



**AGENDA REPORT 12/3/09**  
**GENERAL PLAN UPDATE: CONCEPT ALTERNATIVES**

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TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Debra Whitmore, Deputy Director of Development Services/Planning

SUBJECT: Turlock General Plan Concept Alternatives

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Staff and the consultants, Dyett and Bhatia, have developed four conceptual land use alternatives for consideration by the Planning Commission. The booklet describing these alternatives is available 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.

Staff made a commitment to the City Council to bring these land use alternative concepts back for Council review prior to conducting any additional community meetings. This report gives the Planning Commission an opportunity to provide input into the Council's deliberation. These 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. 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.

In preparing the new General Plan, 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. These performance goals and policies would describe the City's goals and objectives for development of a master plan area, but would allow more flexibility when the master plan is prepared at a later date. The alternatives described in this booklet are the first step in developing these performance goals.

**Concept Alternatives**

The four alternatives presented in this booklet focus on two of the potential growth areas - 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. 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. 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 low density development.

**Alternative A (Southeast Only):** Focuses development in the Southeast area reflecting the growth policies of the current General Plan. A new highway 99 interchange in the Southeast area would be required to support development of a portion of the new growth area.

**Alternative B (Northwest Emphasis):** Shifts development to the northwest in very compact neighborhoods. Some portions of the Southeast area would still be needed to accommodate the housing growth target of approximately 15,000 units. The Taylor Road, Monte Vista, and Fulkerth interchanges would need to be upgraded to accommodate residential development in the Northwest area.

**Alternative C (Most Compact):** Minimizes impact on prime farmland by directing new development into both the Northwest and Southeast areas in very compact neighborhoods. This alternative would not require the improvement of Taylor Road interchange and may avoid the development of a new interchange in the Southeast area.

**Alternative D (Moderate Compact):** Distributes growth between Northwest and Southeast area with the objective of avoiding a new interchange in the Southeast area. Taylor Road, Monte Vista, and Fulkerth interchanges would need to be upgraded to accommodate this alternative.

In all four cases, the level of development in the region as a whole may trigger the need for interchange improvements at Lander, West Main and Fulkerth, as well as the construction of a new interchange in the Southeast area and upgrades at Taylor Road, as these interchanges serve unincorporated communities such as Denair, Hilmar and Delhi that are planned to grow over the next 20 years. In addition, growth in truck traffic could trigger these improvements.

## **Policy Questions**

Staff is seeking input from the Planning Commission on the following questions:

- 1) Do these four alternatives cover the range of growth scenarios that the Commission would like to study further? or are there other areas of potential growth that the Commission wants to investigate?
- 2) Is the Planning Commission comfortable with the type of development proposed as measured in terms of neighborhood compactness? or would the Commission like to see more or less compact neighborhood types?