

**Agenda Item: 6.1**  
**Area Plan: All**  
**Supervisory District: All**  
**Planning Commission: October 01, 2008**

**Applicant: County of Riverside**  
**Project Planner: Mitra Mehta**  
**Project: General Plan Amendment 960**  
**E.A. Number: 41788**

## **COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE PLANNING DEPARTMENT STAFF REPORT**

### **GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT 960 – BACKGROUND:**

On October 08, 2003, Riverside County adopted a highly innovative General Plan. This document was developed over a number of years and was driven by the vision of the Riverside County Integrated Project (RCIP). One of the most innovative principles of the RCIP Vision is the Certainty System, which provides a balance between clarity and flexibility in the General Plan. On one end, the Certainty System provides clarity regarding the implementation of the General Plan in ongoing decision making process and sustains the plan's policy direction over time. On the other, it recognizes that development patterns in the county will change, events will occur that will require changes, and imperfections will be discovered as the County implements the General Plan.

In response to this dichotomy, the Certainty System requires that the County will initiate a comprehensive review of the General Plan every five years after its adoption to address changes in development patterns, correct imperfections/errors, and streamline implementation of the General Plan. General Plan Amendment 960 (GPA 960) is an amendment that the County has initiated in 2008 after the first five year of the General Plan adoption to comprehensively review its progress.

### **GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT 960 – PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

General Plan Amendment 960 encompasses a variety of policy refinements and additions in multiple areas of the unincorporated Riverside County and at multiple levels in the General Plan document. As part of the first comprehensive review cycle of the RCIP General Plan, the County Planning Department proposes the following changes for consideration by the County and its stakeholders (Attachment A).

**GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS:** Due to existing regulatory requirements, recent changes in the regulatory environment, or the availability of new information, the following elements of the General Plan need review and revisions as deemed necessary:

1. Land Use Element:
  - a. Incentive Program Policies
  - b. Community Center and Overlays
  - c. Incidental Rural Commercial Use Policies
  - d. Indian Fee Land Policies
  - e. City Sphere of Influence Policies
2. Circulation Element:
  - a. Planned Circulation System Update
  - b. Non-Motorized Transportation Plan Update (Trails)
3. Multi-purpose Open Space Element:
  - a. Energy Policies Update
  - b. Cultural Resources Policies Update
  - c. Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plans Update
  - d. Water Conservation Policies Update

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4. Safety Element:
  - a. Fire Hazard Section Update
  - b. Flood and Inundation Hazard Section Update
5. Housing Element:
  - a. Five- Year Update
6. Air Quality Element:
  - a. Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Policies
7. Healthy Community Element:
  - a. New Element
8. Administration Element:
  - a. General Plan Amendment Policies
9. Appendices:
  - a. Update Socioeconomic Build-out Assumptions (Appendix E-1)
  - b. Update Population and Employment Forecasts (Appendix F-1)
  - c. Update Fiscal Analysis (Appendix G-1)

**AREA PLANS:** After assessing the General Plan's progress, issues related to its implementation, and changes in the anticipated needs of various communities, the following policies require consideration at the Area Plan level:

1. Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan:
  - a. Vista Santa Rosa Overlay
  - b. South Valley Overlay
  - c. Chiriaco Summit Rural Village Overlay
  - d. Fish Farm Inventory
  - e. North Shore Policy Area
2. Eastvale Area Plan:
  - a. Prado Basin Policy Area
3. Elsinore Area Plan:
  - a. Lakeland Village Land Use Inventory
  - b. El Cariso Rural Village Study Area
  - c. Meadowbrook Rural Village Study Area
4. Lakeview Nuevo Area Plan:
  - a. Northeast Dairies Overlay
  - b. San Jacinto River and 2-4 DU/Ac Policy Area
5. Mead Valley Area Plan:
  - a. Goodhope Rural Village Study Area
6. Riverside Extended Mountainous Area Plan (REMAP):
  - a. Anza Rural Village Overlay
  - b. Aguanga Rural Village Study Area
7. San Jacinto Valley Area Plan:
  - a. Agriculture/Development Potential Study Area
8. Western Coachella Valley Area Plan:
  - a. Sky Valley Rural Village Overlay
  - b. Thousand Palms Land Use Inventory

**PARCEL SPECIFIC LAND USE CHANGES (Multiple Area Plans):** Over the last five years, Planning Staff has come across parcel specific land use mapping errors that warrant further review of their land use designations. These parcel specific changes fall under one of the following criteria:

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1. Land use designations incorrectly/not identified
2. Open Space – Conservation Habitat (OS-CH) incorrectly assigned
3. Public Facilities (PF) incorrectly applied
4. Open Space – Conservation (OS-C) incorrectly applied
5. Open Space – Recreation (OS-R) incorrectly assigned
6. Land use designations incorrectly applied to Public Facilities
7. Land Use designations inappropriate for actual parcel sizes
8. Executive Directives

In addition to these parcel specific land use considerations, Riverside Conservation Authority (RCA) acquired lands will be assigned Open Space – Conservation Habitat (OS-CH) land use designation.

**REQUIRED FINDINGS:**

It is clear that the timing, rationale and process for amending the General Plan are critical in maintaining long term viability of this document. That is the reason why the Administration Element of the General Plan provides carefully crafted descriptions of the amendments allowed under the General Plan Certainty System. To strike a sustainable balance between certainty in critical aspects of the General Plan and flexibility in response to changing conditions throughout the county, the Administration Element provides the following direction for the five yearly comprehensive review and amendment cycle.

***General Plan Review Cycle.*** *This cycle occurs every five years after adoption of this General Plan. It:*

- a) *Is initiated by the County.*
- b) *Is primarily intended to assess General Plan progress and issues related to its implementation.*
- c) *Is the only time, other than a declared extraordinary amendment or an Agriculture Foundation Component amendment, that a Foundation Component of the General Plan may be considered for change.*
- d) *May include policy, entitlement and technical amendment proposals determined to be an appropriate part of this cycle.*
- e) *Extends planning projections another five years into the future, identifying required adjustments in the General Plan, if any, to accommodate anticipated needs.*
- f) *Includes special considerations to reassess the Vision and Planning Principles and recommit to them. This five-year interval also permits a comprehensive evaluation of CETAP and MSHCP progress, with refinements as necessary to enable further implementation of these programs as they relate to the General Plan.*

General Plan Amendment 960 (GPA 960) is the County initiated amendment in 2008, after the first five years of General Plan's adoption, to comprehensively review its progress as identified in the aforementioned policies of the Administration Element. Only one finding is necessary for this type of amendment:

*The foundation change is based on ample evidence that new conditions or circumstances disclosed during the review process justify modifying the General Plan, that the modifications do not conflict with the overall Riverside County Vision, and that they would not create an internal inconsistency among the elements of the General Plan.*

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Planning staff finds that ample evidence is available about new conditions or circumstances that justify this General Plan Amendment for each item discussed in the Project Description. In addition, these items neither conflict with the overall Riverside County Vision nor do they create internal inconsistencies among the elements of the General Plan. Instead, the aforementioned items will result in furthering the vision of Riverside County Integrated Project and creating more consistency in implementation of the General Plan's elements.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff comments that:

- 1) The appropriate findings per the General Plan Administration Element can be made; and
- 2) The adoption of an order initiating proceedings for General Plan Amendment No. 960 would be appropriate.

This order of initiation by the Board of Supervisors does not imply that this amendment, or any component thereof, will be approved.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

None