



## Planning Commission Staff Report

September 14, 2011  
Item 6.a.

**SUBJECT:** PGPA-17

**APPLICANT:** City of Pleasanton

**PURPOSE:** Scoping Session and Notice of Preparation of a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report for the Housing Element Update and the Climate Action Plan

**EXHIBIT:** A. Notice of Preparation

### BACKGROUND

The City of Pleasanton is in the process of updating its General Plan Housing Element and preparing a Climate Action Plan. The City of Pleasanton previously issued a Notice of Preparation and held a Scoping Session for the Housing Element update on May 15, 2011. However, because of the overlap between the Housing Element and Climate Action Plan projects, and the fact that the rezoning of several sites citywide to allow for additional multifamily housing is part of the project description of both plans, it has been decided to combine the discussion of environmental impacts of both the Housing Element and the Climate Action Plan into one Supplemental Environmental Impact Report.

### THE PROJECT

The project consists of an update to the City's Housing Element and the adoption of a Climate Action Plan. The Housing Element update will consist of identifying sufficient land for rezoning to a multifamily land use designation to accommodate the City's share of the regional housing need, and updating the background material and Goals, Policies and Programs from the 2003 Housing Element. On July 19, 2011, the City Council authorized staff to send the Draft Housing Element to the California Department of Housing and Community Development for review and comment. Similarly, on August 16, 2011, the City Council approved a Draft Climate Action Plan which is the subject of the Supplemental EIR. The Climate Action Plan includes policies and programs addressing the City's intent to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to meet the targets set by AB 32 and the California Air Resources Board. A copy of the Draft Climate Action Plan is available at:

[http://www.pleasantongreenscene.org/media/Pleasanton%20CAP\\_Draft\\_07-11-11\\_0.pdf](http://www.pleasantongreenscene.org/media/Pleasanton%20CAP_Draft_07-11-11_0.pdf)

## **CEQA PROCESS**

The update of the City's General Plan to incorporate the Housing Element and the Climate Action Plan is a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and it has been determined that this project will require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report. The purpose of the Scoping Session is to determine the scope and content of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for this project. The (revised) environmental review process and approximate schedule for completion is as follows:

1. Determine the need for an Environmental Impact Report – April 2011
2. Distribute the Notice of Preparation of an EIR to Agencies and Interested Parties – Comment period: August 23 through September 22, 2011
3. Hold a Public EIR Scoping Session – September, 14, 2011
4. Prepare a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) – To be completed by late September, 2011.
5. Allow for Public Comment on the DEIR – October through mid-November, 2011
6. Prepare a Final EIR (FEIR) – To be completed by December 2, 2011
7. Hold Public Hearings to Consider Certification of the FEIR – December 2011 and January 2012.

### **Scoping**

Attached is the Notice of Preparation which was sent to Responsible and Trustee Agencies, and e-mailed to interested parties. It is anticipated that the EIR will address the following impacts: Aesthetic/Visuals; Agricultural Land; Air Quality; Archaeological/Historical; Economic; Fire Hazard; Flooding/Drainage; Geologic/Seismic; Jobs/Housing Balance; Minerals; Noise; Public Services; Schools; Sewer Capacity; Soil Erosion; Solid Waste; Toxic/Hazardous; Traffic/Circulation; Vegetation; Water Quality; Water Supply; Wetland/Riparian; Wildlife; Growth Inducing; Incompatible Land Use; Cumulative Effects; Climate Change and Greenhouse Gases.

The purpose of the Scoping Session is to provide an opportunity for the Planning Commission and the public to comment on the content and analysis to be provided in the Environmental Impact Report.

### **EIR Preparation**

Due to the deadline for completion of this project, the EIR consultant (Environmental Science Associates, ESA) has already started work on the EIR analysis and background information. However, any comments received at the Scoping Session and during the comment period (through September 22, 2011) can be addressed in the Draft EIR.

The EIR serves several functions:

- The EIR satisfies the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act for the project's environmental review. The EIR is the informational document that identifies the environmental impacts of the proposal, the mitigation measures for these impacts, and the impacts that cannot be mitigated and are therefore unavoidable.
- As an informational document, the EIR does not formulate recommendations on the proposal, e.g. approval, conditional approval or denial.
- Once finished, the Draft EIR will be circulated for public comment for 45 days. Comments received from the general public and from the applicable federal, state, and local agencies will be addressed in the "Response to Comments" section of the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR). The FEIR will then be forwarded to the Planning Commission for review. The City Council will determine whether to certify the FEIR as complete according to CEQA requirements.

## **Alternatives**

According to State law, an EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project. The "no project" alternative is also required to be evaluated. In this case, the "no project" alternative would be the continuation of existing Goals, Policies and Programs for housing, and the identification of no additional sites for multifamily housing.

Project alternatives are anticipated to include alternatives which select a subset of the sites shown in the map on Exhibit A, increases or decreases in density on those sites, and an alternative reflecting partial completion of the City's circulation plan at build-out.

## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice of this item was published in The Valley Times. In addition, the City sent notification to responsible and trustee agencies, nearby cities, the Pleasanton Unified School District, and others, as well as about 500 interested parties for the Housing Element project and 158 interested parties for the Climate Action Plan who have provided e-mail addresses.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Commission hold a public hearing and provide feedback as appropriate on the scope and content of the Environmental Impact Report on the Housing Element Update and the Climate Action Plan.

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