



Legislation Text

File #: 24-0938, **Version:** 1

HEARING - To consider the unanimous recommendation for approval from the Planning Commission on General Plan Amendment GPA24-0002/Safety Element Update; and recommending the Board of Supervisors (Board) take the following actions:

- 1) Adopt the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Addendum to the El Dorado County's General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR), certified in May 2003 (State Clearinghouse Number 2001082030) demonstrating that the analysis in that EIR adequately addresses the potential physical impacts associated with implementation of the proposed project and the proposed project would not trigger any of the conditions described in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 calling for the preparation of a subsequent EIR or negative declaration based on the analysis prepared by staff;
- 2) Approve General Plan Amendment GPA24-0002 amending the General Plan to incorporate the Safety Element Update based on Findings as presented by staff; and
- 3) Adopt and authorize the Chair to sign Resolution **082-2024** to amend the County General Plan to incorporate the Safety Element Update.

FUNDING: General Fund and is supplemented with \$50,000 in funding from the El Dorado County Water Agency.

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND

On May 9, 2024 File No. 24-0812, Item No. 2), Planning staff presented the Safety Element Update to the County General Plan (General Plan Amendment GPA24-0002) to the Planning Commission. Following closure of the public hearing and deliberation, Planning Commissioner Nevis made a motion to approve staff's recommendation that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation to the Board to approve the General Plan Amendment, with a second by Commissioner Boeger. The Planning Commission motion (4-0 vote for approval, one Commissioner was absent) recommends that the Board of Supervisors: 1) Adopt the Addendum to the El Dorado County General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR), certified in May 2003 (State Clearinghouse No. 2001082030); and 2) Approve General Plan Amendment GPA24-0002 amending the General Plan to incorporate the Safety Element Update.

The full recommendation from the Planning Commission is summarized in the Planning Commission meeting minutes from May 9, 2024 (Legistar File 24-0812). Planning Commission agenda and materials are available at <https://eldorado.legistar.com>.

General Plan Amendment GPA24-0002 Safety Element: Recommending the adoption of the Safety Element to the Board of Supervisors. The revised draft Safety Element Update was submitted to the Board of Forestry for review on February 20, 2024. The Board of Forestry reviewed the County's revised draft Safety Element Update on March 5, 2024, at its meeting and provided the County with only minor recommended revisions to address.

Additional detail is provided in the attached Staff Memo.

ALTERNATIVES

State law in California require that counties review their Safety Elements when their Housing Elements or their Local Hazard Mitigation Plans (LHMP) are updated, at least once every eight years, and make updates to include new information related to natural hazards, climate adaptation, resiliency strategies, and evacuation accessibility and to comply with statutory changes outlined in California Government Code Section 65302(g) and 65302.15 as updated by Senate Bills (SB) 1241, 379, 1035, and 99 as well as Assembly Bills (AB) 747 and 1409. The County updated its Housing Element on August 31, 2021, which necessitated this update to its Safety Element.

The Safety Element is also a required component of the California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection's (Board of Forestry) Fire Risk Reduction Community List (FRRCL) application. Being on the FRRCL provides local jurisdictions an opportunity to receive grant funding priority, possible reduction in wildfire insurance costs, and possible eligibility to obtain wildfire insurance in the State. Any delay or recommendation to not adopt would mean that the County and its residents would miss the opportunity to be eligible for those opportunities, and likely for another two years - 2026.

Any delay or recommendation to not adopt would mean that the County would not be eligible for the FRRCL as the final, adopted Safety Element Update is due to the Board of Forestry by June 1, 2024. In addition, any substantive revisions to the Safety Element Update, specifically the wildfire-related sections, must be reviewed and approved by the Board of Forestry at its next regularly scheduled meeting, which would prevent the County from meeting the June 1, 2024 FRRCL application deadline.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION

On May 14, 2019 (File No. 19-0600, Item No. 33.), the Board adopted Resolution of Intention 068-2019 to amend the County's General Plan Safety Element following amendments to the Housing Element and as required by State law.

In March 2020, the Department issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for consultant services to update its General Plan Safety Element. Following the RFP process, the Department selected Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions, Inc. (Wood Environment) (now WSP as explained below) and began negotiating an agreement.

On March 16, 2021 (File No. 21-0288, Item No. 19), the Board approved Agreement 5185 with Wood Environment (now WSP) to complete the Safety Element Update for a 3-year term in the amount of \$215,142. Wood Environment (now WSP) began working on the Safety Element Update shortly thereafter; however, due to unforeseen delays surrounding COVID and the Caldor Fire, significant progress was not made during Fiscal Year 2020-21.

In November 2022, the County was notified by Wood that because of an acquisition, it had merged with WSP USA Environment & Infrastructure Inc. (WSP) effective September 21, 2022. On March 14, 2023 (File No. 22-2250, Item No. 14), the Board approved Amendment I to Agreement 5185 with WSP to assist the County with updating its Safety Element, modifying various articles and administrative details following the acquisition of Wood, with no changes to the scope of work, term, or not-to-exceed amount of the Agreement. On December 12, 2023 (File No. 23-1426, Item No. 36), the Board approved Amendment II to Agreement 5185 with WSP to increase the cost by \$55,085 for a new not-to-exceed amount of \$270,227, updating the scope of work, and extending the term of the agreement by one year with a new expiration date of March 16, 2025.

On November 14, 2023, the Board held a joint informational public workshop with the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission on the Public Draft Safety Element to solicit input and encourage public participation during the process of updating the Safety Element of the County General Plan. (Agenda item No. 29, Legistar File No. 23-1962)

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Chief Administrative Office - Office of Wildfire Preparedness and Resilience (OWPR)

County Counsel

Sheriff's Office - Office of Emergency Services

Air Quality Management District

El Dorado County Department of Transportation

El Dorado County Water Agency

El Dorado County Transportation Commission

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

California State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection

California Geological Survey

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Cost for the project is paid from the Department's existing budget, which comes from the General Fund, and is supplemented with \$50,000 in funding from the El Dorado County Water Agency.

CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

- 1) Clerk of the Board will obtain the Chair's signature on the Resolution.
- 2) Clerk of the Board will forward one (1) certified copy of the signed Resolution to the Planning and Building Department, Long Range Planning, attention of Thea Graybill.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT

Healthy Communities - "Encourage and support through policy and resources the pursuit of local, state and federal, private and public funding opportunities to support and promote healthy communities."

Economic Development - "Explore the feasibility of biomass and cogeneration plants."

Public Safety - "Improved communication and coordination between public safety and other agencies and the public."

CONTACT

Thea Graybill, Senior Planner

Planning and Building Department