



COUNTY OF SAN BENITO
PLANNING & BUILDING INSPECTION SERVICES

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TO: Members of the General Plan Advisory Committee

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DATE: October 23, 2009

RE: **Review of Draft Criteria for Including Private Proposals in the County's General Plan Update**

One of the focuses of the October 29, 2009, GPAC meeting will be to develop criteria to be used by County staff and the Consultants for when to include a private development project in the General Plan Update process. Our goal is to protect the integrity of the General Plan Update while at the same time allowing new ideas and proposals into the process.

Private property owners who participate in the General Plan Update can receive numerous benefits. First, they will have the opportunity to have their proposals reviewed and commented on by the general public, County staff, Consultants, GPAC, Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors. Second, assuming their proposals are accepted into the new General Plan, they will essentially receive a General Plan amendment for free. Third, they will also be able to tier off the General Plan's Environmental Impact Report which may lessen future entitlement costs for their projects. Regardless of whether or not they participate in the General Plan Update, every project will still need to obtain project-level entitlements from the County.

The following summarizes our understanding of the two types of projects: "pipeline" and "known." We also included a set of criteria for when to include projects in the General Plan Update and a series of questions for the GPAC to consider.

Pipeline Projects

The first category for private projects are those whose property owners have already formally submitted an application with the County. County staff and the Consultants are presently preparing a matrix to organize and better track these pipeline projects during the General Plan Update. This matrix will include the following information for each project:

- Project Name
- Applicant Name
- Project size (acres)
- Number and type of residential units
- Square feet of non-residential uses (i.e., commercial, office, industrial, public)
- Existing 1999 General Plan Land Use Designation
- Existing Zoning District

These projects would typically continue normal processing with the County but would be included in the cumulative General Plan Update and Environmental Impact Report project alternatives analysis as private projects going through the regular review process.

Known Projects

The second category of projects is those projects whose property owners have not yet submitted a formal application with the County. This includes known projects (i.e., property owners have made some contact with County staff about a possible application and/or request to be included in the County's General Plan Update) and future proposals that may come up during the course of the General Plan Update.

Suggested Criteria

We have created the following suggested criteria for how to distinguish which known projects need to be a part of the General Plan Update and which ones can be processed by the County during the update.

- Residential projects
 - On sites that
 - 1. are within an Area of Special Study and
 - 2. have an available connection to (or "will-serve" letter for) public water and wastewater service providers.
 - On infill sites, or areas of unincorporated County "islands" surrounded by the City of Hollister.
- Commercial projects
 - On sites at an intersection of State highways or arterials.
- Industrial projects
 - On sites that are
 - 1. along State highways, arterials, collectors, or railways and
 - 2. within proximity to existing industrial uses.
- Large projects
 - Projects that trigger the procedures of the Potential Residential Growth Increase (PRGI) program
- Other projects
 - On built-out areas of Agricultural Productive (AP) land use that are clearly not suitable for future agricultural uses.

These criteria, if supported by the Committee, Planning Commission, and Board, would allow projects in logical locations for their type to be considered as part of the overall update of the General Plan's land-use map. This also allows larger projects to be made a part of the Countywide update in order to prevent a detailed, carefully considered revision effort to be extensively modified immediately after the General Plan Update's completion. Projects not meeting these criteria would have to pay the normal fees and go through regular County processing.

Questions for the GPAC to Consider

1. Does the criteria we suggest above make sense for San Benito County?
2. Are there other criteria that should be considered?
3. Should the General Plan Update consider at least one alternative that includes all private-property owner requests with or without additional areas/sites that Staff, the Committee, Planning Commission, or the Board may wish to consider?
4. Should Staff, Committee, Planning Commission, or Board sites be considered as a separate alternative?