



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Planning and Development
Department No.: 053
For Agenda Of: February 15, 2011
Placement: Departmental Agenda
Estimated Time: 2.0 hours
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department Director Glenn Russell Ph.D., Director
Planning and Development Department

Contact Info: Jeff Hunt, AICP, Director, 568-2072
Long Range Planning Division

SUBJECT: Los Alamos Community Plan Adoption

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Other Concurrence: N/A

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions: That the Board of Supervisors consider final staff recommendations and related resolutions and implementing ordinances for adoption of the Los Alamos Community Plan, as follows:

- a) Make the appropriate Findings, Statement of Overriding Considerations, and adopt the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (Attachment A) supporting the Board's final action in adopting the Los Alamos Community Plan Update;
- b) Certify the Final Environmental Impact Report (08EIR-05) including the EIR Revision Letter dated March 8, 2011 (Attachments B and B-1);
- c) Adopt the Los Alamos Community Plan dated February 2011 (Attachment C);
- d) Adopt a resolution approving specific amendments to the Land Use Element of the Santa Barbara County Comprehensive General Plan (Attachment D) by adoption of the Los Alamos Community Plan;
- e) Adopt a Resolution approving an ordinance amending Section 35-1 of Chapter 35 of the County Code, the Santa Barbara County Land Use and Development Code; and approving a zoning map

amendment to zoning and zoning overlay maps applicable to the Los Alamos Community Plan area (Attachment E); and,

- f) Adopt a Resolution approving amendments to the Los Alamos Bell Street Design Guidelines (Attachment F).

Summary

This request for amendments to the Comprehensive General Plan, Land Use and Development Code, and zoning and zoning overlay maps through an update to the Los Alamos Community Plan is being forwarded to the Board of Supervisors by the Planning and Development Department's Long Range Planning Division.

1.0 Background

In 1990, the Board of Supervisors appointed the Los Alamos Planning Advisory Committee (LAPAC) to work with County staff to prepare a community plan for Los Alamos. The work culminated with the Board of Supervisors adoption of the Los Alamos Community Plan on February 8, 1994.

In 2005, a Specific Plan proposal to expand the Los Alamos Urban/Rural Boundary Line to the west provided the impetus for the Board of Supervisors to re-examine the goals and policies of the 1994 Los Alamos Community Plan. The Board of Supervisors formed a new Los Alamos Planning Advisory Committee (LAPAC) on August 8, 2006 and initiated the Los Alamos Community Plan update to assess the community preferences for future land use, as well as the type and form of future development in Los Alamos.

The Los Alamos Community Plan update process included 39 LAPAC meetings and a community visioning workshop. A desire for more services and revitalization of the Bell Street commercial corridor emerged as a strong community priority.

1.1 Focus on Bell Street In-Fill Development

Los Alamos is located at the junction of Highway 101 and State Route (SR) 135 (See Board Letter Attachment 1a, Page 2, and Figure 2). SR 135 serves as "Main Street" for Los Alamos. Development is discontinuous along Bell Street, with 23 vacant parcels (totaling approximately 17.5 acres) and many underutilized commercially zoned lots. While a few mixed-use development projects (residential over commercial) have been proposed, no new commercial development has occurred in town for over four years. Town residents have expressed a desire for a greater amount of retail and services on Bell Street.

A financial feasibility study was prepared by the County's consultant, Strategic Economics, which evaluated the financial feasibility of new commercial development in Los Alamos. Specifically, the analysis examined the market potential for additional retail along Bell Street and found that demand by residents alone will not be sufficient to support a critical mass of commercial activity. Case studies of small towns with successful "Main Street" retail were also assessed. In every scenario, the research showed that tourists and other non-resident visitors were necessary to support even a small retail district.

Regulatory and Costs Constraints

Strategic Economics prepared an additional financial feasibility study to analyze how market constraints and existing County zoning regulations, such as parking requirements, height restrictions, and residential limitations in the C-1 and C-2 zone districts affect the financial viability of development projects. The financial analysis found the types of development desirable to the community of Los Alamos would be infeasible under Retail Commercial (C-2) zoning and permitting requirements. The existing setback and parking requirements that reduce developable space on already small lots along with development plan permit costs and processing times drove development costs too high. The analysis concluded that development in Los Alamos would remain unlikely unless greater parity between development costs and returns on investment could be achieved. The analysis provided the community with an improved understanding of how changes in development regulations can encourage a desired type of development.

The County hired Shubin + Donaldson Architects to prepare a development concept plan to complement the financial study. The concept plan analyzed a variety of building mass and height configurations, building placement, on-site parking configurations, residential unit intensities, and mixed use configurations. Strategic Economics worked with Shubin + Donaldson Architects to test the financial feasibility of development programs on typical Bell Street lots. The concept plan proposed a future development pattern for Bell Street corridor that maintains the integrity of the existing built environment.

From the concept plan, County staff developed a new mixed use zone district based on “form-based” development concepts to alleviate identified zoning constraints. Form-based coded rely on design and scale rather than the regulation of use to achieve a desired outcome. The Community Mixed Use – Los Alamos (CM-LA) zone district will serve as a catalyst for development that will provide the goods and services desired by the community in a form which complements the existing built environment.

2.0 Project Description

The project involves the following components.

1. Los Alamos Community Plan. The Los Alamos Community Plan Update, February 2011 (Attachment C) amends the 1994 Los Alamos Community Plan, updating the goals, policies, development standards and actions intended to regulate and guide future development and improvements.
2. Land Use and Development Code Amendments. The Los Alamos Form-Based Code will be implemented through the new Community Mixed Use – Los Alamos (CM-LA) zone district as an amendment to the County Land Use and Development Code (LUDC) (Attachment E). The proposed LUDC amendments implement the applicable policies and development standards in the Los Alamos Community Plan.
3. Bell Street Design Guidelines. The Los Alamos Bell Street Design Guidelines (Attachment G) are intended to provide reasonable, practical and objective guidance to assist developers and designers in incorporating the components that define the character of the Bell Street commercial corridor into new or remodeled buildings. The guidelines will also provide the tools needed for staff and the County’s Central Board of Architectural Review (CBAR) to properly evaluate development proposals.

A detailed discussion of the project description components for the Los Alamos Community Plan Update is provided in Attachment 1a.

3.0 Summary of Environmental Analysis

CEQA Compliance, Public Process, and Key Issues Addressed

The Draft EIR was released for a 45-day comment period on Friday, September 25, 2008. A Draft EIR comment hearing was held on October 28, 2009 at the Los Alamos Senior Center. Public comment was received until the end of the comment period on Monday, November 9, 2009.

The County, as the lead agency, has reviewed comments on the Draft EIR and prepared responses in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15088 (See Final EIR (FEIR) Section 10.0, Attachment B). The County received and responded to a total of 11 letters and emails with 154 written comments from public agencies, private citizens and community groups in addition to 36 verbal comments from nine speakers received at the Draft EIR comment hearing. Responses to the comments have been included to address the environmental concerns raised and the responses indicate where and how the FEIR has addressed pertinent environmental issues including resultant FEIR text changes.

The FEIR (Attachment B) analyzes impacts associated with buildout under the proposed land use and zoning designations. Using this analysis, the FEIR concluded the LACP update would result 13 significant unavoidable impacts (Class I) in the areas of Cultural Resources; Water Resources; Aesthetic/Visual Resources; Biological Resources; Public Services (solid waste); and Wastewater (FEIR Table ES-1). These impacts will be reduced by the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, but will remain significant even if all mitigation measures feasible to implement are adopted.

Impacts associated with Flooding and Water Resources, Agricultural Resources, Biological Resources, Public Services (schools); Traffic and Circulation; Air Quality; and Noise were identified as significant but mitigable (Class II).

Impacts related to Land Use and Planning; Wastewater; Aesthetic/Visual Resources; Agricultural Resources; Biological Resources; Traffic and Circulation; Air Quality; and Hazards and Hazardous Materials were identified as less than significant (Class III).

The issues identified in the FEIR related to water and wastewater are summarized in Attachment 1b *Environmental Review Key Issues Summary – Water and Wastewater*.

Final EIR Revision Letter

The Planning Commission conducted two hearings on the LACP on August 11, 2010 and October 13, 2010 and recommended minor revisions to maps and several policies, actions, and development standards in the proposed LACP update; and recommended minor permit level changes to the proposed CM-LA zone district. These changes result in minor corrections and clarification to the FEIR text and serve to clarify the timing and applicability of mitigation measures and remove redundant policy requirements. The revisions are detailed in the FEIR Revision Letter in Attachment B-1 and do not result in any new or changed environmental impacts, nor cause changes to the conclusions in the proposed Final EIR impacts analysis.

4.0. Policy Consistency Analysis

Section 5.0 of the FEIR includes a review of the project's potential consistency with the adopted plans and policies contained in the County's Comprehensive Plan. The FEIR found that all proposed Plan policies and goals to be consistent with the County of Santa Barbara Comprehensive Plan.

5.0. Tribal Consultation

Consistent with Government Code §65352.3, the County provided the Santa Ynez Band of Mission Indians the opportunity to consult regarding the Los Alamos Community Plan update. The County also requested a standard record search for cultural resources in the plan area. The Santa Ynez Band of Mission Indians did not respond to the consultation invitation and a follow up letter was sent noting that the opportunity to consult remains available and encouraging them to submit comments and participate throughout the adoption process.

6.0. Planning Commission and Advisory Committee Recommendations

A. Los Alamos Planning Advisory Committee

At the close of environmental review in 2009, the LAPAC held a series of additional public meetings to review the environmental comments, additional staff recommendations, and finalize recommended goals and policies of the Community Plan Update. At their April 15, 2010 meeting the LAPAC unanimously approved a resolution recommending the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors certify the Los Alamos Community Plan Final Environmental Impact Report and approve the Los Alamos Community Plan Update (Attachment H).

B. Planning Commission Hearings

Two Planning Commission hearings were held on the proposed Final Los Alamos Community Plan on August 11, 2010 and October 13, 2010. In response to questions from the Planning Commission, staff prepared additional analysis of existing and projected future downtown parking supply and refined Community Plan policies addressing the timing and funding of future on-street parking (Attachment B, FEIR Revision Letter, Pages 14 -17). The Planning Commission forwarded a unanimous recommendation (5-0) for adoption of the final LACP that includes minor refinements to the Plan in the areas of parking, drainage, permitted uses, and public facilities (library facilities) (Attachment I: Planning Commission Action Letter dated October 13, 2010).

Performance Measure:

N/A

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes

Fiscal Analysis:

<u>Funding Sources</u>	<u>Current FY Cost:</u>	<u>Annualized On-going Cost:</u>	<u>Total Project Costs</u>
General Fund	\$ 77,787.25		\$ 951,983.14
State			
Federal			
Fees			
Other:			
Total	\$ 77,787.25		\$ 951,983.14

Narrative:

The LACP is included in the Board approved Planning and Development Department Long Range Planning (LRP) Work Program and is budgeted in the Planning and Development budget for LRP on page D-321 from the General Fund, and is fully staffed by current employees in the Long Range Planning Division. If approved, no ongoing maintenance costs are associated with the project. The Los Alamos Community Plan Update does, however, contain action items which would require allocation of future funds to implement, including the Pedestrian Circulation and On-Street Parking Striping Plans (Actions CIRC-LA-1.4.1 and CIRC-LA-1.5.1).

Staffing Impacts:

Legal Positions:
N/A

FTEs:
N/A

Special Instructions:

The Clerk of the Board shall complete noticing for the project in a newspaper of general circulation in the County of Santa Barbara ten (10) days prior to the hearing.

In addition, the Planning & Development Department will send mailed notices to the interested parties list and will place a display ad in a newspaper of general circulation prior to the hearing.

The Clerk of the Board shall forward a certified copy of the Minute Order to the Planning & Development Department, Attention: David Villalobos, Hearing Support.

The Planning & Development Department will prepare all final action letters and notify all interested parties of the Board of Supervisors' final action.

Attachments:

1. Summary of Issues:
 - Los Alamos Community Plan Update Project Description Summary
 - Environmental Review Key Issues Summary – Water and Wastewater
- A. Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations (SOC) and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP)
- B. Los Alamos Community Plan Update Final EIR and (RV01) Revision Letter
- C. Final Los Alamos Community Plan
- D. Resolution – Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element Amendment (08GPA-04)
 - a. Exhibit A: Area to be Redesignated from General Commercial (GC) and Residential 12.3 units per acre (Res 12.3) to General Commercial (GC)
 - b. Exhibit B: Area to be Redesignated from to Highway Commercial (CH) to General Commercial (GC)
 - c. Exhibit C: Area to be Redesignated from Design Residential 8 units per acre (DR-8) to General Commercial (CG)
 - d. Exhibit D: Area to be Added to Scenic Buffer Overlay
- E. Resolution – Land Use and Development Code Ordinance Amendment
 - a. Exhibit 1: Land Use and Development Code Ordinance Amendment (08ORD-011)
 - b. Exhibit 2: Zoning Map Amendment (Rezone) Ordinance (08RZN-02)
 - i. Exhibit A: Area to be Rezoned from Limited Commercial (C-1) & Retail Commercial (C-2) to Community Mixed-Use Los Alamos (CM-LA)
 - ii. Exhibit B: Area to be Rezoned from Highway Commercial (CH) to Retail Commercial (C-2)
 - iii. Exhibit C: Area to be Rezoned from Design Residential 8 Units per acre (DR-8) to General Commercial (C-3)
 - c. Exhibit D: Areas to be Added to the Design Control (D) Overlay Zone
 - d. Exhibit E: Area to be Removed from the Affordable Housing (AH) Overlay
- F. Resolution – Bell Street Design Guidelines Amendment
- G. Bell Street Design Guidelines (Copy available at:
http://longrange.sbcountyplanning.org/planareas/losalamos/losalamos_cp_update.php)
- H. Los Alamos Planning Advisory Committee – Resolution 2010-01
- I. Planning Commission Action Letter of October 13, 2010

Authored by:

David Lackie, Supervising Planner
Bret McNulty, Planner
Long Range Planning Division

cc: Jeff Hunt, AICP, Director, Long Range Planning Division
Ed Yates, Deputy County Counsel

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