



**CITY OF LODI
COUNCIL COMMUNICATION**

AGENDA TITLE: Discuss General Plan update and provide direction regarding the scope of the study area, anticipated timeline to complete the update, and level of public participation.

MEETING DATE: December 20, 2005

PREPARED BY: Peter Pirnejad, Planning Manager

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Direction to staff regarding study area and level of public participation in preparing a General Plan Request For Proposal (RFP).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The California State Law requires each city and county to adopt a general plan "for the physical development of the city or county and any land outside its boundaries which bears relation to its planning". The General Plan is the foundation upon which all land use decisions are to be based. It expresses community development goals and embodies public policy relative to the distribution of future land use.

State general plan law (Government Code Section 65302 of the State General Plan Guidelines) requires that a general plan contain the following elements: Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise, and Safety. In addition, a General Plan may include optional elements of local importance that relate to the physical development of a city.

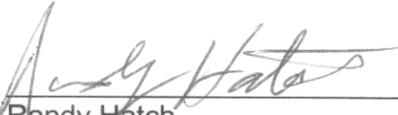
The current City of Lodi General Plan (GP) adopted by the City Council on June 12, 1991 has the following elements (the mandatory elements are identified in **bold**):

- **Land Use** and Growth Management
- **Circulation**
- **Housing**
- **Noise**
- **Conservation**
- Parks, Recreation, and **Open Space**
- Health and **Safety**
- Urban Design and Cultural Resources

FISCAL IMPACT: In order to determine the fiscal impact involved in the preparation of the General Plan Update staff would need to prepare, distribute, and review responses to an RFP (Request for Proposals). Staff would need the City Council direction and authorization to prepare and distribute an appropriate RFP with enough detail related to the level of public involvement to warrant an accurate and reliable estimate.

APPROVED: 
Blair King, City Manager

FUNDING AVAILABLE: N/A



Randy Hatch
Community Development Director

RH/kjc

Attachments



MEMORANDUM, City of Lodi, Community Development Department

To: Mayor and City Council
Randy Hatch, Community Development Director

From: Peter Pirnejad, Planning Manager

Date: December 15, 2005

Subject: December 20, 2005 "Shirtsleeve" session - General Plan Update

SUMMARY

As a first step in an effort to update the City's General Plan, staff thought it would be helpful to provide the City Council with a brief background on our exiting General Plan and lay out the process of a General Plan Update. Prior to staff preparing a recommendation to the City Council to request proposals from qualified applicants, we would need some fundamental questions answered regarding the scope of the study area, the anticipated timeline to complete the update, and the level of public participation the City Council hopes to include in the process. With that direction, staff will proceed in the preparation of the RFP for professional services for review and approval by the City Council.

BACKGROUND

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The current City of Lodi General Plan (GP) adopted by the City Council on June 12, 1991 has the following elements (the mandatory elements are identified in **bold**):

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DISCUSSION

In considering the 20-year projection period of the existing General Plan, which began in 1987 and ends in 2007, now would be the ideal time to begin the process of updating the General Plan for another cycle period. The cycle period would dictate the period of time that the General Plan would project out to. Typically the general plan period is 20 years, but it may be longer. The process of updating a General Plan is largely up to the jurisdiction, therefore, depending on the amount of available funding and expectations it can range significantly in the time and cost.

The following is a brief explanation of a typical General Plan Update process:

1. Characterization of existing conditions, identification of Study Area.

One of the first steps would be for staff and consultant to prepare a detailed Background Report describing and assessing existing market conditions in an effort to identify constraints, and opportunities for development in Lodi. This would be akin to a SWOT Analysis (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) that the City would use to harness and reallocate resources to stimulate economic development and foster responsible development.

The identification of the geographic study area is also a first step. As noted above, the general plan study area is to include the City limits and any "land outside its boundaries which bears relation to its planning". Staff is of the opinion that the geographic study area should be quite expansive to include all land potentially within a greenbelt of a community separator area. The geographic study area should also include lands adjacent to the City's wastewater treatment plant, including the I-5/state Highway 12 interchange

2. Analysis of Market Demand.

An evaluation of the market demand for major land uses in Lodi over a given period e.g. 20-years (2007-2027) would be prepared. A Land Absorption Study would be compiled to define absorption rates based on an established growth rate i.e. 2.0 percent. A Land Absorption Study would determine the rate at which vacant land can be converted to residential uses provided jurisdictional, market, construction, and other constraints.

3. Issue identification

In this step staff would identify community concerns. This can be accomplished through a series of options that range from expedited review with minimal public involvement to a more exhaustive grassroots public outreach approach. The degree of public involvement will dictate, in large part, the cost and length of time to complete the General Plan Update. The following options available to the City Council have been arranged in ascending order from less to more involved:

- a. The City Council can direct staff to work directly with the selected consultant and involve the general public only as part of routine update reports to the Planning Commission and/or the City Council

and mandated public hearings. Staff does not recommend public involvement be limited to this option.

- b. The City Council can form a General Plan Update Ad Hoc Committee tasked with working closely with staff and consultant in reviewing the General Plan Update through the entire process involving the general public during required public hearing processes. Members of the Ad Hoc Committee could include representatives from the Planning Commission, City Council, Chamber of Commerce, community organizations, environmental groups, and other organizations as designated by the City Council. The size of the Ad Hoc Committee can vary but we would recommend no less than 9 and no more than 15. Staff has had success with this option in other general plan updates for other cities. However, this process was used in the recent City of Stockton general plan update and was viewed as being exclusive and inhibiting community input.
- c. Staff and consultant can conduct a survey in a variety of formats to collect and study community opinion related to the General Plan and integrate those findings into the policy objectives of the GP Update. Staff has used this option as a component in other general plan updates and recommends its inclusion based on time and cost considerations.
- d. Staff and consultant can host a series of community vignettes, workshops, brainstorming sessions, and/or other community involved planning sessions at the City Hall under the direction of the Planning Commission in an effort to involve the general public in an open and continuing process. Again, staff has used this option and recommends it. Staff notes that Stockton is now using this option to address the criticisms of the ad hoc committee method.
- e. Staff and consultant could hold community workshops in and around the City through a series of town hall meetings, neighborhood groups, and other grass roots efforts of community involvement. Staff has used this option but it is more appropriate for very large cities with a larger geographic size. Staff does not recommend it for Lodi.
- f. A combination of these options can be used to achieve the desired method of community involvement at the appropriate cost in terms of both time and money. The selected consultant can be an important contributor in refining the best option to be used. Staff is however, favorable to a series of community workshops under the direction of the Planning Commission as the preferred option perhaps with a survey instrument.

4. Analysis of community concern/desires

Through the use of some form of community involvement, staff and consultant will note community concerns and desires as they relate to the physical development of the City over the next general plan cycle period. Said concerns/desires will be translated into policy objectives for consideration by the City Council.

5. Preparation of Land Use/Circulation Alternatives

Staff and consultant will then prepare Land Use/Circulation alternatives based on the information gathered up until that point. These alternatives will pose optional scenarios for the General Plan based on the findings staff and consultants have collected during their analysis. Said alternatives will be presented to the Council for review, consideration, and comment.

6. Selection and refinement of desired alternatives

Upon review of the desired Land Use/Circulation alternatives City Council will direct staff and consultant to refine and expand on a desired alternative. Refinement of said alternative will lead to the preparation and distribution of a Draft General Plan Policy Document for general comment.

7. Preparation of Draft General Plan Policy Document

The Draft Policy Document will be the culmination of all the data assimilation, public workshops, and Council direction. It will reflect the intended course of the physical build out of the city over the next established General Plan cycle period. Said document will be prepared for public review and comment prior to preparation of the required environmental impact report. The selection of the formatting of the document will be verified with a suggested separate policy document and background report. All required elements will be included and the appropriate optional elements will be selected and included.

8. Public Review of the Draft General Plan Policy Document.

The Draft Policy Document would be prepared and released for public review. During this step in the General Plan Update process public involvement beyond that which is required by state law will again dictate the timeline for completion of the Update and thereby affect associated costs.

9. Environmental Impact Report.

Along with preparation of the General Plan Policy Document the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) would be prepared to meet the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

10. Public Review and Adoption of the Lodi General Plan.

Public hearings would be held before the Lodi City Council on the final Policy Document and Final EIR.

FISCAL IMPACT

In order to determine the fiscal impact involved in the preparation of the General Plan Update staff would need to prepare, distribute, and review responses to an RFP (Request for Proposals). Staff would need the City Council direction and authorization to prepare and distribute an appropriate RFP with enough detail related to the level of public involvement to warrant an accurate and reliable estimate.

SUVEY OF RECENT GENERAL PLANS UPDATES PROCESS IN OTHER CITIES

City	Level Of Public Involvement And Scope Of Work	Budget	Time Frame to Adoption
Stockton	Established General Plan Action Team (GPAT) appointed by City Manager comprised of Chamber, Sierra Club, Developers, affordable housing reps, and other interest groups. A fifteen-member committee met 24 times over 2 years. They had four community meetings at the Civic Center. Four specialized subcommittees were appointed by the GPAT that meet 4-5 times each over the life of the project. City had 17 Planning Commission Workshops and 3 study sessions with the City Council. There were a substantial amount of changes as well as a significant narrowing of the focus from a 2050 to a 2035 forecast	Originally budgeted \$2.1 Million but after narrowing scope of GP from 2050 to 2035 increased budget to \$2.4 Million	Started Dec 02 Expected completion by first part of 2006 (Delay due to change of scope) Total time frame expected to be 3 years
Tracy	Established a joint CC/PC Task Force Workshop that meet every 2 months. They had a total of 20 of these events since they started the GP in Feb 2003. In addition to their required elements they developed a new Architectural Design and Public Facilities Elements. Additionally, they consolidated two elements into one. They had generated a list of over 250-people they noticed for every public meeting. As part of the GP Update they included a Housing Element. As part of the public outreach effort they had a press release	They budgeted \$1 Million for the entire GP, which included Traffic and The Housing Element.	Project started in Feb 2003. They hope to adopt by Feb 2006 3 years
Manteca	The GP Update process was combined with 2 Specific Plans and a Housing Element. The City Council appointed a citizen-based Ad-Hoc committee of 12 members and 12 alternates that saw the entire GP Update process to completion. The Ad-Hoc Committee met with City staff and the consultant a total of 35 times over the course of two years until the Plan was adopted by the CC. As part of their initial kickoff they had a press release and a town hall meeting. All 35 meetings were publicly noticed and the general public was permitted to witness but not participate in the discussions.	The 2 Specific Plans were not completed as described in the original contract so the cost of the GP Update alone was approximately \$420,000	The entire GP Process took a total of about 2 years
Turlock	Turlock had a GP that was last updated in 1993. Rather than do a compressive update they decided to do a review and make changes to reflect the amendments and progress that had accomplished since its original adoption. This amendment included reviewing all the policies and identified those that had been met as well as providing updates to those that had not. The entire process took less than 2 years and was completed in 2002		
Merced	GP was last updated in 1997. The City anticipated updating their GP (without a Housing Element) as part of the UC Merced project. The CC had designated a study area for the GP that would identify the new service area. After awarding the contract to URS for \$350,000 there was interest from many property owners to expand the service area. They are now in the process of appointing an Advisory Committee to facilitate a full-fledged public outreach effort. This effort will be coupled along with a determination of what the existing public services can handle with reasonable expansion. The anticipated result is a new project boundary study area that will be adopted by the City Council. The public involvement is anticipated to be facilitated by a newly appointed public information officer and include a formal press release, public workshops, and the appointment of a Citizen Ad-Hoc Committee.	The original budget for the project was \$350,000. However, the expanded boundary proved to be too expensive so they allocated \$70,000 for URS to do a more detailed survey and present a revised study area. The total anticipated cost is expected to be, Less than \$1 Mill	The original anticipated completion date was for late 2006 however with the revised project boundaries they anticipate the new GP Update to take 2 years

RECOMMENDATION

Prior to preparing of an RFP, staff would need to know fundamentally the general level of public involvement the City Council would want integrated in the GP Update. Staff would request that the City Council provide general direction in this regard as well as authorization to distribute an RFP. Upon receipt of responses to the RFP staff would present their finding and more alternatives to the City Council for review and consideration prior to entering into a contract.

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