

**COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO
CALIFORNIA**

For the Agenda of:
April 11, 2007
Timed: 2:15 pm

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Department of Planning and Community Development

Subject: **WORKSHOP #25 ON THE COUNTY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE:
DISCUSSION ON HUMAN SERVICES AND MOBILITY THEMES &
REPORT BACK ON AGRICULTURE AND CONSERVATION THEMES**

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Overview

During the last Board Workshop, held on March 27, 2007, the key Economic Development themes of the Draft Plan were introduced. Today, Planning staff will provide a report back on issues that arose at Workshop #23, held on March 14, 2007, regarding the key Agricultural and Conservation themes of the Draft Plan. Staff will also initiate a discussion on the Human Services and Mobility themes of the Draft Plan. The Draft Transportation Plan, which compliments the Draft Land Use Diagram, will be introduced and discussed today as well. Staff has scheduled one additional workshop prior to the beginning of the environmental review process. This workshop will be held at 3 pm on May 30, 2007.

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 (scheduled for May 30, 2007) and direct the Department of Environmental Review and Assessment to initiate environmental review.

Measures/Evaluation

Not applicable.

Fiscal Impact

None.

BACKGROUND:

During the last Board Workshop, held on March 27, 2007, the key Economic Development themes of the Public Review Draft General Plan 2030 (Draft Plan) were discussed. Your Board provided comments and requested a few minor changes, such as:

- Add a policy and supporting language regarding need for additional higher education facilities, including colleges and universities
- Add a policy and supporting language regarding the need to locate County employment centers and facilities to areas in need of economic revitalization (corridors, redevelopment areas, etc.)
- Report back on the Delta Protection Commission's request to pull out policies from the Delta Protection Plan and include them within existing General Plan Elements
- Change any references to "Mather Airfield" to "Mather Field," as this term better reflects the Mather complex in its entirety

During the prior Workshop, held on March 14, 2007, your Board asked Planning staff for more information on a number of issues related to the Land Use, Agricultural and Conservation themes of the Draft Plan, including:

- A. Land Use Designation change request for a parcel in Elverta, from Agricultural Cropland to Agricultural-Residential
- B. Request to show a 2-mile buffer around Eagle's Nest Airport on Sacramento County's Land Use Diagram
- C. Delta Protection Plan Reformatting
- D. Does the Draft Plan differentiate between urban and rural open space?
- E. Proposed changes to the Draft Plan regarding trails and infrastructure in response to Sacramento Valley Conservancy Letter
- F. Proposed changes to the Open Space Vision Map
- G. Information on pending Senate Bill 68 pertaining to mining
- H. Explore the possibility of the Williamson Act Easement Exchange Program
- I. Information on steps needed to enact Super Williamson Act in Sacramento County
- J. Need to conduct additional outreach to farmers and ranchers regarding proposed changes to the Agriculture Element
- K. Report back on the Resource Conservation Area (RCA) Land Use overlay designation and Silver Springs Lot P

This staff report contains detailed information on each of these issues. Today, Planning staff will report back on a handful of these issues. In addition, staff will walk through the key Human Services and Mobility themes of the Draft Plan. The Draft Transportation Plan, which compliments the Draft Land Use Diagram, will be introduced and discussed today as well. The

Mobility and Human Services themes of the Draft Plan were originally scheduled to be discussed during previous workshops (Workshop #22 on February 13th and Workshop #23 on March 14th 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.

Staff has scheduled one additional workshop prior to the beginning of the environmental review process. This workshop will be held on May 30, 2007 at 3:00 p.m.

DISCUSSION:

1) 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 “A”) 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.

2) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON ISSUES RAISED DURING PREVIOUS WORKSHOP

A. *Land Use Designation change request for a parcel in Elverta, from Agricultural Cropland to Agricultural-Residential*

During the last Board Workshop, the owner of a 34 acre parcel in Elverta requested that the Land Use Designation of this property be changed from Agricultural Cropland to Agricultural Residential. This parcel is located north of West Elverta Road and east of Rio Linda Blvd, outside of the Urban Policy Area (UPA). It is currently zoned AG-20 and is designated as AG-80 on the Rio Linda and Elverta Community Plan. Nearly the entire parcel is located within the 100-year floodplain. Adjacent parcels to the east and south are zoned for Agricultural-Residential uses (AR-2), while parcels immediately to the west are zoned for industrial uses (M-1). Parcels to the north are zoned AG-20. See Attachment “B” for maps illustrating current Land Use Diagram designations, Community Plan designations, zoning, and the 100-year floodplain.

The County has received numerous requests to change Land Use Designations via the General Plan Update process. As stated in previous staff reports, staff advocates that the proponents of such changes file private General Plan Amendment applications, as this is a more appropriate mechanism for considering the merits of their individual requests, especially given that nearly the entire parcel in question is located within the 100-year floodplain and the request is inconsistent with the Rio Linda and Elverta Community Plan. In addition, nearby neighbors would not be noticed regarding this proposed change in the same manner as if an application was filed. Even if this designation change was successfully processed via the General Plan Update process, the proponent would still need to file an application for a Community Plan Amendment and rezone. Therefore, staff recommends that the proponent file for a General Plan Amendment, Community Plan Amendment and rezone concurrently, rather than processing this request with the Draft Plan.

B. Request to Show a 2-mile Buffer Around Eagle's Nest Airport on Sacramento County's Land Use Diagram

During the Board Workshop held on March 14th 2007, Mr. W. David Wardall asked the County to show a 2-mile buffer around Eagles Nest Airport on Sacramento County's Land Use Diagram (see Attachment "C"). This airport is located in Amador County and is privately owned by a non-profit corporation that Mr. Wardall represents. During a subsequent conversation between staff and Mr. Wardall, he also asked that if any development is proposed within this 2-mile buffer, the owners of the airport should be notified so that they could provide comments. Lastly, he requested that if any residential development is approved within this area, an avigation easement should be granted to protect the continued viability of the airport. The issues are discussed in greater detail below.

- Request for 2-mile Buffer on Land Use Diagram & for Notification of Applications
Sacramento County's General Plan Land Use Diagram currently shows the clear zones, approach/departure zones, overflight areas and noise contours for all airports within Sacramento County (and one in Yolo County - Borges-Clarksburg) that have an approved Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) or, in the case of Rancho Murieta Airport, an approved Airport Land Use Policy Plan (ALUP). Mr. Wardall informed Planning staff that, due to the Eagles Nest airport's small size and private ownership, there is no adopted CLUP or ALUP. Staff verified this information with the Caltrans Division of Aeronautics. As such, information for this airport that would normally be illustrated on the Land Use Diagram (including the clear zones, approach/departure zones, overflight area and noise contours) does not readily exist.

Since this information is not available, Planning staff agrees that showing the 2-mile buffer will help Sacramento County take this airport into account when making land use decisions. Therefore, staff proposes that the 2-mile buffer be shown on the Land Use Diagram, along with Amador County's General Plan Land Use designations around Eagles Nest airport.

- Request to be Notified of Applications within 2-mile Buffer
Sacramento County will be implementing a new software package this month that will allow members of the public to visit Sacramento County's web site and review details of all applications pending at the Planning Department. Planning staff recommends that the Eagles Nest owners group visit Sacramento County's web site to see if any applications are filed that may be of interest to their airport, whether within the 2-mile buffer or not. The property owners group will have the opportunity to provide comments on the proposal during the project review process.
- Request for Avigation Easements
Policy NO-4 of Sacramento County's draft updated Noise Element would only require avigation easements for development that occurs within an adopted Airport Policy Area. Since there is no adopted Airport Policy Area for Eagles Nest, and since this airport is

outside of Sacramento County, this policy would not apply. Therefore, staff recommends that the granting of avigation easements for projects near the Eagles Nest airport be examined on a case-by-case basis, rather than as a policy of the General Plan.

C. Delta Protection Plan Reformatting

Linda Fiack, Executive Director of the Delta Protection Commission, has requested that the policies in the Delta Protection Plan be pulled out of the Plan and inserted directly into other Elements of the Draft General Plan. Since the Delta Protection Plan is an adopted Element of the existing General Plan, this is an issue of formatting, not one of policy. However, staff had two concerns regarding this request: 1) if the policies are pulled out of the Plan and dispersed throughout the General Plan, they may get “lost” within these Elements and not get the attention they deserve, and; 2) if the Delta Protection Plan is updated, it may be difficult to relocate and update these policies, as they may be scattered in upwards of a dozen separate Elements. Therefore, staff recommended to Ms. Fiack that instead, the policies and supporting text should be pulled out of the Delta Protection Plan and packaged in a new, separate Element titled “Delta Protection Element.” Staff spoke to Ms. Fiack about this suggested course of action, and she confirmed her support of the idea. Therefore, staff recommends that the Draft General Plan be reformatted to include a new Element, the Delta Protection Element, which will contain pertinent intent language and all of the policies currently found within the Delta Protection Plan.

D. Does the Draft Plan differentiate between urban and rural open space?

During the March 14, 2007 General Plan Workshop, staff reviewed the open space definition included in the Draft Plan Open Space Element. This definition identifies open space areas as “largely un-fragmented areas of undeveloped land that are set aside primarily to preserve and/or enhance the County’s wildlife habitat, agricultural productivity and recreational opportunities” (Open Space Element, page 1). Your Board asked staff if urban open space is addressed anywhere in the Draft Plan. Currently, the Draft Plan only addresses this type of open space through the Recreation land use designation on the County’s Land Use Diagram. Therefore, staff is now recommending that the Open Space Element include definitions of both rural and urban open spaces to adequately address the various types of natural and recreational amenities found throughout the County. Staff’s recommended language related to urban open space is outlined in Attachment “D” of this staff report.

E. Proposed changes to the Draft Plan regarding Trails and Infrastructure in Response to Sacramento Valley Conservancy Letter

At the March 14, 2007 General Plan Workshop, Ms. Aimee Rutledge, Executive Director of the Sacramento Valley Conservancy, presented a letter to your Board directing staff to develop policies addressing: (1) the placement of public infrastructure needs (such as sewers

and roads) near open space preserves; and (2) grade-separated crossings at intersections between major roadways and class 1 separated, non-motorized trail systems and open space preserves.

In response to these requests by the Sacramento Valley Conservancy, staff is recommending that revised/new policies be added to the Open Space and Conservation Elements. These proposed changes are outlined in Attachment “D” of this staff report. Staff met with Ms. Rutledge on March 30, 2007 to review and discuss these proposed changes and she supports staff’s recommendations.

The Draft Transportation Plan includes information regarding grade-separated crossings at certain intersections between major roadways and certain existing or planned trail systems throughout the County. Text describing the grade separation designation has been created by staff and will be included in the Draft Circulation Element.

F. Proposed changes to the Open Space Vision Map

During the March 14th General Plan Workshop, comments were received from the public regarding the Draft Open Space Vision Map shown in the Open Space Element. Ms. Alta Tura mentioned that there were a couple of areas not included on the Open Space Vision Diagram (Vision Diagram); the first being the area just west and north of Rancho Murietta along Latrobe Road that include grassland areas, Crevice Creek and a tributary of Deer Creek and the second area located at the north end of the Agricultural-Residential area along Dillard Road that consist of large parcels that are currently grasslands and Swainson’s Hawk area. Ms. Tura commented that since the Vision Diagram serves as a guide to where resources in Sacramento County are located, she did not want anything to be inadvertently missed.

In light of comments received at the March 14th workshop, staff has discussed the basis of the Open Space Vision Diagram and the intent of the information shown; which was to serve as an illustration of the natural resources and agricultural lands located in the County. Due to this intent, staff is recommending several changes to the Draft Open Space Element. These changes are detailed in Attachment “D” and include:

- Renaming the Open Space Vision Diagram included in the Public Review Draft General Plan to the “Open Space Composite Map”, which serves as a “snapshot” of the natural resources and agricultural lands throughout Sacramento County;
- Including a *new* Open Space Vision Diagram in the Open Space Element that adequately reflects the County’s overall conservation vision. This vision is based on a set of open space/rural principles that staff is proposing be outlined in the Draft Open Space Element; and

- Revising and adding new text on page 3 of the Open Space Element to reflect the changes outlined above.

With these proposed changes, the areas mentioned by Ms. Tura on March 14th are now shown on the Open Space Composite Map. Staff met with Ms. Tura on March 30, 2007 to review these changes and modifications. Ms. Tura supports staff's recommendations.

G. Information on pending Senate Bill 68 pertaining to mining

During the Board Workshop held on March 14th 2007, recent state legislation related to mining was briefly discussed, including the status of Senate Bill 68 (SB68). This bill was introduced in the State Legislature in January 2007 and, at the time of this staff report preparation, is scheduled for a hearing before the Natural Resources and Water Committee on April 24, 2007. The major provisions of SB 68 are included in Attachment "D". The most significant proposed changes include:

- Prohibiting the power of any city or county to regulate the use of buildings, structures, and land in an area classified by the State Geologist or designated by the State Mining and Geology Board (board) as an area that contains mineral deposits and is an area of regional or statewide significance; and
- Prohibiting a city or county, in any area classified by the State Geologist or designated by the board as an area that contains mineral deposits and is an area of regional or statewide significance, in either its general plan, or in its resource management plan, from allowing the specific area to be used for any use that is inconsistent with mineral excavation and production until commercial production of the area is completed.

In speaking with the California Geological Survey, Planning staff determined that, while the County does have aggregate resource areas, none have been designated by the State as areas of regional or statewide significance. Given this fact, it appears that some of the provisions of this bill would currently not apply to Sacramento County. However, anyone can file a petition with the State Mining and Geology Board to identify an area as being of regional or statewide importance. The petitioner would have to pay for a study to look at the aggregate resources as well as conduct a market study to look at the market area and the need for such resources. A public hearing would then be held by the State regarding any potential regional or statewide importance designation.

Planning staff is currently working with the County's legislative advocate to oppose this bill as written since the proposed amendments are inconsistent with the County's Legislative Policy on Home Rule, including land use authority that should properly belong to local governments.

H. Explore the possibility of the Williamson Act Easement Exchange Program

During public testimony at the March 14, 2007 General Plan Workshop, Mr. Bill Geyer mentioned the California Department of Conservation's Williamson Act Easement Exchange Program, which is an alternative to paying the cancellation fee required to rescind an existing Williamson Act contract. Under this program, if certain specific circumstances are met, an in perpetuity agricultural conservation easement may be placed on land at the same time an existing Williamson Act contract is rescinded. These exchange proposals are initiated by the landowner, must be approved by the County Board of Supervisors and then are sent to the California Department of Conservation for a final decision.

Details of this program are included in Attachment "D" of this staff report, including the criteria used by the State when reviewing easement exchange proposals. Staff believes that this program is a viable alternative to paying a Williamson Act cancellation fee and helps to maintain land in agricultural uses. These exchanges can be handled on a case-by-case basis as individual landowners bring their proposals forward for review and approval.

I. Information on steps needed to enact Super Williamson Act in Sacramento County of Sacramento

The Draft Agricultural Element includes a policy and implementation measure to support and establish a Farmland Security Zones (also known as the Super Williamson Act) program in Sacramento County. This program establishes a contract for maintaining land in agricultural uses for twenty (20) years versus ten (10) years under the regular Williamson Act contracts. In exchange, a larger tax break is offered to the landowner (65% of the Williamson Act valuation or 65% of Prop 13 valuation, whichever is lower). The cancellation fee for a FSZ contract is 25% of the unrestricted market value versus 12.5% under the Williamson Act program.

During the March 14, 2007 workshop, the Board inquired if there was any special legislation or action needed to establish the FSZ program in Sacramento County. Creation of these FSZ contracts would occur under the same procedures that Williamson Act contracts are established through the County; a property owner makes a request to enter into a contract and the Board of Supervisors approves a resolution establishing an agricultural preserve for the subject area while also approving the contract. No other action is needed by the Board to establish the FSZ program and no amendments to the County Code are required.

According to conversations with the Assessor's Office and the Application Processing Division, no specific interest has been expressed to date by property owners regarding the FSZ program.

J. Need to conduct additional outreach to farmers and ranchers regarding proposed changes to the Agriculture Element

Planning staff has scheduled a meeting with the Sacramento County Farm Bureau and the Cattlemen's Association for April 9, 2007 to discuss proposed changes to the Agricultural, Economic Development and Conservation Elements of the Draft General Plan. In addition, staff continues to research successful agri-tourism programs in other jurisdictions and is beginning to scope how to implement a similar program in Sacramento County. As this effort progresses, meetings will be set up with interested organizations, stakeholders and landowners to further develop and ultimately initiate a pilot program.

K. Report back on the Resource Conservation Area (RCA) Land Use overlay designation and Silver Springs Lot P

The Draft Land Use Diagram, released in November 2006, shows the Resource Conservation Area (RCA) Land Use designation over Silver Springs Lot P (Parcel #122-0110-019-0000). As stated in the Draft Land Use Element, the purpose of the RCA combining designation "is to identify areas with special resource management needs that are currently preserved or permanently protected under conservation easements or another form of protection".

During previous General Plan workshops before your Board, the owners of Lot P, AKT Development, stated that the RCA designation was not appropriate for this site since the area does not have the same type of permanent protections as other RCA locations shown on the County's Land Use Diagram. Per direction from your Board, Planning staff has researched the matter and made a determination of the appropriateness of the RCA designation on Lot P.

Staff's recommendation is to remove the RCA overlay designation from Lot P. Staff recently discovered clear and compelling evidence, including documentation from the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Army Corps of Engineers, that suggests that Lot P was not protected in perpetuity and that deed restrictions allowed for the possibility that Lot P would be developed.

It is important to understand that the recommendation to remove the RCA land use designation from Lot P does not imply that Lot P should be developed. The scope of this analysis was only to determine if the RCA overlay was an appropriate designation for Lot P. It only implies that the proposed RCA designation as it is defined is not appropriate for this parcel. The merits of developing or maintaining Lot P as open space will need to be based on further analysis and review.

It should also be noted that the RCA itself does not preclude development from occurring. The RCA is simply a tool that informs Planning Staff and other analysts that there may be some form of protection status on a parcel and that further investigation is needed.

Further details regarding this issue are provided in Attachment "D" of this staff report.

3) MOBILITY THEMES

The Public Review Draft General Plan includes a revised Circulation Element. During today's workshop, Department of Transportation staff will introduce the key policies of this revised Element and will present the Draft Transportation Plan, which compliments the Draft Land Use Diagram. 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 "E") 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 scheduled for May 30, 2007. This upcoming workshop has been scheduled to address any comments or questions received during today's

workshop, as well as to give your Board an overview of the environmental analysis of the Draft General Plan. 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 report back on issues raised during the previous workshop pertaining to Agriculture and Conservation themes, as well as to introduce key Economic Development themes of the Draft Plan. One additional workshop is scheduled on May 30, 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 - Human Services Themes Chapter
- B. Elverta Parcel Land Use Diagram Change Request - Maps Illustrating Current Land Use Diagram Designations, Community Plan Designations, Zoning, and the 100-year Floodplain.
- C. Map Indicating the Proposed 2-mile Buffer Around Eagle's Nest Airport
- D. Additional Information on Issues Raised During Previous General Plan Workshops
 - Exhibit 1: Open Space Composite Map
 - Exhibit 2: Open Space Vision Diagram
- E. Board of Supervisors Workbook - Mobility Themes Chapter

4/4/07