examining the social consequences of various development proposals and to enhance the County's capacity to interact with the physical planning process for new growth and existing communities in order to create whole and sustainable communities. Human services are recognized as an integral part of the fabric of the community, and development strategies have been identified to promote self-sufficient, complete and integrated communities.

Ensure available and physically accessible human services in each community

The Draft Human Services Element proposes several policies to ensure that each community has access to human services, that these services are physically accessible, and that they are co-located or integrated as much as possible or appropriate. Emphasis is placed on ease of service availability, accessibility, prevention, service integration, public/private partnerships, leveraging of resources, and neighborhood service provision. Additionally, human services will be focused in transportation corridors in order to increase accessibility.

Establish human service infrastructure as a component of land use policy and planning

The draft Human Services Element establishes an objective to ensure that Sacramento County has a planning system that recognizes and reacts to the identified need for a human services infrastructure associated with growth, population shift and/or redevelopment. This includes collaboration and information sharing with Community Planning Advisory Councils, human service providers, and others to project needs and promote placement of human services facilities as part of the planning process. The Human Services Element identifies policies in which project level proposals will be subject to selection criteria established by the Planning Department and a human services review body and calls for participation from the human services review body on new growth and commercial corridor planning bodies. The Element will also indicate what types of services are most needed in particular infill, commercial corridor and new growth areas, with plans prepared for new growth areas to include designations to identify sites for future human services.

Planning staff has created a new Workbook chapter (Attachment “D”) that focuses on key themes of the Human Services Element. Staff from Sacramento County Health and Human Services and the Community Planning Service Council will be on hand today to answer any questions.

4) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THEMES

Board of Supervisors’ Workbook – Economic Development Themes Chapter

During Workshop #4, held on December 1, 2004, Planning and Economic Development staff introduced the concept of including a new Economic Development Element in the General Plan. Subsequently, the Board directed staff to craft the new Element based on a number of key themes/objectives presented during the Board Workshop. The resulting Public Review Draft Economic Development Element contains eight distinct sections/themes:

- Balanced Mix of Land Uses
- Regional Sales Tax Strategy
- New Growth Areas
- Commercial Corridor Revitalization
- Agriculture and Agricultural Tourism
- McClellan Park and Mather Field
- Business Retention, Attraction, Development and Recruitment
- Sports, Tourism and the Arts

Planning and Economic Development Department staff has created a new Workbook chapter (Attachment "E") that focuses on these key themes. Although these themes form the backbone of the Economic Development Element, they are also woven into a number of other General Plan Elements, the most notable of which include Land Use, Agricultural and Open Space. As such, the new Workbook chapter includes specific references to relevant information in other General Plan Elements and Diagrams, as well as pertinent public input found in the *General Plan Update Public Outreach Process Summary Report*, provided to your Board on October 31, 2006. Economic Development Department staff will be on hand today to introduce these key themes.

5) MOBILITY THEMES

The Public Review Draft General Plan includes a revised Circulation Element. During this workshop, Department of Transportation staff will present key policies of this revised Element. The Draft Transportation Plan, which compliments the Draft Land Use Diagram, will be introduced and discussed at the next workshop, tentatively scheduled for April 11, 2007. The Draft Circulation Element provides the framework for Sacramento County decisions concerning the countywide transportation system, which includes various transportation modes and related facilities. It also provides for coordination with the cities and unincorporated communities within the county, with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan adopted by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), and with State and Federal agencies that fund and manage transportation facilities within the county. The Element is divided into two sections. The first section describes the County's Transportation Plan and functional roadway classification system and the second section establish goals, policies and implementation programs organized into six sections: Streets and Highways; Transit; Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities; Transportation System Management; Rail Transportation; and Air Transportation.

The main theme of the draft Circulation Element is to provide for mobility through choices. Rather than invest in one or two modes of travel, the intent is to invest in all modes of travel so that the residents of Sacramento County have access to multiple viable and efficient transportation alternatives. This integrated and balanced transportation system requires investment in not only the roadway system, but also substantial investment in transit, bicycling, and pedestrian modes of travel. The growth management strategy of this General Plan update directs much of the anticipated growth in housing and employment to infill development and within existing commercial corridors. As the density of existing and new communities and commercial corridors increases, a greater demand on mobility through choices is a prerequisite to healthy, vigorous, and self-sustaining communities.

This Circulation Element not only compliments and supports the anticipated growth in housing, retail, and employment, but also improves the existing deficiencies in mobility within the County. True to the theme of this Element, the Circulation Element relies heavily on creating complete streets, offering choices in the mode of transportation, including transit, bicycle, and pedestrian modes, with each mode interconnected to provide greater overall mobility.

Department of Transportation and Planning staff has created a new Workbook chapter (Attachment "F") that focuses on key themes of the Circulation Element. They will be on hand today to introduce your Board to these key themes and to answer any questions.

NEXT STEPS:

The last scheduled workshop to review the Draft Plan and to consider input and feedback received during the community outreach process is tentatively scheduled for April 11, 2007. This workshop is intended to continue the Mobility Themes discussion, as well as to address and comments or questions received during today's workshop. At this final scheduled workshop, Planning staff is recommending that your Board direct staff to transmit the draft updated General Plan to the Department of Environmental Review and Assessment (DERA) for environmental analysis and direct DERA to initiate environmental review. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be prepared to assess the environmental impacts of implementing this Plan. Public hearings before the Planning Commission and your Board will be initiated following the release of the Draft EIR.

CONCLUSION:

Today's workshop was scheduled to finalize discussions on the key Land Use Themes of the Public Draft General Plan 2030, as well as to discuss the key Agriculture and Conservation related themes, Human Services themes, Economic Development themes, and Mobility themes. One additional workshop is tentatively scheduled on April 11, 2007 to discuss remaining issues relating to the Draft Plan before it is sent to the Department of Environmental Review and Assessment (DERA) for environmental analysis.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Board of Supervisors Workbook - Agriculture and Conservation Themes Chapter
- B. East County Open Space Study and the Draft General Plan
- C. County Line Area USB Expansion Request Analysis
- D. Board of Supervisors Workbook - Human Services Themes Chapter
- E. Board of Supervisors Workbook - Economic Development Themes Chapter
- F. Board of Supervisors Workbook - Mobility Themes Chapter

3/7/07