

MEMORANDUM

DATE: OCTOBER 15, 2009

TO: PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: MIKE KAMINO, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT *MK*

BY: ALLISON COOK, PRINCIPAL PLANNER *ac*

SUBJECT: GENERAL PLAN UPDATE STUDY SESSION

The purpose of the General Plan Update Study Session is for PBS&J (the General Plan Update consultant) and City staff to present the Draft General Plan Update (GPU) to the Planning Commission, and respond to questions the Commission may have about the document. PBS&J will provide a PowerPoint presentation to you during the study session. The following is a summary to help you in reviewing the GPU document.

The timeframe for the GPU is to year 2035, and its focus is sustainability. Since our City is almost built out, the theme of the GPU is to sustain and enhance existing neighborhoods, travel corridors, commercial centers, and open spaces, while at the same time encouraging the redevelopment of older buildings and areas to provide better design and economic benefit to the City. Another common theme is enhancing a special sense of community reflecting the unique character of Agoura Hills through community programs, urban design, and preservation of the natural features of the City. The GPU addresses recent state legislation regarding environmental sustainability, particularly reducing greenhouse gases, throughout the document, as there is an emphasis on resource protection and conservation, and encouraging transportation systems and development that promote alternative modes of travel (e.g., walking, cycling, transit).

In January 2009, City staff and PBS&J worked with the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) to create the following vision statement for the GPU, which became the philosophy that guided the GPU preparation. The vision statement was based on consideration of the variety of public input received during the initial data gathering phase of the GPU.

Agoura Hills is a special place, surrounded by the Santa Monica Mountains, where oak trees and rolling hills abound. Here we seek to preserve our city's best qualities while striving to create a better community. The future Agoura Hills is an attractive city of growing sophistication that chooses to retain its small town look and feel. The city remains a safe place, where people live, work, play and move about in an economically viable and environmentally sustainable community. Sensitive growth and economic development are means of perpetuating our quality of life. These are balanced with resource conservation, as the city's semi-rural ranching past, rich history and unique neighborhoods are respected, and open spaces and surrounding hillsides are preserved. Agoura Hills

is a place where its citizens have opportunities to engage in their community through recreation, social and civic activities, schools and neighborhood organizations.

Instead of the current format style of many separate topic elements, the GPU format consists of four larger Elements that combine a series of topics into issue areas: (1) Community Conservation and Development; (2) Infrastructure and Community Services; (3) Natural Resources; and (4) Community Safety. Each Element contains a series of goals and policies. Policy implementation measures are provided for all of the Elements together in the Implementation Program section of the GPU. This integrated approach leads to a comprehensive and internally consistent GPU document in articulating the community's shared vision, and is now considered the norm for new general plans.

The following is an overview of the most important items in the Draft GPU by Element.

COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT (CHAPTER 2)

Land Use & Community Form - The Land Use & Community Form goals and policies guide the built environment of the City.

1. Land Use: The "Land Use Diagram" (Figure LU-3) shows the proposed land use designations, densities and intensities. There are no major changes to land use densities and intensities. Growth and new development in the City would be infill, protecting surrounding open space areas. Development on the edges of the City, in the Ladyface Mountain Specific Plan (LMSP) and the Agoura Village Specific Plan (AVSP) areas, would continue according to those approved plans.
2. Build Out: Based on build out of the Land Use Map, development by the year 2035 is projected to be limited to a total of 8,150 housing units; 1.85 million square feet of retail services; 3.43 million square feet of business park/office uses; and 1.1 million square feet of business park manufacturing uses in the City as a whole (existing 2009, plus future anticipated development to 2035). Any exceedance of these figures would require supplemental environmental review per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
3. Pedestrian Orientation: The use of pedestrian amenities throughout the City is emphasized, but especially in commercial developments, to encourage walking, and to create more interesting and enticing commercial areas.
4. Sustainable Design: Policies include incorporating green building code state requirements into the Municipal Code, as well as encouraging the use of green building technologies, such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED).
5. Areas of Change: There would be minimal changes to the majority of the City. However, proposed changes are directed at twelve subareas (See Figure LU-4) of the City in need of revitalization, with specific goals and policies to encourage change. No subareas are

within existing residential areas. The most substantial changes would occur in the following subareas:

#5 – Generally located west of Kanan Road and North of Agoura Road, a master plan, specific plan or other regulatory document is called for in this proposed mixed-use area of the City, adjacent to Agoura Village on the northwest. The goal is to allow a variety of commercial uses and some residential uses to further build upon Agoura Village and provide a cohesive element to the current fragmented uses.

#8 – As an incentive to revitalization, the option for multi-family residential housing above commercial uses is provided in the three shopping centers along Kanan Road.

6. Land Use Designations: Three new land use categories are proposed: (1) Commercial Shopping Center-Mixed Use (Subarea #8 only); (2) Planned Development (Subarea #5, and the AVSP and LMSP); and (3) Neighborhood Commercial (Subarea #2).

Economic Development – The Economic Development goals and policies encourage a strong and sustainable economic base and sound fiscal management of the City. Key policy items are to target new retail opportunities along Highway 101; diversify the City's economic base; retain existing businesses; and continue to provide efficient and adequate public services and infrastructure.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES (CHAPTER 3)

Mobility - The Mobility goals and policies aim to provide a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation network while maintaining the character of Agoura Hills.

1. Traffic Analysis: The land use buildout figures were used to determine the possible traffic scenario in 2035 with the proposed GPU based on reasonable predictions and modeling. A segment analysis was conducted, as opposed to an intersection analysis. The segment analysis assigns Levels of Service (LOS) from A to F to segments of a roadway, and does not analyze intersection capacity. The segment analysis is most often used for long range planning, particularly general plans. On the other hand, the intersection analysis is used as individual development projects are proposed and a traffic impact analysis is conducted for that particular development, since the intersection analysis requires more specific information only available when a particular development site is designed. There were 43 road segments or links analyzed as part of the recent study, versus 17 critical intersections analyzed in the current General Plan (1993).
2. Roadway and Interchange Improvements: Two freeway interchanges (Reyes Adobe Road, Palo Comado/Chesebro Road) and five roadway segments (Agoura Road west of Kanan Road, Chesebro Road, Kanan Road south of Agoura Road, Canwood Street, Chesebro Road south of Dorothy Drive) have been identified for future improvement and

inclusion on the Capital Improvements Program list. (The Reyes Adobe Interchange Project is included in the GPU, even though construction is expected to begin shortly).

3. **Alternative Transportation:** Numerous policies speak to reducing the reliance on single occupancy vehicle trips, and encouraging the use of bicycles, walking, and transit. The goal is to physically connect the different parts of the City in more sustainable ways. Goals and policies on pedestrian connectivity and accommodating bike facilities are threaded throughout the various elements of the GPU, but are primarily located in the Mobility section. A Bikeway Master Plan is proposed, as well as an Urban Pedestrian Plan, both of which seek to create more viable and user-friendly options apart from auto use, and expand upon existing bikeways and pedestrian paths and sidewalks. Policies also address further coordination with Metro to improve transit opportunities, as well as to expand special shuttle services.
4. **More Efficient Transportation:** In addition to alternative modes, the goals and policies address improving the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Ordinance to encourage greater participation, and incorporation of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) and Traffic Management Systems (TMS), which are electronic systems that help improve the efficiency and safety of vehicle routes (e.g., signal timing synchronization, advanced traveler information).
5. **Levels of Service:** Even with the above noted physical improvements (Item 2) several roadway segments would continue to operate below the standard level of service "C." These include segments that are currently adversely impacted, such as Kanan Road north of Canwood Street; Kanan Road south of Agoura Road; Agoura Road east of Kanan Road; Canwood Street east of Kanan Road; Driver Road between Argos Street and Chesebro Road just before school starting and ending hours; and Lake Lindero Road north of Thousand Oaks Boulevard just before school starting and ending hours. Additional segments are Canwood Street west of Reyes Adobe Road, and Dorothy Drive between the Lewis Road and U.S. 101 ramps. The City Council has already determined that Agoura Road east of Kanan Road should remain a two-lane road, and staff, PBS&J and the GPAC have proposed that the other widenings are not practical due to limited land availability in the right-of-way and in consideration of quality of life issues (e.g., pedestrian friendliness; maintenance of existing landscaping, medians, bikeways, and sidewalks; aesthetics; and retaining the small town feel of Agoura Hills). As such, the GPU includes a policy to maintain an LOS C standard on most roadways, but allow a reduced LOS standard of D, E or F on the above noted roadway segments. It is important to note that the LOS analysis conservatively did not assume the implementation of the measures listed in Items 3 and 4 above. There is no clear methodology for quantifying to what extent alternative methods of travel, and TDM, TMS and ITS programs would improve the LOS on a roadway. Therefore, the actual effect of traffic on the roads may be eased somewhat by using these measures, but the benefits of such use have not been assumed in the LOS analysis.

Community Services – The goals and policies of the Community Services section are necessary to continue to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the residents. Recreation and park facilities make up a significant portion of the goals and policies.

1. **Park Master Plan:** An update of the Park Master Plan is identified. The Master Plan would provide a current set of standards for maintaining and improving the City parks and recreation facilities.
2. **Sharing of Resources:** Shared use of facilities is encouraged to expand opportunities for recreation and reduce costs, as well as aim to provide a variety of services in different parts of the City to minimize distance traveled and increase convenience.
3. **Focus on Health and Community:** The Community Services section addresses recreation programs and special events that promote healthy lifestyles and community identity.

NATURAL RESOURCES (CHAPTER 4)

Open Space, Hillside and Trails – Goals and policies have been formulated to ensure the continued preservation of open space and hillside, and to develop the trail system called for in the Citywide Trails and Pathways Master Plan. The trail system would link with the Urban Pedestrian Plan facilities to complete a cohesive pedestrian system in the City from the urban areas into the outlying open space areas.

Water – Goals and policies focus on conserving water, and minimizing pollutants in the City's waterways and storm drain system.

1. **Water Recycling:** To minimize potable water use, further coordination with the Las Virgenes Municipal Water District is called for to increase the availability of recycled water to additional areas and users in the City.

Climate Change – A specific section on climate change is included in this chapter to demonstrate compliance with recent state legislation regarding greenhouse gases. In the next couple of years, the state is expected to provide specific guidance and requirements to cities regarding their role in reducing the "carbon footprint" that results in greenhouse gases (GHG). This is likely to include measuring the baseline GHG emissions upon which to assess future increases in the City from growth and development, and creating a specific plan to reduce GHG emissions throughout the City. The policies in this section acknowledge that the City will continue to comply with all state mandates and programs as they are developed.

COMMUNITY SAFETY (CHAPTER 5)

Noise – Goals and policies continue to protect sensitive receptors from substantial noise generators. The focus of this section is not only new uses being located in areas with high ambient noise, but new noise-generating uses being sited in existing neighborhoods.

NEXT STEPS

In the next few weeks, the City Council will be holding a study session similar to that of the Planning Commission. The Draft GPU is available for public review and has been made available to relevant federal, state and local agencies in particular. The public may comment on the Draft GPU from now through the formal Planning Commission and City Council adoption hearings (Winter 2009-2010), although the City encourages comments to be submitted before mid-December 2009. The GPU Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be released shortly, beginning the public review and comment period pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). A public hearing before the Planning Commission would be held during this public review period to accept oral comments on the EIR.

If you have any questions on the above information, and would like to speak to staff prior to the study session, please contact either Mike Kamino (805) 597-7321 or Allison Cook at (818) 597-7310.