
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

GOVERNMENTAL CENTER



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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August 3, 1998

AGENDA: August 18, 1998

Board of Supervisors
 County of Santa Cruz
 701 Ocean Street
 Santa Cruz, California 95060

SUBJECT: Environmental Impact Reports on the Internet

Members of the Board:

During your Board's consideration of the Planning Department budget, you directed that we return on today's agenda with a report outlining actions necessary to place complete Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs) on the County's internet web site. At that time, we expressed some concern about workload implications surrounding the legal requirements for response to comments received through the internet and that we would analyze the issue with County Counsel.

We have discussed the issue with County Counsel and have considered various means by which EIRs can be placed on the internet while effectively managing the comment and response phase of EIR development. Through those discussions, we have confirmed that responses to comments submitted electronically can be included in the Final EIR; that placing the Final EIR on the internet will satisfy the legal requirement to respond to comments, and; to reduce the opportunity for frivolous comments, we can direct that comments be made in writing rather than on the internet.

Of course, printed copies would continue to be distributed to libraries and those who wish to purchase printed copies. In addition to the benefit of increased public access, one likely outcome of the electronic response process is the reduction of the overall cost of EIRs by reducing the number of printed copies.

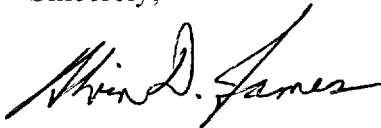
In order to effectively implement this program, we will begin requiring EIR consultants to provide web-ready electronic versions of the complete draft and final EIRs. Since it would be equitable to provide contractors time to incorporate this requirement into their business plans, we believe this requirement should become effective January 1, 1999. In the interim, we would give bid preference to contractors who can provide web-ready documents.

It is, therefore, **RECOMMENDED** that your Board authorize the Planning Director to take the following actions:

1. Change the standard EIR request for proposal format to require EIR consultants to deliver web-ready draft and final documents meeting County specifications beginning January 1, 1999, and;

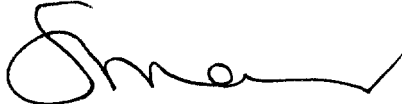
2. From August 18 to December 31, 1998, authorize the Planning Director to give preference to EIR proposals which include preparation and delivery of web-ready documents, and;
3. Authorize the Planning Director to place Draft EIRs on the County's web page including the address to which written comments are to be mailed, and, when known, the date by which the corresponding Final EIR will be available on the web site with responses to comments, and;
4. Authorize the Planning Director to remove Draft EIR and Final EIR documents from the County web site 60 days after certification of the Final EIR.

Sincerely,



Alvin D. James, AICP
Planning Director

RECOMMENDED:



Susan A. Mauriello
County Administrative Officer

cc: Ken Wedderburn, ISD