

**COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO
CALIFORNIA**

For the Agenda of:
May 30, 2007
Timed: 9:30 am

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Department of Planning and Community Development

Subject: **WORKSHOP #26 ON THE COUNTY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE:
DISCUSSION ON MOBILITY THEMES & REPORT BACK ON
VARIOUS THEMES**

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Overview

During today's workshop, staff will introduce the key Mobility themes of the Public Review Draft General Plan 2030 (Draft Plan) and the Draft Transportation Plan. In addition, staff will respond to issues that came up during previous General Plan Board Workshops, including questions and concerns regarding the Human Services Element. Finally, staff will give a brief overview of the environmental review process. Staff is recommending that your Board transmit the Draft Plan to the Department of Environmental Review and Assessment (DERA) for environmental analysis at the end of this Workshop.

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. Adopt the attached Resolution (provided as Attachment "A") directing Planning staff to transmit the draft updated General Plan to DERA for environmental analysis, including changes to the Draft Plan summarized in Attachments "C", "D", "E", "F" and "I" and any additional changes made by your Board today during this Workshop, and direct DERA to initiate environmental review.
3. Direct staff to implement a Visioning Program for the Jackson Highway Area ("Jackson Area Vision"), as shown in Attachment "G".
4. Adopt the attached Resolution (Attachment "H") that authorizes the Planning Director to contract for consultant services for the Jackson Highway Visioning program in an amount not to exceed \$150,000 and in a form approved by County Counsel.
5. Approve the Economic Development Fund (ED Fund) as the appropriate source of funding for the Jackson Highway Visioning program and direct the Planning and Community Development Department to seek reimbursement from the Department of Economic Development.

Measures/Evaluation

The General Plan Update review process is near completion. Staff is recommending that your Board initiate the environmental assessment of this project, which represents the next phase of the General Plan Update process. This process will allow the County to analyze the environmental impacts of the project, conduct public hearings and adopt the updated General Plan (a document required under state law). This process will also enable the County to continue processing development applications.

The Jackson Highway Visioning program will lead to a better understanding of the potential for Jackson Planning Area, and how development in this area relates to the area outside of the Urban Policy Area (UPA). In addition, the resulting Vision will guide future master planning efforts and allow for more informed decisions regarding a number of strategic planning considerations relating to the Area, including development potential at full build out, phasing of development, location and conceptual layout of land uses, economic development opportunities, environmental issues, and public facilities and infrastructure.

Fiscal Impact

The Department of Environmental Review and Assessment has estimated the cost to prepare the Environmental Impact Report for the General Plan Update at approximately \$1,000,000. The cost for the General Plan Update Environmental Impact Report will be included in Planning's 2007-08 budget as an adjustment between the approved Proposed and Final budget. The cost for the Environmental Impact Report will be offset by revenue for a zero net affect to the General Fund allocation.

The Economic Development Fund is the appropriate source to fund the Jackson Area Vision program. The request is consistent with the goal, objectives and criteria that the Board established for funding projects from the ED Fund in January 2006. As proposed, the subject request will decrease the ED fund by \$150,000. There are no impacts to the General Fund. The Board has directed that the Grant Line East area be studied in the environmental review process for the Draft General Plan. No funding for a concurrent Visioning program has been identified for this area.

BACKGROUND:

During the last Board Workshop, held on April 11, 2007, the key Human Services themes of the Public Review Draft General Plan 2030 (Draft Plan) were introduced and discussed. Your Board provided comments and requested a few minor changes, such as:

- Integrating human services into the planning process is essential
- Addressing human services during preparation of master plans (i.e. Community, Specific or comprehensive plans), corridor plans, community plans, etc. makes sense, but may not at the project level
- Creating an additional review body may lead to another level of bureaucracy
- Some policies and implementation measures need work, including:

- Policies HS-9, HS-10 and HS-11 regarding review of planning projects by a human services review body
- Implementation Measure D on Page 7
- Language on page 3 regarding cities and human services should be reworded
- As currently worded, policy HS-1 may lead to over-concentration of human services in certain areas

In addition to the Human Services discussion, staff provided a report back on issues raised during Workshop #23, held on March 14, 2007. Finally, your Board asked staff to address Mr. Jack Sales' desire to include language in the Draft Plan regarding light pollution and outdoor lighting.

Today, staff will present the key Mobility themes of the Draft Plan. The Draft Transportation Plan, which compliments the Draft Land Use Diagram, will be introduced today as well. The Mobility theme of the Draft Plan was originally scheduled to be discussed during previous workshops (Workshop #23 on March 14th and Workshop #25 on April 11th), but due to lack of time, it was 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.sacounty.net/planning/gpupdate/gpu-index.html. Today, staff will also report back on a small number of outstanding issues regarding the Human Services, Open Space and Agricultural Themes of the Draft General Plan.

DISCUSSION:

1) 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 neighboring counties, 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 Circulation Element of the November 2006 Public Review Draft General Plan has been revised to include several new topics. This revised Circulation Element is provided as Attachment "I" of this staff report, with all changes shown in track-edit (underline/~~strikeout~~). Key revisions to the Element are listed below:

- New text to address transportation planning and health related impacts.

- New text to define the following Transportation Plan designations: regional rail, light rail, bus rapid transit, continuous right-turn lanes, urban interchanges, wildlife corridor/trails grade separation and transportation reservation corridor.
- New section, including goals, policies and implementation measures to discuss mobility and a balanced transportation network.

The revised draft Circulation Element consists of two main sections, as follows:

- The County's Transportation Plan (Attachment "C") including the proposed roadway system, transit system, and operational improvements and strategies to enhance mobility for all modes.
- The proposed goals, policies and implementation measures addressing the following subjects: Mobility; Streets and Highways; Transit; Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities; Transportation System Management; Rail Transportation; and Air Transportation.

An overarching theme of the draft Circulation Element is to provide for mobility through choices, so that the residents of Sacramento County have access to multiple viable and efficient transportation alternatives. This integrated transportation system requires balanced investment in the roadway, transit, bicycle and pedestrian systems. 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. True to this theme, the Circulation Element supports the development of complete streets offering choices in transportation modes that are interconnected to provide greater overall mobility.

While the draft Circulation Element compliments the proposed Land Use Element and supports the anticipated growth in housing, retail, and employment, it also recommends strategies and improvements to address the existing deficiencies in mobility within the County. Such deficiencies include insufficient capacity (roadway and transit) within key corridors to meet current and future travel demand; the lack of adequate "through traffic" corridors and the reliance on local streets to carry regional traffic; and the existing and growing backlog of roadway infrastructure rehabilitation needs. All of these deficiencies not only result in continued and exacerbated congestion and reduced safety, they impact the transportation system's ability to support the new growth anticipated by the Land Use Element. To address these deficiencies and develop a system that improves and sustains mobility for all modes, the Department of Transportation has utilized the results of the Mobility Strategies for County Corridors study as a key source of input in preparing the recommended Transportation Plan.

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. Staff is proposing text to be included in the Draft Circulation Element describing the grade separation designation.

Department of Transportation and Planning staff has created a new Workbook chapter (Attachment “B”) 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.

2) REPORT BACKS FROM PREVIOUS WORKSHOP

Outdoor Lighting and Light Pollution

During the April 11, 2007 General Plan Workshop, your Board requested that staff address light pollution concerns in the Draft General Plan. Staff is recommending that a ‘Light Pollution’ section be included in the Draft Land Use Element under Urban Design. The proposed language for this section is included in Attachment “E” of this staff report.

Rural and Urban Open Space Definitions

During the March 14, 2007 General Plan Workshop, staff reviewed the open space definition included in the Draft 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. At the April 11, 2007 General Plan Workshop, staff proposed language for the Open Space Element that defines both rural and urban open. Your Board asked for some additional changes to the urban open space definition. These changes have been included in the proposed language found in Attachment “E” of this staff report.

Open Space Vision Diagram

During the March 14th General Plan Workshop, comments were received from the public regarding the Open Space Vision Diagram shown in the Public Review Draft Open Space Element. In light of comments received, staff 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 recommended several changes to the Vision Diagram and text in the Draft Open Space Element at the April 11, 2007 Workshop. These proposed changes included:

- 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 on one map. This vision is based on a set of open space/rural principles that staff proposed be outlined in the Draft Open Space

Element and also reflects the goals of the South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan (SSHCP); and

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

Your Board discussed these proposed changes, including how to best present the information in a clear format, and asked that staff bring this item back to the May 30th General Plan Workshop for further discussion and comments.

Since General Plan Workshop #25 in April, Planning staff has continued to work on this Vision Diagram. A revised Draft Open Space Vision Diagram is included as Attachment “F”. Staff has revised the Vision Diagram to include four component maps displaying agricultural, habitat, floodplain and potential parkway and community separator open space areas. The main Vision Diagram was created by layering the four component maps into levels of open spaces resources. The first level represents areas where there are resources from all four component maps; the second level contains resources from three components; the third level contains resources from two components; and the fourth level represents areas of one component resource. Revised text for the Open Space Element describing the Vision Diagram is included in Attachment “E”.

Meeting with Agricultural and Ranching Interests

Per the Board’s request at the March 14, 2007 General Plan Workshop for additional outreach to the agricultural and ranching communities, County staff held two meetings with the Sacramento County Farm Bureau and the Sacramento Cattlemen’s Association on April 9 and May 3, 2007. Draft General Plan topics discussed at these meetings included:

- Agricultural Element –
 - Policies regarding protection of important farmlands;
 - Super Williamson Act program;
 - New Agri-tourism section.
- Policies in the Economic Development Element related to Agriculture;
- Policy in the Conservation Element related to soil resources; and
- Open Space Vision Diagram.

Both meetings were very productive and staff received very useful feedback. Based on comments staff received, proposed changes were made to certain policies, implementation measures and intent language in the Agricultural, Economic Development and Conservation Elements. A list of these proposed changes are included in Attachment “E” of this staff report. A key change requested by the meeting participants is the requirement for in-County mitigation for loss of important farmlands. The meeting participants also supported the policies in the Public Review Draft General Plan that expand protection to all categories of important farmland as defined by the California Department of Conservation.

Human Services Element

Staff met with members of the Community Services Planning Council (CSPC) and the Human Services Coordinating Council (HSCC) to discuss the comments received by your Board during the last General Plan Update Workshop held on April 11, 2007. Your Board offered comments regarding the necessity to incorporate human services as part of the planning process, concerns related to addressing human services at the project level, and several specific policies and implementation measures.

Changes have been made to the Human Services Element to clarify human services as part of the review process, as well as to clarify the proposed program to include human services in the long-range planning process through the designation of human services sites. Policy HS-9 has been modified to further explain the human services review process. The Planning Department has a project review process in place; projects are routinely forwarded to numerous County and non-County agencies for review and comment, including affected local park districts, school districts, and utility agencies. The HSCC would be added to this distribution list for project review. Comments received from the HSCC would then be included in the Planning Department's staff report and made available during the hearing process. This review would occur within the timeframe and structure currently in place, and would not add any additional steps to the overall review process.

Revised policy HS-10 and HS-11 would enable the County to establish a planning system that will recognize and react to human services needs early during the land use planning process. HS-10 requires that human services will be addressed during any new growth planning program, while HS-11 would allow for areas to be designated for human services need, similar to the designation of park sites to meet future recreational needs of residents. The complete proposed changes to the language of the Human Services element are included in Attachment "E" of this staff report.

3) OVERVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS OF DRAFT GENERAL PLAN

The Sacramento County General Plan Update is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which requires that hearing bodies and the public be informed about the significant environmental effects of a proposed project as part of the approval process, via Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs) or Negative Declarations. The Department of Environmental Review and Assessment (DERA) has determined that an EIR will be prepared for the General Plan Update. The first step in the EIR process is the release and distribution of a Notice of Preparation (NOP). An NOP is essentially a letter to various government agencies and the public to solicit input on the environmental review process. Once an NOP has been distributed, comprehensive studies will be conducted to analyze the entire General Plan Update and to identify any significant effects its implementation may have the environment. These includes studies on land use, air quality, traffic and circulation, noise, biological, cultural, hydrology, drainage, water supply, sewer service and community services including schools, parks, library, fire and sheriff services.

Once the studies are completed, a draft EIR will be released for public review. Staff anticipates a draft EIR release date of summer 2008. The Draft EIR will also identify mitigation measures to address any adverse impacts to the environment. The public will have an opportunity to

provide written comments on the EIR during the public review period. Upon the end of the Draft EIR review period, several hearings on the Draft General Plan and the EIR will be conducted with the Policy Planning Commission. These hearing are anticipated to begin in fall of 2008. A Final EIR will be prepared following the Policy Planning Commission decision and the project will be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors. Adoption of the General Plan is anticipated to occur by late 2008. The following table describes the anticipated scheduling for the General Plan Update EIR & hearing process.

<i>GP Update EIR Initiation</i>	<i>May 2007</i>
<i>Release Notice of Preparation</i>	<i>July 2007</i>
<i>Release Environment Impact Report</i>	<i>Summer 2008</i>
<i>Planning Commission & Board Hearings</i>	<i>Fall & Winter 2008</i>
<i>Final Adoption of General Plan</i>	<i>Late 2008</i>

The Draft EIR will analyze the following four growth management strategies proposed in the Draft General Plan to accommodate population, housing and job growth anticipated for the unincorporated area by 2030: build out of vacant and underutilized infill parcels, build out of planned communities, commercial corridor planning and expansion of the Urban Policy Area (UPA). The General Plan EIR will also analyze impacts associated with the planning of several proposed new growth areas including Easton, the areas west of Watt Avenue, the Jackson Highway Area and the area east of Grant Line Road.

Alternatives to these strategies can be analyzed at a complete and equal level of detail. The study of these alternatives during these EIR process will enable the Board of Supervisors to consider alternative areas during the public hearing process without rendering the environmental document inadequate. The process so far has focused on the identification of a preferred Land Use Diagram, draft Circulation Element and Transportation Plan, as well as other associated General Plan components. If the Board would like to identify specific alternatives, such as transportation alternatives, the Board can direct that the EIR analyze such alternatives. Otherwise, DERA will prepare alternatives as part of CEQA.

4) JACKSON HIGHWAY VISIONING PROGRAM

The Jackson Highway Visioning program was conceived as a proactive, County-led approach to capitalize on the enormous opportunities offered by the greater Jackson Area. The objective of the Vision effort, as indicated in the Draft Land Use Element, is “coordinated near- and long-term planning efforts for the development of the greater Jackson Area that creates cohesive and complete communities while protecting environmental resources.” As such, this Vision will span beyond the 2030 timeframe of the General Plan to ensure compatibility between near-term decision-making and the Area’s long-term development potential. This plan will strive to encourage the creation of new communities that are connected and balanced, while preventing piecemeal and haphazard development that can occur as large new communities emerge over an extended period of time.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) for this Visioning program was released on April 25, 2007. Proposals are due no later than June 1, 2007 at 5:00 p.m. All proposals will be reviewed shortly thereafter by a multi-disciplinary team. Depending on the number of proposals received,

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subsequent interviews may be scheduled with the top candidates. It is anticipated that a consultant will be selected on or around June 13, 2007, with execution of a contract following shortly thereafter. Planning is recommending the use of \$150,000 from the Economic Development Fund (ED Fund) to retain these consultant services.

It is important to note that while ED funds have been identified for the Jackson Highway Visioning program, no funds have been identified to study the Grant Line East area, an area included in the UPA of the Draft Plan during Board Workshop #22, held on February 13, 2007. Therefore, staff requested in the RFP that proposers include a separate scope and budget for this optional component. Funding for this optional component will be presented to your Board and discussed during the Planning Department's 2007/2008 budget hearings.

NEXT STEPS:

Today is last scheduled workshop to review the Draft Plan and to consider input and feedback received prior to identifying the draft project and initiating environmental review. This workshop was scheduled to address any comments or questions received during the last work workshop, to introduce the key Mobility themes, as well as to give your Board an overview of the environmental analysis of the Draft General Plan. 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) today 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.

Over the next few months, staff from the General Plan Update (GPU) Team of the Long Range Planning Division will coordinate with the Department of Environmental Review and Assessment during the preparation of the EIR. GPU staff will assist in the writing of the NOP and participate in scoping sessions to agree on the methodologies and assumptions that will guide the development of the technical studies for the EIR. GPU staff will also lead the Jackson Highway Visioning program, which will be initiated within the next few weeks. Additionally, GPU staff will conduct a series of the meetings to inform and educate the public on the key concepts of the Draft General Plan and to discuss the results of the fall 2006 General Plan public outreach program.

CONCLUSION:

Today's workshop was scheduled to report back on issues raised during the previous workshop pertaining to Human Services, as well as to introduce key Mobility themes of the Draft Plan. Staff is recommending that your Board forward the Draft Plan today to the Department of Environmental Review and Assessment (DERA) for environmental analysis.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Resolution of the Board of Supervisors to Transmit the Draft General Plan 2030 to the Department of Environmental Review and Assessment to Initiate the Environmental

Review Process for the Draft General Plan 2030

- B. Board of Supervisors Workbook - Mobility Themes Chapter
- C. Draft Transportation Plan
- D. Board-Reviewed and Approved Changes to the Public Review Draft General Plan
- E. New Proposed Changes to the Public Review Draft General Plan
- F. Draft Open Space Vision Diagram
- G. Map of Jackson Visioning Study Area
- H. Resolution of the Board of Supervisors Authorizing the Planning and Community Development Department to Conduct the Jackson Area Vision Program and Authorizing the Planning Director to Retain Associated Consultant Services
- I. Revised Circulation Element with Track-Edit Changes

5/23/07