

update/revision to the County General Plan/Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan will be a significant planning document, requiring extensive County resources and staff time. Major issues include water resources, housing, school capacity, transportation systems, wildlife resources and future growth directions. Planning staff expects to begin preliminary work on this project as a part of the 2001-02 work program.

Housing Element

State housing element law (California Government Code Section 65580 et. seq.) requires that all cities and counties update their housing elements on a periodic basis — generally every five years. The next deadline for updating the County’s housing element is June 30, 2002 (Gov. Code Section 65588 (e)(3)). Because the housing element update process is relatively long and involves a number of parties, the County will need to begin the update during FY2000-1.

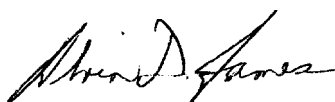
At the State level, the update process starts with the Department of Finance @OF) projecting county populations. The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) takes these projections and stratifies the population by income level to estimate housing needs. HCD provides this data to the regional Councils of Government (COGs), who then allocate the region’s housing needs among the cities and counties within their region. As a member of the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), the local COG, the County will have an opportunity to provide input in the development of the regional housing allocation and to challenge the allocation if we do not believe that it is based on sound planning principles.

While this regional housing allocation process is underway, the Planning Department collects data and conducts studies upon which to base the updated housing element. Public hearings are held to obtain input on housing needs and preferences. Planning then develops options for addressing local housing needs and combines them into a draft housing element. Then, an environmental review process is undertaken to assess the likely impacts of the programs and policies that are proposed in the draft housing element. Any significant findings of the environmental review process are addressed and the draft housing element is then circulated locally and forwarded to HCD. Your Board will act on the housing element after considering HCD’s comments.

Considering the effort that must be devoted to developing and adopting the 2002 housing element, it is unfortunate that its deadline is too early for AMBAG’s housing allocation to be based on 2000 Census data. Since both the housing allocation and preliminary analysis for the housing element must be completed before new Census data becomes available, the new element will be based on 1990 Census data. For this reason, the Planning Department recommended that the County’s year 2000 legislative package include delaying the deadlines for the next round of housing element updates by one year. Delaying the deadline would also enable the County to develop the housing element as part of the comprehensive updating of the general plan.


It is RECOMMENDED that your Board accept and file this report.

Sincerely,



Alvin D. James
Planning Director

RECOMMENDED:



Susan A. Mauriello
County Administrative Officer



County of Santa Cruz

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PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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ALVIN D. JAMES, DIRECTOR

November 24, 1999

AGENDA: December 14, 1999

Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Cruz
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TIME LINES FOR GENERAL PLAN AND HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATES

Members of the Board:

As a part of your Board's budget deliberations, several questions arose regarding the time lines for updating the County General Plan and Housing Element. You directed the Planning Department to provide a report regarding these time lines on this agenda.

General Plan Update

The General Plan is "a set of policies and programs to guide future growth and development in a manner consistent with the goals and quality of life desired by the residents of Santa Cruz County". State law requires each community to adopt a general plan and implement it through the adoption of consistent zoning and ordinances, and to periodically review and amend the plan as necessary to maintain relevancy to the needs of the community. State law does not specify when general plans must be updated or revised, but allows each jurisdiction to determine when their general plan needs review and update. Most jurisdictions update or revise their general plans on a ten year cycle.

Local Coastal Programs are subject to periodic review by the Coastal Commission, usually every 5 years, to determine the effectiveness of the implementation of the Coastal Act policies. If the Coastal Commission determines that there is a conflict, the Commission will submit recommendations to the County to address the issue. The County has a year to respond to the recommendations, either by adoption of amendments to the Land Use Plan, or the implementation plan, to address the concerns of the Coastal Commission, or by the submission of a report explaining the reasons for not taking the recommended actions.

As your Board knows, the County General Plan/Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan (GP/LCP) was last updated in 1994 (effective date December 19, 1994). This update, initiated in 1988 for adoption in 1990, was interrupted by the Loma Prieta earthquake and the subsequent recovery activities. The 1994 GP/LCP update focused on the urban areas of the County and the consolidation of the 1980 General Plan and 1982 Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan into a single document.

Based on the ten year cycle, the next County General Plan would be completed in 2004-05. This