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**COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE**  
*TRANSPORTATION AND  
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**Planning Department**



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**FORM AND CONTENT  
OF  
SPECIFIC PLANS  
AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
IMPACT REPORTS**

This is intended as a guide. For more information, contact the Specific Plans Section of the Planning Department at (951) 955-3200.

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**FORMAT AND CONTENT OF SPECIFIC PLANS  
AND ASSOCIATED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORTS  
OVERVIEW**

The draft document will consist of the following parts, and shall be tabbed separately:

- I. Title Page
- II. Table of Contents
- III. Summary - This section will contain two parts: (1) a project summary in a "fact sheet" format of no more than 3 pages and (2) EIR/Issues summary in a matrix format.
- IV. Specific Plan Zoning Ordinance (If SP zoning is proposed.)
- V. Specific Plan - This section will contain all the essential planning, design, and preliminary engineering standards in a "development code" format. The standards should reflect the level of commitment you are willing to make, but keep in mind that staff may recommend more or different standards.
- VI. EIR and General Plan Analysis - This section provides the Environmental and General Plan analysis in the format of the County's Comprehensive General Plan. It also includes all the mandatory topics found in CEQA. The EIR is included in the text for review purposes, and to show the relationship between environmental mitigation, site planning development standards. It is not an element of the specific plan itself.
- VII. Technical Reports and Background Material - Technical reports and background material will be placed in loose-leaf binder and tabbed separately.

Once the plan is approved by the Board of Supervisors, a final document containing the following will be required:

- I. Adopted General Plan Amendment Resolution (if applicable)
- II. Adopted Specific Plan Board Resolution
- III. Board of Supervisors Adopted Final Conditions of Approval
- IV. Adopted Specific Plan Zoning Ordinance (if applicable)
- V. Final Specific Plan Text
- VI. Draft EIR
- VII. Final EIR
- VIII. Technical Appendices

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The final text will be submitted in a 3-ring binder to facilitate future amendments. The final text will also be submitted in electronic format. Applicants and/or consultants should consult with staff regarding specific electronic standards. It is rare that a specific plan receives a Negative Declaration. However, in those instances some modification to the environmental portion of this outline (Part V) will be necessary. Staff will work with the consultant to develop an acceptable format.

NOTE: Any modifications to this format and contents must be approved by Planning Department staff.

**DETAILED OUTLINE OF TEXT**

**I TITLE PAGE**

A. Include the following information:

1. Specific Plan Case Number (i.e. "SPECIFIC PLAN NO.")
2. Name of Specific Plan (please consult with staff before naming plan)
3. Name, address, telephone number, and contact person of Developer.
4. Name, address, telephone number, and contact person of Document Preparer.

**II TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**III SUMMARY (5 PAGES MAXIMUM, INCLUDING MAPS)**

A. Project Summary

1. Brief description of project, market characteristics and overall design objectives.
2. Regional Map - show location of project in relation to freeway, major roads, cities, etc.
3. Vicinity Map - project boundaries plotted on U.S.G.S. topography or similar base.

B. EIR/Issues Matrix - Identify (1) issue/impact, (2) alternative mitigation measures, (3) what mitigation measures have been incorporated into the SP development and design standards, (4) who is responsible for implementing the mitigation measures, (5) what triggers the mitigation (include references to text and EIR if necessary), and (6) who or what agency monitors the mitigation. This section will evolve throughout the process as staff and the consultant formulate solutions to potential environmental and design problems.

**IV SPECIFIC PLAN ZONE**

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The County Land Use Ordinance (Ordinance No. 348) contains provisions for a "Specific Plan Zone" (See Article XVIIa of Ord. No. 348).

The SP zoning ordinance contained in the text will ultimately be adopted as an amendment to the County's Land Use Ordinance but will contain site-specific land use requirements. In fact, the requirements may be different for each planning area within the specific plan. The ordinance will contain standards typically found in a zoning code: land uses, lot size, setback, height, lot dimensions, lot coverage, etc. (Contact Planning Department staff for a sample). The specific plan text will also contain "planning" standards that reflect primarily the design features of the project.

[NOTE: Use of SP Zoning mandates the submittal of a zoning ordinance map prior to final ordinance adoption, showing each of the Specific Plan's Planning Area's with their respective legal descriptions. The SP Zoning Ordinance and final map must be adopted concurrently with the resolution that adopts the final Specific Plan. Alternatively, the specific plan resolution may be adopted without the adoption of an SP zoning ordinance Final Map if the land in the specific plan is held in one or very few ownerships. In this case, no subsequent land division maps or development projects may be approved unless the zoning ordinance final map is provided and adopted at the same time as the project or land development proposal.]

**V SPECIFIC PLAN**

- A. Project-wide planning standards: Using the required exhibits and a "code" format, illustrate and describe the project-wide development plan and standards in specific terms for each of the following topics (items noted by an "\*" may be illustrated on the Land Use Plan, i.e., comprehensive exhibit).

1. Comprehensive Land Use Plan

- a. Exhibit (11"x17" fold out) showing the following information identified by a planning area number:

- (1) Residential
- (2) Commercial
- (3) Industrial
- (4) Public facility sites (sewage treatment plant, fire station, etc.)
- (5) Parks/open space/recreation
- (6) Any other uses or features that should be treated as a separate planning areas

- b. b. A clear 8½" x 11" black and white reduction of the Land Use Plan.

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- c. Land Use Table
    - (1) Planning area identification number
    - (2) Use/residential product, e.g., single family, multi-family, etc.
    - (3) Acreage
    - (4) Density of residential use (see attached Land Use Designation)
    - (5) Maximum number of residential units for each planning area.
  - d. Project-wide Development Standards
2. Circulation Plan
- a. Exhibit showing the following:
    - (1) Primary internal roads\*
    - (2) Signalized intersections\*
    - (3) Off-site road improvements (may be shown on separate exhibits)
    - (4) Trails-Equestrian, bicycle, and pedestrian\*
  - b. Development Standards, typical, cross-sections (Consult with the County Transportation Department and County Regional Park and Open-Space District.)
3. Drainage Plan
- a. Exhibit identifying the following:
    - (1) Areas to be landscaped\*
    - (2) Areas to remain natural\*
    - (3) Special treatment areas\*
  - b. Development standards, typical, cross-sections (Consult with Water and Sewer Purveyors)
4. Illustrative Landscaping Plan
- a. Exhibits showing the following:
    - (1) Areas to be landscaped\*
    - (2) Areas to remain natural\*
    - (3) Special treatment areas\*
  - b. Development standards, typicals, cross-sections (Consult with Water and Sewer Purveyors)

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5. Water and Sewer Plan

a. Exhibit showing:

- (1) Existing and proposed sewer lines
- (2) Existing and proposed water lines
- (3) Sizes of lines
  
- (4) Off-site improvements, existing and proposed

b. Development standards, typical, cross-sections (Consult with Water and Sewer Purveyors)

6. Public Facility and Special Phasing Requirements

Identify the phasing of development as it pertains to recreational facilities, public facilities, or other uses within the plan. Design and construction of these public facilities should be identified by milestones (eg. "Prior to issuance of the \_\_\_\_\_ Building Permit.")

7. Illustrative Grading Plan

8. Comprehensive Maintenance Plan

B. Planning Area Land Use, Planning Standards, and Design Guidelines

Each Planning Area shall be described in a separate subsection of the Specific Plan document, and each Planning Area subsection shall contain the following:

1. Planning Area Exhibit – 11"x17" topographic base (4' contours if available, no greater than 10' contours.)

The exhibit will show the following:

- a. Use, density, maximum number of units, acreage, minimum lot size
- b. Limits of development
- c. Special treatment areas
- d. Any special environmental constraints
- e. Area where additional study or mitigation is necessary
- f. Existing Assessor's Parcel Number(s) included or partially included in the Planning Area, and any existing parcel boundaries.

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2. Planning Development standards and design guidelines by Planning Area. (For purposes of the Specific Plan, standards will be interpreted as required development features of the project; guidelines will be interpreted as recommendations. Variations from development standards in implementing projects would require an amendment or substantial conformance application. Variations from guidelines in implementing projects could be administratively approved). Development standards such as setbacks, lot dimensions, building heights, lot coverage, allowable land uses, etc. shall be placed in any proposed SP zoning text, and not within the Planning Area descriptions. However, minimum lot sizes shall be placed in both the Planning Area descriptions and the SP zoning text.
  
3. Residential
  - a. Planning Standards
    - (1) encroachments
    - (2) parking
    - (3) special treatment/buffer areas
    - (4) other
  
  - b. Design Standards/Guidelines
    - (1) lotting concepts (including minimum lot sizes)
    - (2) grading criteria
    - (3) siting criteria
    - (4) fencing/walls
    - (5) architectural features
      - (a) theme
      - (b) form, mass, height
      - (c) shade/shadow
      - (d) building relief
      - (e) materials
      - (f) roof form and material
      - (g) spaces
      - (h) accessory structures
      - (i) other
  
    - (6) landscaping
      - (a) coverage
      - (b) plant selection
      - (c) planting guidelines

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- (d) special treatments
  - (7) lighting
  - (8) other
4. Commercial and Industrial Standards
- a. Planning Standards
    - (1) special treatment buffer areas
    - (2) parking
    - (3) sign program
    - (4) access
    - (5) other
  - b. Design Standards/Guidelines
    - (1) building layout and arrangement
    - (2) service area
    - (3) screening
    - (4) landscaping
      - (a) coverage
      - (b) plant selection list
      - (c) planting guidelines
      - (d) special treatments
      - (e) other
    - (5) Architectural Features
      - (a) basic theme
      - (b) building form, mass elevations
      - (c) shade and shadow
      - (d) building relief
      - (e) offsets
      - (f) eaves and facias
      - (g) materials
      - (h) roof forms and materials
      - (i) spaces - verandas, patios, courtyards
      - (j) fencing and walls
      - (k) accessory
      - (l) outside furnishing
      - (m) walkways
      - (n) other

- (6) Public Facilities - parks, libraries, fire stations, etc.

Identify design and planning standards for public facilities.

5. Design Standards/Guidelines

The consultant should prepare a separate set of design guidelines that will be referenced in the project-wide or planning area descriptions. Where design guidelines have been adopted in Supervisorial Districts, design guidelines for specific plans should incorporate District guidelines.

## **VI GENERAL PLAN/ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS**

### **A. GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DETERMINATION SYSTEM (Steps 1-4)**

1. SITE IDENTIFICATION WITHIN OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION MAP
2. SITE IDENTIFICATION WITHIN COMPOSITE HAZARDS/RESOURCE MAP
3. LAND USE AREA PROFILE AND COMMUNITY POLICY AREA IDENTIFICATION FOR PROJECT SITE (INCLUDING COMMUNITY OR AREA PLAN DESIGNATION, IF WITHIN A COMMUNITY OR AREA PLAN)
4. SUMMARY OF PROJECT PROPOSAL/SITE COMPARISON WITH APPLICABLE LAND USE CATEGORY POLICIES

### **B. LAND USE ELEMENT**

1. LAND USE PLANNING AREA POLICY ANALYSIS
2. COMMUNITY POLICY AREA ANALYSIS
3. LAND USE CATEGORY POLICY ANALYSIS
4. COMMUNITY PLAN
5. ACTUAL EXISTING AND SURROUNDING LAND USES.

### **C. ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS AND RESOURCES ELEMENT**

USE THE FOLLOWING FORMAT FOR EACH OF THE TOPICS (FROM C1 THROUGH D12:

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(Topic)

1. Existing Conditions/General Plan policies
2. Project impact/relationship to General Plan policies
3. Mitigation
4. Significance after mitigation

If a topic does not apply, there is no need to elaborate on items a, b, and c. However, for the record, briefly explain why the topic is inapplicable.

1. SEISMIC SAFETY
2. SLOPES AND EROSION
3. WIND EROSION AND BLOWSAND
4. FLOODING
5. NOISE
6. AIR QUALITY
7. WATER QUALITY
8. TOXIC SUBSTANCE
9. OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION
10. AGRICULTURE  
(If the project proposal involves a request for cancellation of a Land Conservation Contract, be sure to include in this section an analysis of the projects conformance to the findings required to be made by the Board of Supervisors in order to approve a cancellation request.)
11. WILDLIFE/VEGETATION
12. MINERAL RESOURCES
13. ENERGY RESOURCES
14. SCENIC HIGHWAYS
15. HISTORIC AND PREHISTORIC RESOURCES

**D. PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES ELEMENT**

1. CIRCULATION
2. WATER
3. FIRE PROTECTION
4. SHERIFF SERVICES
5. SCHOOLS
6. PARKS AND RECREATION
7. UTILITIES
8. SOLID WASTE
9. LIBRARIES
10. HEALTH SERVICES
11. AIRPORTS
12. DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

**E. HOUSING ELEMENT**

1. GENERAL PLAN POLICIES
  - a. Applicable Housing Programs
  - b. Applicable Housing Policies Within Other Elements
    - (1) Affordable Housing Incentives
2. SPECIFIC PLAN - Project relationship to General Plan Policies
  - a. Project Housing Inventory
  - b. Project Compatibility With Existing Inventory
  - c. Project Design Mitigation

**F. REGIONAL ELEMENT**

1. REGIONAL GROWTH (SCAG) FORECASTS
  - a. Identification of Regional Growth Forecasts For Project Site
  - b. Refer to Subregional Growth Forecast in the General Plan and consult with Western Riverside Council of Governments or Coachella Valley Association of Governments, whichever is applicable.
  - c. Project Growth Forecast Comparative Analysis with Regional Growth Forecast

**2. APPLICABLE EMPLOYMENT/HOUSING BALANCE POLICIES**

**G. ADMINISTRATIVE ELEMENT**

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LAND USE POLICY/SPECIFIC PLAN TIME FRAMES - Project Time Frames for Development

FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

**H. MANDATORY CEQA TOPICS**

1. CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

2. UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS (Include a description of the Project Benefits that support any necessary Overriding Considerations.)

3. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

(At least one alternative should be development pursuant to existing General Plan designations. An additional alternative addressing proposed Area Plan/Integrated Plan designations may be required.)

4. GROWTH INDUCING IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

5. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT IN MAINTENANCE/ENHANCEMENT OF LONG TERM PRODUCTIVITY

6. IRREVERSIBLE/IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF ENERGY SUPPLIES SHOULD THE PROJECT BE IMPLEMENTED

7. PROJECT CORRESPONDENCE

8. ORGANIZATIONS, PERSONS AND DOCUMENTS CONSULTED (Identify the location where the referenced documents are available for public review.)

**VII TECHNICAL APPENDICES**

A. INITIAL STUDY

B. PRELIMINARY GEOTECHNICAL REPORT

C. AIR QUALITY ANALYSIS

D. CULTURAL RESOURCES REPORT

E. TRAFFIC ANALYSIS

F. BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

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- G. FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS
- H. PRELIMINARY WATER SUPPLY INVESTIGATION
- I. PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING REPORT
- J. OTHER(S)

Revised: 11/16/04  
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