



Legislation Text

File #: 13-0793, **Version:** 3

Community Development Agency, Long Range Planning Division, recommending the implementation of the General Plan Amendment Initiation Process, and recommending adoption of the General Plan Initiation Policy including application criteria and process. (Est. Time: 30 Min.) (Board Policy J-6)

FUNDING: General Fund.

Fiscal Impact/Change to Net County Cost

There is no fiscal impact or Net County Cost associated with this item.

Background

On June 25, 2013, at the request of Supervisor Veerkamp, staff provided a draft Board Policy to establish a process requiring authorization by the Board of Supervisors to initiate a privately-sponsored General Plan Amendment application. As discussed in a memo to the Board dated June 21, 2013, amending the general plan is an important decision. In recognition of the role of the General Plan as a comprehensive, long-term plan for the physical development of the County, amendments to the General Plan should occur infrequently and with appropriate deliberation. Because a significant financial investment is involved both on the private and public side of processing a General Plan Amendment, early review and consideration of amendments are warranted.

On September 30, 2013, following a 30-day public review and comment period on the draft policy, the Board provided further direction, and requested staff return with a final draft policy for consideration.

Discussion

The final draft General Plan Amendment Initiation Policy includes the following provisions:

1. Allows an early evaluation by the Board of proposed General Plan Amendments, new Specific Plan Applications and/or Specific Plan Amendments (herein collectively referred to as "Applications") based on a simplified application with few exhibits.
2. Allows the Board to terminate Applications considered inconsistent with the goals and policies of the General Plan.
3. Applies to Applications that propose to increase residential density. It does not apply to Applications which would reduce residential density or to changes to commercial, industrial, Research & Development (R&D) or similar land uses.
4. Establishes criteria to evaluate whether Applications are appropriate and timely.
5. Includes exemptions for technical corrections, mapping errors, certain qualified housing projects, and projects that propose to increase allowable density/intensity by less than 50 dwelling units.
6. Does not apply to amendments initiated by the County, which are already subject to a requirement for initiation by the Board or the Planning Commission.

The final draft General Plan Amendment Initiation Policy includes the following criteria:

1. The proposed Application is consistent with the goals and objectives of the General Plan;

and

2. Public infrastructure, facilities and services are available or can be feasibly provided to serve the proposed project without adverse impact to existing or approved development; and
3. The Application meets one or more of the following goals and objectives:
 - a. Increases employment opportunities within El Dorado County.
 - b. Promotes the development of housing affordable to moderate income households.
 - c. Provides additional opportunities to retain retail sales tax revenues within El Dorado County.
 - d. Protects and enhances the agricultural and natural resource industries, and;
4. The Application is consistent with any applicable Board adopted community vision and implementation plan.

The final draft Policy also incorporates the following additional conditions that were discussed with the Board on September 30, 2013:

1. This Policy shall apply only to new General Plan Amendments, new Specific Plan Applications and/or Specific Plan Amendments submitted after the effective date of this policy. This policy will not retroactively apply to projects currently under review.
2. The County will strive to schedule a hearing to evaluate whether the application complies with the criteria identified in this Policy within 60 days from the date staff determines the application is complete.

The Policy shall be reviewed no less than annually to assess whether this policy is working effectively and as intended.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Board adopt the General Plan Initiation Policy including application criteria and process and with the conditions noted above.

Action to be taken following Board approval:

Long Range Planning will update the existing Pre-Application and Conceptual Review Process Application (which is attached and was last revised March 2011) to include provisions for Applications consistent with the Board adopted policy.

Contact

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