
18. PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANS

Section 15125(d) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines requires EIRs to "...discuss any inconsistencies between the proposed project and applicable general plans and regional plans." The Guidelines indicate that the objective of this discussion is to identify possible modifications to the project to reduce any inconsistencies with relevant plans and policies.

18.1 SOLANO COUNTY 2008 GENERAL PLAN

The EIR concludes in chapter 12, Land Use and Planning, that overall, the Draft Specific Plan is consistent with the Solano County 2008 General Plan. As shown on Figure 12.4 in Draft EIR chapter 12, Middle Green Valley is identified on the General Plan Land Use diagram as a Special Project Area facing unique planning issues. Six public workshops were held during the spring and summer of 2007 as part of a resident-driven planning process for the Middle Green Valley Special Study Area. The ultimate goal identified by community participants in the workshops (see section 2.2, Specific Plan Background, in EIR chapter 2) was to maintain the rural character of Middle Green Valley while allowing some opportunities for compatible residential development. Land use tools such as clustering and transfer of development rights were identified for this purpose and are described in the General Plan (General Plan page LU-54) as possible measures to limit the effects of residential development on the rural character of the valley.

Those policies and implementation programs from the 2008 Solano County General Plan that are pertinent to consideration of proposed Specific Plan and its potential environmental impacts have been listed throughout this Draft EIR in the corresponding environmental chapters (aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural and historical resources, etc.). Where any proposed Specific Plan land use and development policy or standard has been found these Draft EIR chapters to be potentially inconsistent with one or more of these County-adopted goals, policies or implementation programs, a potentially significant environmental impact and one or more associated mitigations has been identified for incorporation into the Specific Plan to reduce the impact and better implement the General Plan.

18.2 SOLANO COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE

The Solano County zoning ordinance provides a precise plan for land use and development standards within Solano County. The zoning ordinance establishes and designates zoning districts as a means of implementing Solano General Plan land use goals and policies. The various zoning districts include specific land use and development standards, including permitted and conditionally-permitted land uses, building setbacks, building height limits, and other standards. Under state planning law, the zoning ordinance must be consistent with the General Plan. A *Neighborhood Design Code* is presented in Chapter 5 of the Draft Specific Plan which is intended to establish a revised zoning and development pattern for the Plan Area.

In this manner, the land use and development standards of the adopted Specific Plan would supersede the standards, land use designations public works standards and other applicable regulations found in the current County Zoning Ordinance, as well as other applicable County regulations, for the plan area. The Specific Plan also states that, to the extent that standards or regulations are not specified in this Specific Plan and do not conflict with the implementation of the Specific Plan, the Zoning Ordinance shall prevail (DSP page 2-2).

The Specific Plan content specifically modifies some definitions and defines additional land uses not found in the Zoning Ordinance. These proposed zoning modifications or amendments would be implemented through standard County procedures for zoning amendments.

18.3 PERTINENT REGIONAL PLANS

18.3.1 ABAG's Regional Land Use Policy Framework

The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) has been established as the regional planning agency and council of governments for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area responsible for addressing in a regional context such intraregional issues as land use, housing, environmental quality, and economic development. The primary regional land use policy document adopted by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) is entitled A Proposed Land Use Policy Framework for the San Francisco Bay Area, and was adopted by the ABAG Executive Board in July 1990. The document is described as a regional policy framework for future land use decisions in the Bay Area that respects the need for strong local control, but that also recognizes the importance of regional comprehensive planning for issues of regional significance. The document contains policies that (1) direct growth where regional infrastructure (e.g., freeways, transit, water, solid waste disposal, sewage treatment) is available and natural resources will not be overburdened; (2) encourage development that discourages long-distance commuting; (3) establish firm growth boundaries; and (4) encourage provision of housing at all levels.

The proposed Specific Plan would be partially consistent with these policies, in that it (1) could be served by existing regional infrastructure systems, with improvements as described in chapter 10 (Public Services and Utilities) and chapter 17 (Transportation and Circulation); (2) would facilitate local agricultural employment and improved housing opportunities that together would assist the County in maintaining a relative balance between local jobs and employed residents; and (3) would help to improve housing opportunities in Solano County.

18.3.2 ABAG's Regional Housing Needs Allocation

As discussed in chapter 14 of this Draft EIR, ABAG also administers the State-required Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process in the San Francisco Bay Area. As shown in Table 14.2 in chapter 14, the current RHNA assignment, which applies to the period from 2007 to 2014, calls for the County to identify sites in its unincorporated area for development of a total of 99 housing units (26 units for very low-income households, 16 units for low-income households, 18 units for moderate-income households, and 39 units for above moderate-income households). The proposed Specific Plan would provide for an increase of up to 400 new primary residential units, plus the potential for up to 100 new secondary residential units. This housing unit increase would exceed the County's ABAG-identified Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) for 2007 through 2014 (99 housing units). The contribution to the

ABAG-identified housing need for each income category (“very low,” “low,” “moderate,” and “above moderate”) has not been established. The proposed Specific Plan would not result in any inconsistencies with the RHNA.

18.3.3 Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) Plans and Policies

In 1991, the BAAQMD, MTC and ABAG prepared the Bay Area 1991 Clean Air Plan (CAP) to address the California Clean Air Act. Updates are developed approximately every three years. The plans were meant to demonstrate progress toward meeting the more stringent 1-hour ozone California Ambient Air Quality Standard (CAAQS). The latest update to the plan, which was adopted in January 2006, is called the Bay Area 2005 Ozone Strategy. This plan includes a comprehensive strategy to reduce emissions from stationary, area, and mobile sources. The plan is designed to achieve a region-wide reduction of ozone precursor pollutants through the expeditious implementation of all feasible measures. An update to the plan is currently being developed and should be available in 2009. This update is anticipated to address not only ozone, but also include controls for particulate matter and greenhouse gases that lead to climate change.

A key element in air quality planning is to make reasonably accurate projections of future human activities that are related to air pollutant emissions. Most important is vehicle activity. The BAAQMD uses population projections made by ABAG and vehicle use trends made by MTC to formulate future air pollutant emission inventories. The basis for these projections comes from cities and counties. In order to provide the best plan to reduce air pollution in the Bay Area, accurate projections from local governments are necessary. When General Plans are not consistent with these projections, they cumulatively reduce the effectiveness of air quality planning in the region.

As discussed in chapter 5, Air Quality, of this Draft EIR, the amount of growth anticipated in the plan area under the proposed Specific Plan would be in accordance with the County's General Plan and generally consistent with growth assumptions used in the latest regional clean air plan (i.e., 2005 ozone plan).

18.3.4 Regional Water Quality Control Board Plans and Policies

As discussed in chapter 11, Hydrology and Water Quality, of this Draft EIR, the plan area is located within the jurisdiction of the Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board), San Francisco Bay Region. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan and associated future development under the Specific Plan must, by law, comply with WATER BOARD regulations.

The WATER BOARD has adopted the San Francisco Bay Basin Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan; 2007) to implement plans, policies, and provisions for water quality management pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Act. The WATER BOARD has set water quality objectives for all surface waters in the region concerning bacteria, bioaccumulation, biostimulatory substances, color, dissolved oxygen, floating material, oil and grease, population and community ecology, pH, salinity, sediment, settleable material, suspended material, sulfide, tastes and odors, temperature, toxicity, turbidity, and ammonia. The WATER BOARD also administers the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater permitting program for construction and industrial activities in the Bay Basin, along with other permit requirements and prohibitions. Chapter 11 of this Draft EIR includes mitigation measures that would ensure Specific Plan consistency with WATER BOARD policies and requirements.

