



County of El Dorado

Chief Administrative Office

330 Fair Lane
Placerville, CA 95667-4197

Terri Daly
Chief Administrative Officer

Phone (530) 621-5530
Fax (530) 295-2537

NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF
A DRAFT PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR)
AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING FOR THE
EL DORADO COUNTY TARGETED GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT AND ZONING
ORDINANCE UPDATE

Date: 10/01/2012

To: Interested Parties

From: El Dorado County Chief Administrative Office

The County of El Dorado (County) will be the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Targeted General Plan Amendment (TGPA) and Zoning Ordinance Update (ZOU). The purpose of this Notice of Preparation and Notice of Public Scoping Meeting is to request the views of public agencies and interested persons as to the scope and content of the environmental information and analyses, including the significant environmental impacts, reasonable alternatives and mitigation measures that should be included in the Draft EIR. The project description, location, and potential environmental effects are summarized in the attached materials.

The County released a Notice of Preparation on May 25, 2012 with a 45 day review period for this project. Comments received during this review period and through the Zoning Ordinance Workshop held the week of July 16, 2012 are available on the County website at <http://www.edcgov.us/landuseupdate/>. Documents have been revised based on current direction by the Board of Supervisors and comments received. Written comments should be directed to revisions made to the documents and sent at the earliest possible date, but not later than 30 days after the receipt of this notice. There will be another opportunity to submit detailed comments when the Draft EIR is released for public review. Please send your comments to:

Shawna Purvines, Senior Planner
Development Services Department, Planning Services
2850 Fairlane Court, Building "C"
Placerville, CA 95667

or use the Public Comment form at:

<http://www.edcgov.us/landuseupdate/>

The County will conduct a public agency and public scoping meeting on the project to provide additional information and to receive verbal and written input. The public meeting will include a brief overview of the project by the County staff, followed by an opportunity for public and agency comment. The public meeting will be held at the El Dorado County Planning Commission, 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville, on October 25, 2012.

Kim Kerr
Assistant Chief Administrative Officer
Interim Department of Transportation Director

NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF
A DRAFT PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR)
AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING
FOR THE
EL DORADO COUNTY TARGETED GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT AND ZONING ORDINANCE
UPDATE

Location:

This project involves changes to policies of the County General Plan and the adoption of an update to the Zoning Ordinance. These changes will take effect county-wide in those areas that under county jurisdiction. In addition, the County will consider amending the Camino/Pollock Pines Community Region Boundary and Agricultural District Boundaries in the General Plan.

Project Description:

The County is proposing a limited number of amendments to its General Plan policies and land use designations and a comprehensive update to the Zoning Ordinance. The items below are listed in no particular order of importance.

General Plan Amendments

Amendments to the General Plan are proposed for the Land Use Element; Transportation and Circulation Element; Public Services and Utilities Element; Public Health, Safety and Noise Element; Conservation and Open Space Element; and Agriculture and Forestry Element.

General Plan amendments to be addressed in the EIR are primarily policy changes, although a limited number of General Plan Land Use Designations, discussed below, are also identified for potential amendment. The EIR will analyze all of the potential amendments under consideration.

The following is a summary of the proposed policies and maps considered for analysis or amendments to the General Plan:

Land Use Map

1. Camino/Pollock Pines Community Region Boundary amendment to create three (3) Rural Centers including Camino, Cedar Grove, and Pollock Pine, to allow for separate and distinct opportunities for each of the communities.
2. Agriculture District Boundary Expansion for Garden Valley-Georgetown, Coloma, Camino-Fruitridge, Gold Hill, Oak Hill, Pleasant Valley, and Fair Play-Somerset.
3. Limited Land Use clean-up identified through the Zoning Ordinance Update.

Consider Amending the Following Policies

1. *Policy 2.1.1.3:Commercial/Mixed Use-* Amend to allow residential density by increasing residential use as part of a mixed-use development from 16 units per acre to 20 units per acre.
2. *Policy 2.2.1.2, Table 2-1, and Table 2-1:* Commercial and Industrial- Amend to allow for commercial and industrial uses in the rural regions.
3. *Policy 2.2.1.2:Commercial/Mixed Use-* Delete sentence, “The residential component of the project shall only be implemented following or concurrent with the commercial component.”
4. *Policy 2.2.1.2:* Delete requirement that industrial lands be restricted to areas within, or in close proximity to community regions and rural centers. Delete the requirement that industrial lands in rural regions have more limited industrial uses, for support of agriculture and natural resource uses.
5. *Policy 2.2.1.2:* Amend multi-family density from 24 units per acre to 30 units per acre to comply with California Government Code 65583.2(c)(iv) and (e). Amend the multi-family land use to encourage a full range of housing types including small lot single family detached design without a requirement for a planned development.
6. *Policy 2.2.1.2:* High Density Residential- Delete requirement for a planned development application on projects of 3 or more units per acre.
7. *Policy 2.2.1.2:Open Space-* Amend policy to refer to Objective 7.6.1
8. *Table 2-2:* Amend table to reflect changes in density for commercial/mixed use from 16 units per acre to 20 units per acre and multi-family from 24 units per acre to 30 units per acre.
9. *Policy 2.2.1.5 and Table 2-3:* Amend policy to direct the regulation of building intensities be established in the Zoning Ordinance and delete Table 2.3.
10. *Policies 2.2.3.1, 2.2.3.2, and 2.2.5.4:* Amend the 30% open space requirement for Planned Development community regions and rural centers to allow lesser area of “improved open space” on site, and consider options to provide a portion of the required open space off-site or by an in-lieu fee option.
11. *Table 2-4:* Amend as necessary to reflect Zoning Ordinance Update revisions.
12. *Policy 2.2.4.1:* Amend the density bonus criteria, and consider placing the specifics of this policy into the Zoning Ordinance.
13. *Policy 2.2.5.4:* Delete policy requiring a Planned Development application on projects requesting the creation of 50 parcels or more.

14. *Policy 2.2.5.8*: Amend the policy creating the Neighborhood Services zone and allow for objectives to be met in a related commercial zone.
15. *Policy 2.2.5.10*: Delete policy requirement for special use permit for agriculture support services; incorporate standards and permitted into Zoning Ordinance
16. *Policy 2.4.1.3*: Amend policy to recognize the historical town sites of El Dorado/Diamond Springs and other historical town sites.
17. *Policies 2.9.1.2, 2.9.1.3, and 2.9.1.4*: Amend criteria for establishing community region and rural center boundaries by deleting the restriction that boundaries can be amended every five years, and allow revisions to the boundaries to be initiated by Board of Supervisors whenever necessary.
18. *Add New Policies that provide* set criteria for and identify infill sites and opportunity areas that will provide incentives for development of these vacant/underutilized areas, including streamlining the CEQA process for these identified locations. These policies may support the use of traditional neighborhood design guidelines, mixed use, and “form based” codes. These policy changes would not include amending the land use designations, or increasing the densities currently provided for in the General Plan.
19. *Policies TC-1a, TC-1b, and Table TC-1*: Revise policies, and table to further support the important objectives found in policies TC-1p, TC-1r, TC-1t, TC-1u, TC-1w, TC-4f, TC-4i, HO-1.3, HO-1.5, HO-1.8, HO-1.18, HO-5.1 and HO-5.2, allowing for narrower streets and road ways and to support the development of housing affordable to all income levels.
20. *Policies TC-1m, TC-1n(B), TC-1w*: Amend to make minor modifications to clarify language including; TC-1m delete “of effort”; TC-1n(B) replace accidents with crashes; and TC-1w, delete word maximum.
21. *Tables TC-2, Policy TC-Xb, and Policy TC-Xd*: Amend or delete Table TC-2; if Table TC-2 is deleted, amend all references to TC-2, including the references in TC-Xb and TC -Xd.
22. *Policy TC-Xb (C)*: Consider minor amendment to refer to Figure TC-1 when referencing the circulation diagram.
23. *Policy TC-Xg*: Amend to clarify the requirement that development constructs or funds necessary road improvements, and include the requirement to design, or fund design.
24. *Policy TC-Xi*: Amend to allow for coordination of regional projects to be delivered on a schedule agreed to by related regional agencies and therefore not subject to meeting the scheduling requirements of the policies of this General Plan.
25. *Policies TC-4a, TC-4d, and TC-4f*: Amend to clean up language to ensure consistency with subsequent adopted plans.
26. *Policies TC 4i, TC-5a, TC-5b, and TC-5c*: Amend to provide more flexibility of when sidewalks are required.

27. *Add New Goal and associated policies* to provide for CEQA streamlining opportunities for qualified projects that are consistent with the Metropolitan Transportation Plans.
28. *Add New Policy* to support the development of new or substantially improved roadways to accommodate all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, transit riders, children, older people, and disabled people, as well as motorists, to comply with Assembly Bill 1358, the Complete Streets Act of 2008. Add implementation measure to update the applicable manuals and standard plans to incorporate elements in support of all users.
29. *Objective 5.1.1, 5.1.2, and Table 5-1*: Amend as needed policy(s) and table to clarify Board authority when determining minimum level of service requirements consistent with General Plan objectives, standards, and related policies.
30. *Policy 6.4.1.4 and 6.4.1.5*: Amend policies and remove flood insurance rate maps, to address recommendations by the Office of Emergency Services and Homeland Security regarding dam failure inundation.
31. *Policy 6.5.1.11 and Tables 6-1 thru 6-5*: Amend existing noise standards to establish attainable noise thresholds with regard to temporary nighttime construction activities and other temporary exceedances.
32. *Objective 6.7.1 and 6.7.5*: Amend these objectives to reflect updated air quality plan opportunities that support the adoption of a separate Air Quality - Energy Conservation Plan.
33. *Policy 7.1.2.1*: Amend the restrictions for development on 30% slopes, and set standards in the Zoning Ordinance and Grading Ordinance.
34. *Policy 7.2.1.2 and 7.1.2.3*: Amend to clarify which mineral resource zones are required to be mapped.
35. *Objective 7.6.1.3(B)*: Amend to delete specific references to zone districts to conform to the changes proposed in the Zoning Ordinance update.
36. *Policy 8.1.3.2*: Amend policy to provide a limited buffer for lands within a community region by adding language similar to Policy 8.4.1.2 to Policy 8.1.3.2.
37. *Policy 8.2.4.2*: Consider amending policy to eliminate the requirement for a special use permit for all visitor serving uses, and instead establish standards, permitted uses, and requirements for permits, in the various zone districts in the Zoning Ordinance
38. *Policy 8.2.4.4*: Consider amending the policy to allow for ranch marketing activities on grazing lands.

Consider Analyzing the Following Policies

1. *Policies 2.1.1.1 and 2.1.2.1*: Analyze the possibility of adding, amending or deleting existing Community Regions or Rural Center planning areas.

2. *Policy 2.2.1.2: High Density Residential-* Analyze the potential effects of increasing high density residential land use density from a maximum of 5 units per acre to 8 units per acre.
3. *Policy TC-1y:* Analyze the potential for deleting the El Dorado Hills Business Park employment cap limits including option identified in TC-1v.
4. *Policies TC-Xd, TC-Xe and TC-Xf:* Analyze impacts to revising the policies to clarify the definition of “worsen”, to clarify what is required if a project “worsens” traffic, identifying the methodology for traffic studies (e.g. analysis period, analysis scenarios, methods), and identifying the timing of improvements.

Zoning Ordinance Update

The proposed comprehensive Zoning Ordinance Update has two elements: 1) revising the zoning maps to bring existing zoning designations into conformance with the General Plan, and 2) providing a comprehensive update of the text of the Zoning Ordinance both to bring conformance with the General Plan and to modernize implementation tools.

The following is a summary of the proposed changes:

1. Ensure that the zoning designation for all parcels in the County conforms to the General Plan land use designations for those parcels.
2. Eliminate inconsistent provisions of the existing Zoning Ordinance.
3. Include provisions in the Zoning Ordinance to implement General Plan Implementation Measures LU-A, HO-6, HO-16, HS-K, CO-A, AF-A, ED-N, ED-P, ED-II, ED-JJ, ED-KK, and ED-QQ.
4. Ensure that the Zoning Ordinance is consistent with applicable state and federal laws.
5. Reorganize the Zoning Ordinance for ease of use, including the use, including the use of tables to identify permitted uses and development standards, establishing specific use regulations for administrative review of specified uses.
6. Create new zones to reflect current zoning needs and implement the General Plan, including the following zones: Rural Lands, Forest Resources, Agricultural Grazing, Neighborhood Service, and Limited Agriculture.
7. Delete obsolete zones, including Unclassified, Agriculture, Residential-Agricultural, and Planned Commercial.
8. Create combining zone districts (e.g. Historical, Community Design, etc.) to identify land that needs additional regulation, protection of resources, protection of public health and safety, or establishes a review process to more effectively implement General Plan policies and related ordinances.

9. Expand potential uses in the agricultural and rural lands zones to provide for opportunities for agricultural support, recreation, and rural commerce, including allowing ranch marketing on grazing land.
10. Provide a range of intensities for home occupations, based on size and zoning of parcels, addressing the use of accessory structures, customers, and employees.
11. Modify zoning for Williamson Act contracted and rolled out land to reflect the underlying General Plan land use designation.
12. Revise the zoning map to conform to standardized rules (i.e. mapping criteria) for zoning modifications based on the General Plan land use designations.
13. Provide a range of commercial zones to specify and direct the type, design, and location of commercial uses. Proposed zones include Commercial Regional (CR), Commercial General (CG), Commercial Community (CC), Commercial Planned Office (CPO), Commercial Limited (CL), and Commercial Mainstreet (CM).
14. Create a Rural Commercial Zone that would be permitted within the rural regions planning concept area.
15. Increase potential uses to provide additional agricultural support, recreation, home occupation, and other rural residential, tourist serving, and commercial uses in zones in the rural region.
16. Create standards (master plans) for proposed mixed use and traditional neighborhood design development on commercial and multi-family zoned parcels to provide for a streamlined approval process and to protect the commercial viability of the parcels.
17. Include standards for single family detached development proposed in multifamily zones. Create a standard to allow a limited percentage of commercial use in proposed mixed use development in multifamily zones.
18. Provide multiple industrial zones to specify and direct the type, design, and location of industrial uses.
19. Provide alternative means to any open space requirement as part of a planned development to provide more flexibility and incentives for infill development and focus on recreation in community regions and rural centers.
20. Amend Zoning map to include a historical overlay zone district to the historical townsites of El Dorado and Diamond Springs, consistent with adopted General Plan and Zoning Ordinance policies.
21. Establish standards for wetland and riparian setbacks.
22. Provide opportunities for residential and recreational uses on Timber Production Zone land compatible with timber management and harvesting.

Project Objectives

The TGPA and Zoning Ordinance Update have the following objectives:

TGPA:

1. Establish policies related to the development of housing affordable to the moderate income earner,
2. Establish policies that will result in job creation and improved sales tax revenues,
3. Establish policies that will promote and protect agriculture in the county,
4. Establish policies consistent with SB 375 (2008) and housing element law, and
5. Revise existing General Plan policies as needed to provide clarity.

Zoning Ordinance Update:

1. Conform the zoning map to the General Plan land use designations,
2. Eliminate conflicting provisions within the existing ordinance,
3. Include provisions in the ordinance to implement General Plan Implementation Measures LU-A, HO-6, HO-16, HS-K, CO-A, AF-A, ED-N, ED-P, ED-II, ED-JJ, ED-KK, and ED-QQ,
4. Ensure that the ordinance is consistent with applicable state and federal laws,
5. Reorganize the ordinance for ease of use, including the use of tables to identify permitted uses and development standards, establishing specific use regulations for administrative review of specified uses,
6. Create new zones to reflect current zoning needs and implement the General Plan, including Rural Lands, Forest Resources, Agricultural Grazing, and Limited Agriculture,
7. Delete obsolete zones,
8. Create overlay zones to more effectively implement General Plan policies,
9. Expand potential uses in the agricultural and rural lands zones to provide for opportunities for agricultural support, recreation, and rural commerce, including allowing ranch marketing on grazing land,
10. Provide a range of intensities for home occupations, based on size and zoning of parcels, adding the use of accessory structures, customers, and employees,
11. Modify zoning for Williamson Act contracted and rolled out land to reflect the underlying General Plan land use designations,

12. Revise the zoning map to conform to standardized rules sets for zoning modifications based on the General Plan land use designations, and
13. Provide a range of commercial zones to specify and direct the type, design, and location of commercial uses, consistent with the General Plan.

Level of Detail for the Environmental Analysis in the Draft EIR

The analysis will be at a program-level. It will focus on the reasonably foreseeable direct and indirect physical environmental effects that could result from implementation of the TGPA and the ZOU. Because no specific development projects are being proposed, the analysis will not be parcel-specific.

The ZOU includes a number of optional ordinances that will be considered by the County, but which may or may not be adopted. The EIR will examine these options as part of the project and will discuss the range of impacts that could result from adopting the options as part of the ZOU.

Scope of the EIR– Potential Significant Effects

The County is preparing an Initial Study pursuant to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines to help identify potential significant effects to be analyzed in the Draft EIR. The following list of potentially significant effects is not intended to be comprehensive. The Draft EIR may address additional impacts as a result of the comments received on the Notice of Preparation, the scoping meetings, and the Environmental Checklist/Initial Study.

Comments and suggestions are requested regarding the environmental issues that will be analyzed in the EIR; a 45 day public comment period (instead of the normal 30 day period) is set to begin upon receipt of this Notice of Preparation.

Potentially Significant Impacts to be Addressed in the EIR

At this time, the following issues are anticipated to be addressed in the EIR:

1. Aesthetics
2. Agriculture Resources
3. Air Quality
4. Biological Resources
5. Cultural Resources
6. Greenhouse Gas Emissions
7. Land Use/Planning

8. Noise
9. Population/Housing
10. Transportation/Traffic

Less Than Significant Impacts That Will Not Be Addressed in the EIR

Based on a preliminary review of the Project, the County has determined that the proposed Project would have a less than significant impact or no impact on the CEQA issue areas identified below. This is a preliminary determination only and does not preclude the County from making a different determination upon further analysis.

The primary reasons for these preliminary determinations are as follows:

Geology/Soils

None of the proposed changes in General Plan policy or zoning regulations will result in an increased risk from geologic hazards in that no reduction in safeguards are proposed.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

None of the proposed changes in General Plan policy or zoning regulations will result in the exposure of residents to hazards or hazardous materials. For example, no changes are proposed to regulations regarding naturally occurring asbestos.

Hydrology/Water Quality

None of the proposed changes in General Plan policy or zoning regulations will violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, nor will the proposed project substantially alter or degrade groundwater supplies, existing drainage patterns, or water quality.

Mineral Resources

None of the proposed changes in General Plan policy or zoning regulations will substantively change mineral resource designations or the regulation of mineral resource recovery.

Public Services, Utilities/Service Systems

Because none of the proposed changes in General Plan policy or zoning regulations will substantively change projected population or change the amount of housing designated in the General Plan, or increase areas to be developed, the changes are not expected to substantially affect demand for public services or utilities. However, this will be reviewed in the EIR in relation to proposed changes to density at the local level.

Recreation

None of the proposed changes in General Plan policy or zoning regulations will reduce standards for recreational lands, nor will they substantially reduce recreational opportunities; therefore future recreational demands will be met during the future process of considering individual development projects.

Alternatives to be addressed in the EIR

In accordance with section 15126.6 of the State CEQA Guidelines, an EIR must “describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the Project, or to the location of the Project, which would feasibly attain most the basic objectives of the Project, but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the Project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives.” The State CEQA Guidelines also require that a No Project Alternative be evaluated, and that under specific circumstances, an environmentally superior alternative be designated from among the remaining alternatives.

The EIR will evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives, selected by an alternatives screening analysis, which will include alternatives that meet most or all of the objectives described above, are potentially feasible, and reduce significant impacts associated with the proposed TGPA and ZOU. The EIR will include an explanation of why other alternatives were rejected from further analysis in the EIR.

The alternatives analysis may, in addition to the No Project Alternative, consider one or more of the reduced intensity alternatives for further development and analysis in the EIR. The selected alternatives will be analyzed at a qualitative level of detail for comparison against the impacts identified for the proposed Project, consistent with the requirements of CEQA. Because this is a county-wide project, no alternative will be analyzed that is outside the county.

Requests for Additional Information

If you have any questions, please contact Shawna Purvines at the County of El Dorado, Development Services Department, Planning Services, 2850 Fairlane Court, Building “C,” Placerville, CA 95667, by telephone at (530) 621-5362, or by e-mail to TGPA-ZOU@edcgov.us.

The full text of the proposed changes, is available from the Development Services Department, Planning Services, 2850 Fairlane Court, Building “C,” Placerville, CA 95667. The full text of the proposed changes is also available online at the Land Use Policy Programmatic Update website: <http://www.edcgov.us/landuseupdate/>, and at the following County libraries:

1. Main Library in Placerville, 345 Fair Lane, Placerville, CA 95667. HOURS: Tuesday & Wednesday 12-7, Thursday, Friday & Saturday 10-5, Closed Sunday & Monday
2. Cameron Park Branch 2500 Country Club Dr, Cameron Park, CA 95682 HOURS: Monday, Wednesday & Friday 10-5, Tuesday & Thursday 12-7, 2nd Saturday of each month 10-3, Closed Saturday & Sunday
3. El Dorado Hills Branch 7455 Silva Valley Parkway El Dorado Hills, CA 95762. Monday 1-5, Tuesday & Wednesday 12-7, Thursday & Friday 10-5, Saturday 1-5, Closed Sunday.
4. Georgetown Branch 6680 Orleans Street P. O. Box 55 Georgetown, CA 95634. HOURS: Tuesday & Wednesday 12-7, Thursday 10-5, Friday 1-5, Saturday 10-3, Closed Sunday & Monday.
5. Pollock Pines Branch 6210 Pony Express Trail P O Box 757 Pollock Pines, CA 95726 HOURS: Tuesday 12-7, Wednesday & Thursday 10-5, Closed Friday, Saturday, Sunday & Monday.
6. South Lake Tahoe Branch 1000 Rufus Allen Blvd South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150. HOURS: Tuesday & Wednesday 10-8, Thursday, Friday & Saturday 10-5, Closed Sunday & Monday.