



MARIN COUNTY  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
ALEX HINDS, DIRECTOR

December 11, 2006

Marin County Planning Commission  
3501 Civic Center Drive  
San Rafael, California 94903

**SUBJECT:** Public Workshop on the Review of the Draft Marin Countywide Plan Update

Dear Planning Commission Members:

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Conduct workshop.
2. Discuss key issues and changes in the Draft Marin Countywide Plan.
3. Review the attached hearing schedule.
4. No formal action required.

**BACKGROUND**

In 2000 the Board of Supervisors approved a work program and public participation program to update the Countywide Plan. Although most of the existing 1994 Countywide Plan has withstood the test of time, the draft Plan has been updated to reflect extensive input from the public (including five working groups) as well as from environmental, housing, economic and legal consultants. There have been approximately 100 meetings open to the public regarding the draft Plan. A Public Review Draft of the Marin Countywide Plan was released in February 2004, which was followed by twenty-three public hearings in order to help finalize the project description to be evaluated in the environmental impact report.

A Revised Public Review Draft of the Plan was completed in August 2005. This version incorporates comments received from several hundred letters from the public in addition to recommendations heard at the twenty-three public hearings. Changes are shown in strike-thru and underline format in the Plan. In addition, extensive legal review also resulted in other revisions to the Plan.

Since the release in 2005, a team of consultants has been working to prepare the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). The DEIR is a program EIR that analyzes the environmental impacts of the draft Plan CWP released in August 2005.

Please see Attachment 1 for the schedule for the completion of the Marin Countywide Plan Update.

## DISCUSSION

The purpose of this workshop is to review each of the Plan elements, highlight the key concepts, unresolved issues, and significant revisions, and offer the opportunity for public input. Each of the elements and sections will be discussed in greater detail at subsequent public hearings (see Attachment 1). The following briefly describes several of the key concepts and issues proposed in the Revised Public Review Draft.

### I. General Content and Format

To improve the readability and organization of the Plan, the Natural Systems Element was renamed “Natural Systems and Agriculture” and the *Mineral Resources* section was moved to the Built Environment Element. In addition, the definition of sustainability has been more clearly defined and considerable content added and each “Why is It Important” section has been rewritten. Finally, improved photographs and graphics have been added along with cleaner references.

### II. Natural Systems and Agriculture Element

#### Biological Resources

Significant issues were raised regarding the location of the proposed Baylands Corridor and the need for additional information before the boundaries can be determined. To this end, three options have been provided and are described below:

- **Option 1** sets the boundary based on the location of historic baylands as determined by the San Francisco Estuary Institute, plus an additional 300-foot setback (Map 2-5a);
- **Option 2** is similar to Option 1, but the corridor extends west to Highway 101 in the Las Gallinas Planning Area (Map 2-5b);
- **Option 3** excludes Gness Field and the lands between the airport and the railroad in the Novato Planning Area while the boundary follows the Northwestern Pacific Railroad in the Las Gallinas Planning Area (Map 2-5c).

All options for the Baylands Corridor exclude portions of small parcels not subject to tidal action unless the parcels are in public ownership and designated for open space purposes. Further assessments of these options are included in the Draft Environmental Impact Report.

The Draft CWP proposes to continue to avoid, preserve, and enhance wetlands, streams and riparian areas. Highlights of key revisions to these areas include:

- Modifying the Stream Conservation Area policy language to create 50 foot buffers for parcels between 0.5 and 2 acres and 100 foot setback for parcels larger than 2 acres in the City-Centered Corridor. On parcels less than 0.5 acres in the City-Centered Corridor, the Draft CWP requires adequate setbacks based on a site assessment by a qualified professional and avoidance of woody riparian vegetation and other sensitive biological

resources.. In the Coastal, Inland Rural, and Baylands Corridors, all parcels are subject to a minimum 100 foot development setback;

- Establishing a Wetlands Conservation Area for jurisdictional wetlands and including criteria to determine the setback and buffer area
- Requiring a ratio of 2:1 replacement ratio for on-site mitigation and a minimum 3:1 ratio for off-site mitigation

#### Water Resources

Additional measures have been added to the Water Resources section to monitor septic systems, along with repair and maintenance programs for those systems. A program to establish a Septic Inspection, Monitoring, and Maintenance District has also been added.

#### Atmosphere and Climate

Various programs have been added to this section to minimize contributions to greenhouse gases and promote efficient management and use of resources. These include reducing greenhouse gas emissions resulting from transportation and agricultural uses, reducing methane emissions from landfills, and establishing a climate change planning process.

#### Agriculture and Food

One significant issue involved limiting residential building size on agriculturally zoned property. To address this issue, four options were provided that include criteria for establishing maximum housing unit sizes.

Options 1 through 3 would limit residential development on agricultural zoned property to reflect housing sizes typically accessory to agricultural production uses, while considering the need for landowner family housing. Option 4 would convene a working group to prepare criteria and/or standards for the purpose of establishing limitations on the size of residential development on agriculturally zoned lands.

Other key highlights to the Agriculture and Food section include:

- Promoting small scale waste treatment and rainwater catchments for farmers and ranchers for the purposes of agricultural diversification, and
- Supporting local and organic agriculture and the promotion of local foods

### **III. Built Environment Element**

#### Community Development

Highlights of key changes to the Community Development section include:

- Adding language to reduce potential impacts by calculating the potential residential density and commercial Floor Area Ratio at the low end of the density range on sites with sensitive habitat or within the Ridge and Upland Greenbelt, the Baylands Corridor, or properties lacking public water and sewer systems

- Establishing a Housing Overlay Designation to encourage construction of units to meet the need for workforce housing, especially for very low and low income households, and for special needs housing in the City-Centered Corridor
- Establishing a Housing Bank to allocate housing to sites within the newly created Housing Overlay Designation
- Evaluating residential land use designations to determine if Planned multifamily designations are appropriately located; and whether minimum densities would enable the development of more affordable housing rather than large, single-family homes on sites planned for multifamily residential development
- Updating Community Plans to evaluate and refine the Ridge and Upland Greenbelt and to address bicycle and pedestrian circulation as needed
- Preparing criteria to exempt affordable housing developments from paying the full cost of impact fees
- Modification of the land use designations to establish the Planned Designation – Agricultural and Environmental Resource Area (St. Vincent’s/Silveria), Planned Designation – Transit Village Area (San Quentin prison site), and Planned Designation – Reclamation (San Rafael Rock Quarry and McNear’s Brickyard site).

#### Transportation

Changes to the Transportation section include:

- Adding a policy to require necessary transportation improvements to be in place or to guarantee their timely installation, before or concurrent with new development
- Requiring the preparation of a traffic impact analysis report to identify impacts and mitigation measures for projects that may result in significant traffic impacts
- Adding language to amend the Public Transportation Facilities Fee ordinance to allow a waiver, reduction, or adjustment in traffic mitigation fees for affordable housing projects
- Creating a multi-purpose path from west Marin to the City-Centered Corridor to improve bicycle and pedestrian access and maintain or reduce congestion
- Adding a policy to provide alternatives to automobile travel to recreational areas in west Marin
- Providing reduced-cost transit passes for students and other special needs groups engaged in education and employment activities.

#### Public Facilities and Services

The Public Facilities and Services section has been modified to assure a reliable and sustainable water supply for existing and future development (while protecting the natural environment) by:

- Discouraging privatization and commercialization of public service facilities utilities.
- Working with local water agencies to mitigate increases in water demand due to new development by supporting water efficiency programs that decrease demand.

- Encouraging the use of energy conserving and renewable power facilities to offset energy used in water development and distribution.

### Planning Areas

Policy language designating land uses for Planning Area 1 has been modified to clarify that commercial uses on lands surrounding the airport shall be limited to those which are airport-related or compatible with the airport. Other modifications have been made to clarify uses on the LucasFilm, Marinwood Shopping Center, and Oakview properties.

The St. Vincent's/Silveria area has been assigned the Planned Designation-Agriculture and Environmental Resource Area land use category. The Draft CWP includes four options for the level of development on the St. Vincent's/Silveria properties. These are:

- **Option 1** allows a combined total of 221 dwelling units consisting of up to 121 market rate units plus an additional 100 units for very low and/or low income households.
- **Option 2** allows a combined total of 350 dwelling units. A senior housing and care facility may be considered with a capacity to serve up to 350 residents, including apartment style and/or congregate care units at varying degrees of affordability.
- **Option 3** allows a combined total of 500 dwelling units. Similar to Option 2, a senior housing and care facility may be considered with a capacity to serve up to 350 residents, including apartment style and/or congregate care units at varying degrees of affordability.
- **Option 4** allows a range of a combined total of 221 – 500 dwelling units. A senior housing and care facility may be considered with a capacity to serve up to 350 residents, including apartment style and/or congregate care units at varying degrees of affordability.

In all options, non-residential uses may be permitted in lieu of dwelling units, provided that the impacts of the non-residential development on peak hour traffic do not exceed those projected for the residential development being replaced.

## **IV. Socioeconomic Element**

Changes to the Socioeconomic Element include:

- Establishing an amnesty program for large family daycare providers who do not yet have a use permit.
- Considering permit and fee waivers for large daycare providers and childcare facilities.
- Prioritizing educational opportunities for the homeless population.
- Targeting businesses that are a good match with the goals and needs of the local community.
- Promoting arts and culture that contribute to an enhanced community atmosphere and economic framework.
- Working with agencies that provide emergency preparedness, response, and recovery services to develop evacuation plans
- Supporting Farmer's Markets and local neighborhood outlets to increase access to healthy foods

- Providing increased opportunities for seniors and persons with disabilities to “age in place” and remain in their homes and communities
- Promoting Native American awareness and school enrichment and summer camp programs

Respectfully Submitted,

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Planner

Attachments: 1. Proposed Countywide Plan and EIR schedule.

Proposed Countywide Plan Update and EIR Schedule

1. Planning Commission refresher workshop on Draft CWP	Dec 11, 2006
2. Notice of Completion and public distribution of DEIR (60-day public comment period begins)	Jan 12, 2007
3. Re-release of the August 2005 Draft Countywide Plan	Jan 12, 2007
4. Joint PC-BOS Hearing on CWP EIR Schedule and Process	Jan 30, 2007
5. Open Planning Commission 1 <sup>st</sup> hearing on the CWP (afternoon) and hearing on the DEIR (evening)	Feb 12, 2007
6. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Planning commission continued hearing on DEIR	Feb 26, 2007
7. 60-Day DEIR Public Comment Period ends	March 12, 2007
8. 3 <sup>rd</sup> Planning Commission hearing on the CWP	March 26, 2007
9. FEIR distribution for 21-day review	June 4, 2007
10. FEIR review period ends	June 25, 2007
11. 4 <sup>th</sup> Planning Commission hearing on CWP/ Special Meeting week of 7/16/07	July 16, 2007
12. Planning Commission hearing on recommendation for Certification of EIR and action on CWP	July 23, 2007
13. 1 <sup>st</sup> hearing of Board of Supervisors	Sept 11, 2007
14. 2 <sup>nd</sup> hearing of Board of Supervisors to certify the EIR and adopt the CWP	Sept 25, 2007
15. 3 <sup>rd</sup> Hearing of the Board of Supervisors to Certify the EIR and adopt the CWP	Oct 9, 2007