



Planning Commission Staff Report

To: Planning Commission
From: Greg Smith, Associate Planner
Date: March 23, 2011(Continued from March 9, 2011)
Subject: Comprehensive General Plan Update and Environmental Impact Report:
Second Hearing

RECOMMENDATION

Discuss and comment on the Draft General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report, take public testimony, and continue the hearing to April 6, 2011.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Application Type: General Plan Amendment (GPA-2009-2841)

Applicant: City of Murrieta

Location: The City of Murrieta is located in southeastern Riverside County, and is comprised of 26,852 acres (41.96 square miles) of which 21,511 acres (33.61 square miles) is located within the City Limits and 5,341 acres (8.34 square miles) is located within the City's Sphere of Influence. Surrounding cities include Menifee to the north, Temecula to the south and east, Wildomar to the west, and unincorporated Riverside County to the north, south, and east.

Description: The General Plan 2035 is a comprehensive update of the 1994 General Plan, which includes an update of existing elements, as well as the addition of two elements. The General Plan 2035 comprises the following State mandated and optional elements: Land Use; Economic Development; Circulation; Healthy Community; Conservation; Recreation and Open Space; Air Quality; Noise; and Safety. The Housing Element is being updated in a separate process. In addition, a Climate Action Plan (CAP) is being prepared. The CAP is an implementing action of the General Plan 2035 that describes measures intended to reduce greenhouse emissions within City operations and the community at-large.

BACKGROUND

On March 9, 2011, the Planning Commission continued the hearing on the draft General Plan 2035 and the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) to March 23, 2011. The first of several meetings focused on providing the background for how the General Plan update has reached this point and a general overview of the draft documents.

Subsequent Planning Commission meetings will discuss, in greater detail, the specific General Plan elements, the goals and policies in those elements, and how they are tied to the environmental document (DEIR).

ANALYSIS

This second Planning Commission hearing will focus on the following elements:

- Circulation
- Safety
- Infrastructure
- Conservation

In addition, a discussion of the issues with the French Valley Airport Land Use Plan will be covered. Much of the discussion in the General Plan on airports is found in the Land Use Element. However, the goals and policies found in other elements, including the Circulation and Safety Elements, specifically applies to airports.

CIRCULATION ELEMENT

The Circulation Element represents the City's overall transportation plan to accommodate the movement of people and goods within and through the City. It establishes goals and policies to achieve a balanced transportation system that adequately serves the growth and development anticipated in the Land Use Element. *Government Code* Section 65302 (b) requires that a General Plan include the Circulation Element.

The Circulation Element provides thresholds for evaluating road segments and intersections based upon the Level of Service (LOS) determined for those locations. For example the LOS "D" or better is required for intersections during peak hours. Road segments generally need to operate at a LOS "C" or better.

Iteris is the sub-consultant working with RBF Consulting to run the traffic models, prepare the traffic analysis, and also prepare the Circulation Element. In order to maintain the value of the environmental document, as a program EIR, additional intersections were evaluated for the traffic study.

SAFETY ELEMENT

The Safety Element describes hazards that exist in Murrieta and the measures that the City is taking to address them. Some naturally occurring hazards may be unavoidable, however their impacts on communities can be reduced through planning and preparation. Thus, the Safety Element addresses geologic, seismic, flood, and fire hazards. This Element also addresses hazards created by human activity: hazardous materials and waste, aircraft hazards, and incidents that call for police protection. California *Government Code* Section 65302(g) requires that a General Plan include a Safety Element.

Public safety is a major component of the Safety Element. The Murrieta Police Department and Murrieta Fire Department have reviewed the draft General Plan and DEIR to ensure the documents are consistent with their department goals, policies, and existing and future needs in terms of personnel and facilities.

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

The purpose of the Conservation Element is to provide direction regarding the conservation, development, and utilization of natural and cultural resources. It serves as a guide for the City of Murrieta, its residents, and its businesses to understand what natural or other resources exist in the City, how development impacts these resources, and methods to maintain, preserve, or conserve these resources. The Conservation Element considers the following resources in the natural environment: water; hills and ridges; and mineral, paleontological, and biological resources. It also considers resources within the built environment: urban ecology, farmland, cultural, energy, and solid waste. *California Government Code Section 65302 (d) requires "that a General Plan include a conservation element for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources including water and its hydraulic force, forests, soils, rivers and other waters, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, minerals and other natural resources."*

INFRASTRUCTURE ELEMENT

In order to accommodate sustainable growth of Murrieta's resident population and employment centers, the City must actively plan for and allocate resources to infrastructure systems. This Element addresses facilities for water, wastewater, flood control, storm drainage, electricity and natural gas. It identifies infrastructure issues that affect General Plan implementation, seeking to ensure that adequate infrastructure is provided with all new development projects, and that infrastructure is maintained and upgraded as needed. This Element also seeks to encourage the expansion of recycled water systems throughout the City, as an important part of ensuring sufficient water supplies. *California Government Code Section 65302 (b) requires that the General Plan include "local public utilities and facilities, all correlated with the land use element of the plan."*

AIRPORT LAND USE

The General Plan discusses Airport land use under regional issues in the Land Use Element. Per the California State Aeronautics Act (*Public Utility Code Sections 21670 et. seq.*), the Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission (RCALUC) has two primary functions: 1) prepare and adopt and airport land use compatibility plan, and 2) review the plans, regulations, and other actions of local agencies and airport operations with the land use compatibility plan.

Section 5.1, the Land Use Section of the Environmental Impact Report discusses the history of the most recent Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans. This section also provides details on the Initial Study that was done to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act. The Initial Study provides a matrix of mitigation measures to address the residential and non-residential displacement, based on inconsistencies in the Airport Land Use Plan and surrounding land uses. Those inconsistencies were in the City of Murrieta, the City of Temecula and Riverside County. The

previous 2004 ALUCP had identified two areas of inconsistency in the City of Murrieta. In one of those areas an Airport Land Use Override was done by the City of Murrieta (Murrieta MarketPlace), and the Airport Land Use Commission has agreed to find the second area (west of Winchester Road) consistent with the ALUCP for a Rural Residential Land Use with a 2.5 Acre Minimum lot size.

APRIL MEETINGS:

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 6, 2011. If the Commission continues the hearing to that date, the next General Plan elements to be discussed are:

- Economic Development Element
- Air Quality Element
- Healthy Community Element

In addition, a discussion of the Climate Action Plan is proposed. The CAP is an implementation tool for the policies in the Air Quality, Infrastructure and other elements of the General Plan. The next meeting will discuss new State Laws that led to the inclusion of the CAP in the General Plan update.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

The City of Murrieta is the Lead Agency under *CEQA* and is responsible for preparing the Program EIR for the Murrieta General Plan 2035 (State Clearinghouse No. 20100111084). This Program EIR has been prepared in conformance with *CEQA* (*California Public Resources Code* [PRC] Section 21000 et seq.); *CEQA Guidelines* (*California Code of Regulations* [CCR], Title 14, Section 15000 et seq.); and the rules, regulations, and procedures for implementation of *CEQA*, as adopted by the City of Murrieta. The principal *CEQA Guidelines* sections governing content of this document are Sections 15120 through 15132 (Contents of Environmental Impact Reports), and Section 15168 (Program EIR).

The City has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) to address significant impacts that that were identified; including Land Use, Traffic and Circulation, Air Quality, Noise, and Parks and Recreation. A Statement of Overriding Considerations will be required to address those impacts that cannot be mitigated to a level of insignificance.

The DEIR is also being prepared with the intent that future development may tier from the *CEQA* document and the proposed mitigation, unless it is determined that any future proposed project presents significant impacts not considered and/or mitigated by this EIR. Tiering involves the use of a previous, and usually more complete, analysis that allows a proposed project to comply with *CEQA* regulations because the previous analysis addressed issues that could impact the proposed project.

A Notice of Availability (NOA)/Notice of Completion (NOC) were issued on February 7, 2011, and the 45-day review period ends on March 24, 2011. At the end of the 45-day review period, comments and responses to those comments will be incorporated into the document for the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR).


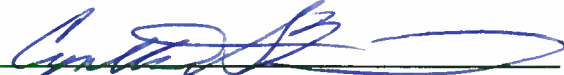

Section 5.0 of the EIR evaluates the impacts associated with the proposed General Plan 2035. This section contains a detailed environmental analysis of the existing conditions, project impacts, recommended mitigation measures, and unavoidable adverse impacts for a number of environmental



topic areas. Mitigation measures that are incorporated into the General Plan 2035 in the form of goals and policies are described and additional mitigation measures, which may be required to mitigate project impacts, are recommended. These additional mitigation measures will make up the Mitigation Monitoring Report (MMRP) that will become part of the environmental approval for the EIR.

NOTICING

The project was noticed in accordance with Section 16.76 of the Development Code with a display notice in *The Californian* newspaper for a minimum of 10 days prior to the hearing, and the posting of notices at City Hall as well as the main Fire Station. Notices were also mailed to property owners and the surrounding property owners for parcels included in the focus areas where land use changes are proposed.

<p>Prepared by:</p>  <hr/> <p>Greg Smith Associate Planner</p>	<p>Reviewed by:</p>  <hr/> <p>Cynthia Kinser City Planner</p>
<p>Approved by:</p>  <hr/> <p>Mary E. Lanier Community Development Director</p>	

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft General Plan (previously transmitted)
2. Draft Environmental Impact Report (previously transmitted)
Land Use Map
3. Focus Area Maps: Existing and Proposed Land Uses (To be distributed at the hearing)