

Q & A:

Riverside County Draft General Plan Update, Environmental Impact Report and Climate Action Plan

What is a General Plan?

California State law requires that each county and city adopt a general plan. The general plan establishes a blueprint for how the jurisdiction will look over time. A general plan is a long-range document that incorporates policies which underlie most land use decisions. Pursuant to state law, subdivisions, capital improvements, development agreements, zoning, specific plans and many other land use actions must be consistent with the adopted general plan.

General plans are required to include seven fundamental elements such as land use, circulation, conservation and safety. However, some jurisdictions incorporate additional elements to convey their overall vision.

Why is the County Proposing General Plan Amendment No. 960 (GPA No. 960)?

State law requires that counties and cities periodically update their general plans. In 2003, the County adopted a major overhaul of its general plan which charted a course for land use planning over the next 20-50 years. The proposed GPA No. 960 is the first comprehensive update to the 2003 document.

The overarching intent of GPA No. 960 is to ensure that the policies and plans of the Riverside County General Plan remain adequate and appropriate for the continuing implementation of the County Vision. Through the proposed general plan amendment, the County examines how implementation of the General Plan has proceeded since 2003 and identifies the refinements necessary or desirable to ensure the General Plan continues to reflect the Vision over the next eight years and into the future (2035 and beyond).

What has the County done to reach out to the public during the preparation of the Draft General Plan? Are there plans for further outreach?

The County conducted an extensive public outreach campaign that included a public hearing before the Board of Supervisors; one public hearing, three workshops and two reports before the Planning Commission; 13 General Plan Advisory Committee Meetings, two scoping meetings and two mailings pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Planning Department maintains a public website for the GPA No. 960 process at:

<http://planning.rctlma.org/>

In the fall of 2014, the County will conduct a series of 5-10 additional public outreach meetings. A schedule for these meetings is under development. Once confirmed, the schedule will be posted on the above mentioned web site and noticed appropriately.

Where can I go to read at the Draft General Plan?

The Draft General Plan Amendment, Draft Environmental Impact Report and Draft Climate Action Plan documents are available on-line at <http://planning.rctlma.org/>. The documents are also available for review at the Riverside County Planning Department offices (4080 Lemon Street, 12th Floor, Riverside, CA 92501; in eastern Riverside County: 77-588 El Duna Court, Suite H, Palm Desert, CA 92211) and at 20 County Libraries from Jurupa Valley to Blythe.

Can this Draft General Plan Amendment affect the zoning on my property?

No zoning changes are proposed as part of GPA No. 960.

How can I determine if the Draft General Plan Amendment affects my property?

The County provides a web-based mapping tool that assists property owners in obtaining information about how/if the geographic changes (land use designations, policies, trails, circulation network, etc.) within the proposed GPA No. 960 is affecting their land. The tool and the draft GPA No. 960 documents can be found at the following web site: <http://planning.rctlma.org/>

What is an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) why is it being prepared?

An EIR evaluates potentially significant adverse environmental impacts that could be associated with the project and identifies project components, mitigation measures and project alternatives that would avoid, reduce or eliminate significant impacts. The EIR does not set forth policy for the County about the proposed project's desirability. Rather, it is an information document to be used by decision-makers, public agencies and the public.

The Draft EIR No. 521 prepared for GPA No. 960 identifies the following issues as having one or more significant effects on the environment, despite the incorporation of all feasible mitigation.

- Agricultural and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Cumulative Aesthetic
- Cumulative Cultural & Paleontological
- Cumulative Population Growth
- Cumulative Public Facilities
- Cumulative Recreational
- Geology and Soils
- Growth-Inducement
- Irreversible Commitments
- Noise
- Transportation and Circulation
- Water Resources
- Wildland Fire Hazards

What is the significance of the public comment period from May 1, 2014 through June 30, 2014?

California law requires that the County hold a public review period for Draft EIRs during which the public and interested parties are invited to comment. In this case, Draft EIR No. 521 is available for public review from May 1, 2014 – June 30, 2014. Comments on the adequacy of the analysis and the appropriateness of the project may be made in writing. Comments may include additional or alternative mitigation measures to those proposed in the document.

All comments must be submitted in writing to Ms. Kristi Lovelady, Principal Planner, at the address indicated below, and **must be received no later than 5:00 pm on June 30, 2014.**

Kristi Lovelady, Principal Planner
TLMA Planning Department
4080 Lemon Street, 12th Floor
Riverside, California 92501

or

klovelad@rctlma.org

When are the public hearings?

While no hearing dates have been scheduled at this time, it is expected that the project will go to the Riverside County Planning Commission in early 2015 and to the Board of Supervisors in the spring of 2015.

Why is the County preparing a Climate Action Plan (CAP) and what does it do?

The draft Riverside County CAP was prepared in response to The Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32). Following the state's adopted AB 32 Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reduction target, Riverside County proposes a plan that would reduce emissions back to 1990 levels by the year 2020.