



Council-Planning Commission Synopsis

May 25, 2010

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Prepared and
Presented

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– Planning

Agendized by: Roy W. Wasden, City Manager

1. ACTION RECOMMENDED:

THIS ITEM IS FOR DISCUSSION ONLY.

2. DISCUSSION OF ISSUE:

Background

Staff and the consultants, Dyett and Bhatia, have developed four conceptual land use alternatives for consideration by the City Council and Planning Commission. The booklet describing these alternatives is attached and is also available to the public for free download at: <http://www.gpupdate.turlock.ca.us/>. Because the City already has sufficient land inventory to support projected commercial and industrial development, the focus of these alternatives is to provide sufficient land capacity to accommodate projected residential development needs. The alternatives are presented at a very high level, describing potential residential growth alternatives in terms of neighborhood compactness, rather than identifying specific land use classifications. Staff has directed the consultant to prepare a more flexible master planning approach that focuses less on identifying the location and mix of land use classifications for new growth areas and instead focuses on master plan performance goals and policies. The descriptions in the report represent the initial step in developing these goals and policies by describing the type of residential neighborhood based upon its level of compactness. The consultant has provided a visual palette of neighborhood development types, using examples drawn from recently developed residential projects in other cities, to illustrate each level of neighborhood compactness. Both the City Council and Planning Commission reviewed these concept alternatives in December 2009.

Purpose of the Workshop

The focus of the May 25 workshop is to review the preliminary analysis of the potential impacts and costs associated with each of the four alternatives. The consultant will review the analyses prepared by each of the subconsultants. A summary of their findings are presented in the revised booklet, attached herein. The revised booklet is also available on the General Plan Update webpage referred above, as well as the more detailed technical memoranda prepared by each of the subconsultants.

Overview of the Concept Alternatives

The four alternatives presented in this booklet focus on two of the potential growth areas identified in the current General Plan- the Southeast and Northwest areas. The Northeast and Southwest areas have not been included in any of these concept alternatives. The reason for this is two-fold: first, to focus the extension of urban infrastructure into more compact residential neighborhoods thereby reducing the cost of development to the City, developers and the public; and, second, to reduce environmental impacts on prime farmland and air quality.

Each alternative is designed to meet a future housing growth target of approximately 15,000 units. Infill development is assumed in each alternative; however, these assumptions do vary slightly. Each alternative assumes more compact development than has historically occurred in the City of Turlock to reduce the consumption of prime farmland, reduce emissions, and reduce the infrastructure and service costs associated with lower density development.

Alternative A (Southeast Only): Focuses development in the Southeast area, reflecting the growth policies of the current General Plan. Approximately one-third (1/3) of the growth, or 5,000 units, would be provided through infill development. The remaining growth would be provided through the development of five (5) master plans that would include neighborhoods ranging from low density to very compact.

Alternative B (Northwest Emphasis): Shifts development to the northwest in very compact neighborhoods with the objective of accommodating as much growth as possible in the Northwest area. Two of the Southeast area master plans would still be needed to accommodate the housing growth target of approximately 15,000 units. This alternative includes 3,500 units of infill development.

Alternative C (Most Compact): Minimizes impact on prime farmland by directing new development into both the Northwest and Southeast areas in very compact neighborhoods. Development would occur in both the

Southeast area and Northwest area. This alternative assumes 5,000 units of infill development.

Alternative D (Moderate Compact): Distributes growth between the Northwest and Southeast areas in lower density neighborhoods. This density of this alternative is the lowest of the four alternatives. Approximately 4,000 units are to be provided as infill development.

Impact Assessment

The consultant team has been asked to prepare a very high-level impact assessment comparing the alternatives to assist the City Council and Planning Commission in making a decision on the direction of the Turlock General Plan Update. More detailed evaluations will be performed on the preferred land use plan to determine the final mix of land use types as well as address a myriad of other planning, environmental, service, quality of life, and fiscal issues. This preliminary evaluation compares the alternatives based upon major environmental impacts, infrastructure improvement needs, fiscal impacts and cost. The detailed background reports that serve as a basis of the attached summary report are available for download on the Turlock General Plan Update webpage.

Input Requested

Staff is seeking comments from the City Council and Planning Commission on the range of alternatives and the impact assessment. Any questions or concerns that cannot be addressed by staff or the consultant at the meeting will be researched prior to bringing this item back to the two bodies for action. In order to continue moving forward with the General Plan Update in accordance with the schedule and work plan approved by Council, the City Council will be asked to provide direction on a preferred land use plan at an upcoming meeting. The Planning Commission will also be asked to provide a recommendation to the City Council.

Ultimately, the preferred land use plan may be one of the four conceptual land use alternatives, a combination of any of the four, or a completely new mix of land use types. Based on the comments and input received from the City Council and Planning Commission, staff and the consultant will attempt to develop a preliminary draft of the preferred land use plan for consideration at a future meeting.

3. BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

The City Council reviewed the four conceptual land use alternatives at their December 8, 2009, meeting. The item was presented for discussion only.

4. FISCAL IMPACT / BUDGET AMENDMENT:

Fiscal Impact: The project is currently on schedule and within budget. No budget amendment is required at this time. The cost to update the General Plan and Housing Element, including its Environmental Impact Report and the Capital Facility Fee Program, is \$1,242,470.

5. CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS:

Recommend approval.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

An environmental impact report is being prepared to support the proposed changes in the Turlock General Plan.

7. ALTERNATIVES:

Not applicable; no action is requested at this time.