

- City Council
- Redevelopment Agency
- Community Services District
- Fire District
- Library Board
- Financing Authority




**Murrieta**  
**Agenda Report**

Subject: General Plan Update Progress Workshop  
Murrieta – The Future of Southern California – 2035

Date: November 30, 2010

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

Provide staff with direction regarding the progress of the General Plan Update.

### **PRIOR ACTION/VOTE**

On August 18, 2009, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 09-2357, awarding RBF Consulting a contract to provide professional services in the preparation of a Comprehensive General Plan Update and a Focused Redevelopment Area Land Use Analysis (Vote: 5-0).

### **BACKGROUND**

The General Plan Update began in October 2009, with a very aggressive schedule for completion by April 2011. Completion of the Plan is on schedule and staff and RBF Consulting are in the final stages of completing various studies, preparing the Environmental Impact Report (EIR), and General Plan document preparation. The purpose of the November 30 and January 11 Workshops are to provide a foundation for the remainder of the process, review the schedule, the structure and contents of the General Plan document, and provide some insight into what can be expected during the coming months, prior to final action on the General Plan and EIR. The Workshops will also provide the opportunity for additional public comment. The November 30, presentation will include the following topics:

- Background
- Overview of General Plan Update Process
- What has been accomplished already
- General Plan Update
- Environmental Impact Report

### **Overview of the General Plan Process**

The process began in fall 2009, with the preparation of the Existing Conditions Report, which set the stage for where Murrieta is today. A series of community meetings and workshops were held to identify the vision for the community, land uses for the targeted corridors, as well as, priorities, challenges, and treasures.

Land Use was a primary focus in spring and summer 2010, with community meetings and joint City Council/Planning Commission Workshops. The meetings resulted in the development of a "Preferred"

Land Use Alternative map of proposed land uses. Completion of the Land Use Alternative set in motion completions of studies, such as the traffic modeling, air quality, and noise, which are the foundation of the EIR and General Plan document. The focus for fall 2010 has been completion of studies, preparation of the EIR, General Plan Elements, and Goals, Policies, and Objectives.

### **General Plan Update**

This General Plan will update the 1994 General Plan to meet the needs and desires of the community. However, the foundation set in 1994 served Murrieta well and many of the features and information are still valid today. This update to the General Plan may contain similar goals, policies, or other components of the previous plan; however, this version has been tailored to meet the issues and needs of the city at the present time and foreseeable future. The Murrieta General Plan is not a static reflection of general goals and policies; it is a dynamic, practical document with strategies for community development and enhancement, specifically focused on economic development and achieving the overall vision identified by the community.

It also reflects the history and heritage of Murrieta. Attachment 1 includes ten community priorities that describe the vision that members of the community provided, during the community workshops and online surveys.

The General Plan Update will be composed of the following twelve elements.

- Air Quality
- Circulation\*
- Conservation \*
- Economic Development
- Healthy Community
- Housing \*
- Infrastructure
- Land Use \*
- Noise \*
- Open Space \*
- Recreation
- Safety \*

\* Required by State Law

Attachment 2 is a summary of the proposed General Plan Elements. The summary provides a brief description of each element and a brief discussion of State Law regarding the requirements and/or justifications for including the Element in the General Plan. Although many of the new elements are not required, most will help the City comply with new regulations tied to the reduction of greenhouse gases (GHG). The intent of the General Plan Update is to also streamline the document and make it easier to understand, and easier for staff and the public to use.

Goals, policies, and objectives outline how the General Plan will be implemented. They are being developed in conjunction with each Element. Attachment 3 includes the draft goals and policies completed for the November 30th Workshop.

### **Environmental Impact Report (EIR)**

The City is preparing an Environmental Impact Report to address impacts that may occur from implementing the General Plan, including, but not limited to, air quality, circulation, land use and population. Where significant impacts are identified, mitigation measures will be incorporated, when feasible. However, a Statement of Overriding considerations is a possibility, if impacts are identified that cannot be mitigated to a level of insignificance.

The EIR is also being prepared with the intent that future development may tier from the document and the proposed mitigation, unless it is determined that a future proposed project presents significant impacts not considered and/or mitigated by this EIR. Tiering involves the use of a previous, and usually more complete, analysis that allows a proposed project to comply with CEQA regulations because the previous analysis addressed issues that could impact the proposed project.

A Notice of Preparation (NOP) will be issued in November for 30-days stating that the City intends to prepare an EIR for the General Plan Update. The NOP, included in Attachment 4 was sent by certified mail to agencies, environmental groups, and other stakeholders that may have an interest in the project. The NOP provides the opportunity for those parties to request the agency preparing the EIR to address specific issues and to circulate the DEIR to that agency, if they wish to review the document.

### **January 11, 2011 Joint City Council/Planning Commission Workshop**

The January Joint Workshop will be a continuation of this November Workshop. Additional presentation of the General Plan Elements will occur, as well, as Goals, Policies, and Objectives. The following items are in the works for the January Workshop:

- General Plan Elements
- Goals, Policies, and Objectives
- Greenhouse Gas Inventory and Climate Action Plan
- Land Use Alternative
- General Plan/Zoning
- Procedural Steps and Actions for General Plan Adoption and EIR Certifications

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact of discussing this issue. There will be fiscal impacts of implements changes resulting from the Updated General Plan.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Ten Community Priorities
2. General Plan Elements Summary
3. Draft Goals, Polices, and Objectives
  - a. Air Quality
  - b. Healthy Communities
  - c. Noise
  - d. Recreation and Open Space

## COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

During the General Plan Update, community members were afforded a number of ways to share their thoughts about Murrieta today and Murrieta in the future. The ten community priorities below describe the vision that members of the community provided for the future of their community, which guides the goals and policies in the General Plan.

Natural Environment	<i>Protect the natural beauty of the mountains, hills, and waterways.</i>
Rural Areas	<i>Preserve elements of Murrieta's rural heritage.</i>
Community Character	<i>Protect and foster a strong sense of community and safety, as well as the "home town" feeling.</i>
Recreation and Culture	<i>Provide abundant parks and facilities for recreational activities, and cultural amenities.</i>
Historic Downtown Murrieta	<i>Create a vibrant, prosperous Historic Downtown that serves as a community center and provides a variety of quality shopping and dining experiences.</i>
Governance	<i>Promote community involvement and provide for a fiscally sound future.</i>
Sustainable Economy	<i>Pursue economic vitality and longevity by attracting higher education and growing a base of clean industry, while maintaining the current housing affordability.</i>
Transportation	<i>Improve roadway networks to reduce traffic, and provide a citywide system of bicycle lanes and recreational trails that improve accessibility without a car.</i>
Infrastructure and Services	<i>Improve health care within the City, and continue to provide excellent school, police, fire, library, and recreation services.</i>
Youth Amenities	<i>Provide ample activities for all ages of youth, and jobs for teens.</i>

## **GENERAL PLAN SUMMARY VISION AND ELEMENTS**

### ***Vision***

One of the first tasks undertaken by RBF was to hold a series of workshops to identify the components that make up the visions for the citizens of Murrieta, and what they want the City to become over the next twenty-five years. Based on the information gathered from the workshops those visions appear to have changed since the last updates to the General Plan were done. However, some of the things identified like a rural life style and good schools seem to be constants. The workshop presentation, the online survey, and Community Visioning Report are posted online at [www.murrietaplan.info](http://www.murrietaplan.info).

### ***Economic Development Element***

The economic environment that affects the City of Murrieta encompasses a wide variety of factors including those related to land use, business development, job formation, and investment. These factors are referred to as production-based elements. The local economic environment encompasses elements of consumption as well. Consumption-based factors include selection and quality of housing, retail goods and services, recreation, and educational opportunities.

The Murrieta economic environment is complex. Not only do the local production and consumption elements of the community affect Murrieta's economic environment, but the local economic performance is also affected by events that take place outside the City's geographic boundary. The City of Murrieta seeks to play a significant role in fostering and directing the community's future economic growth and performance. The Economic Development Element provides a policy framework through which such contribution is possible.

State Government Code Section 65303 authorizes local jurisdictions to include elements that they recognize as being important to the city's or county's future. Murrieta recognizes that coordinated economic development is necessary to ensure the maintenance of the health, safety, and welfare of the City.

The purpose of the Economic Development Element is to provide guideline direction concerning future economic growth of the community. Within the scope of this Element, the desired role and contribution of key economic sectors of the community are identified through goals, objectives, and policies. This Element is closely related to the Land Use Element because many aspects of economic growth (jobs, housing, property values, retail sales) are manifested through land use development and resulting activities. Overall, this element establishes a direction for continued growth and guideline for decision-makers, City Staff, civic organizations, businesses, and residents.

### ***Land Use Element***

The purpose of the Land Use Element is to establish the location and intensity of future development in the City while maintaining orderly growth and economic vitality with community character, historical identity, and the stewardship of natural resources. The goals and policies of this Element are based in community values and offer a vision of what Murrieta strives to be in the future.

The Land Use Element of the Murrieta General Plan indicates the distribution, location, and density/intensity of residential, commercial, industrial, and public land uses. These broad categories are further defined as land use designations. For example, residential land uses include eight designations, based on the housing type and density, or number of dwelling units per gross acre of land area. The residential designations range from large lot single-family to multi-family type development. Commercial and industrial land uses are assigned designations based upon intensity of uses. Civic or public uses of land are included in the Civic/Institutional designation, and may range from public utilities, public services, educational institutions.

State law requires the Land Use Element be included in the General Plan. Government Code Section 65302(a) states that the General Plan “include a Land Use Element which designates the proposed general distribution and general location and extent of the use of the land for housing, business, industry, open space, including agriculture, natural resources, recreation, and enjoyment of scenic beauty, education, public building and grounds, solid and liquid waste disposal facilities, and other categories of public and private uses of land.”

#### ***Circulation Element***

The City of Murrieta Circulation Element has been developed in response to issues raised and objectives identified by City staff and public input. The Element is intended to provide a balanced circulation system that will provide adequate capacity to support the travel demands of the land uses identified in the Land Use Element, while at the same time maintaining an acceptable quality of life for the residents of Murrieta. It also provides information on the types and classification of roads through the City. The Circulation Map, within the Element, identifies where roads are and will be located within the City.

The Circulation Element is included in the Murrieta General Plan in conformance with Government Code Section 65302(b). The Circulation Plan is intended to be responsive to the objectives of the City in planning for its future growth while at the same time mitigating existing problems or concerns. The Circulation Element states general policy that serves to guide the development of future, more detailed circulation system implementation programs.

#### ***Conservation Element***

For centuries the character and qualities of the natural setting have provided support for communities living in the Murrieta area. Developing in response to thousands of years of local conditions, this setting is unique and impossible to duplicate. Although the network of interactions between the people and the land has undergone profound changes in the years since hunting and gathering took place, the natural resources still provide life support and life quality to area residents.

Demands on these resources increase relative to increases in population. For this reason, it becomes necessary for a community to periodically reassess its use of these resources, particularly those that are finite and nonrenewable, or those critical to life support such as air and water. Although the traditional need for resource conservation concerned itself with natural resources, it is also important for a community to assess the man-made cultural and historic resources it wishes to preserve for its future residents.

State Government Code Section 65302 states that the General Plan shall address the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources. State guidelines specify that, "to the extent applicable," the following issues are mandatory and must be addressed: water and its hydraulic force, forests, soils, rivers, and other waters, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, minerals, and other natural resources, as applicable. Other issues, such as flood control and energy resources, may also be included in the Conservation Element.

### ***Recreation Element***

Previously issues that will be covered in the Recreation Element were addressed in the Conservation and Open Space Element. The Recreation Element will address parks, trails and other facilities covered in the Master parks Plan, which was approved in 2009.

### ***Open Space Element***

There are many types and functions of open space land. It can be utilized for the preservation of natural resources, such as when open space is set aside for habitat protection or for ecological or scientific study. Open space may be used for the managed production of resources such as mineral deposits, agriculture, or groundwater recharge. Recreation is one of the most recognized uses of open space. Both regional and local park and recreation areas, areas protected for their scenic, historic, or cultural values, and trails used for cycling, riding, or hiking are open spaces of this type. A critical open space function is the protection of public health and safety. Areas such as earthquake fault zones, flood plains, or those necessary for fire breaks or fuel load reduction can be designated for open space use to prevent the unnecessary destruction of property or danger to human lives.

Open space areas contribute to the overall form, sense of identity, and general well being of a community. Open space can be used to shape and form the urban environment. It can separate, buffer, or even integrate disparate land uses, and it can link one area or activity to another.

Recognizing that open space is now a limited, valuable, and necessary resource, every city and county must prepare and implement an open space plan to manage and conserve their open space resources. State Government Code Sections 65302(e) requires that the General Plan include an Open Space Element. Government Code Sections 65560(b) defines "open space land" as "any parcel or area of land or water which is essentially unimproved and devoted to an open space use." Code sections also specify the contents, legislative intent, and consistency requirements of this open space plan and mandate that it includes an action program. In addition, Public Resources Code Section 5076 requires that the open space plan consider demands for trail-oriented recreational use and the feasibility of integrating its trail routes with the State system.

### ***Air Quality Element***

The City of Murrieta is located in an air basin that is well known for its poor air quality. Although Murrieta has location advantages not afforded to other areas, it is still impacted by occasional poor air quality days. Murrieta recognizes its regional responsibility in regard to air quality and the importance of air quality to the health and safety of its residents.

California Government Code Sections 65300 and 65302 require every city and county to draw up and adopt "a comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical

development” of the community. Several general plan elements are required by law and may be adopted individually or as a single general plan. While air quality is not a required element, Government Code Section 65303, authorizes cities and counties to adopt additional general plan elements which they judge to be necessary.

### ***Noise Element***

The Noise Element includes an overview of noise terminology, a description of the effects of noise on humans, applicable State regulations, a summary of the City noise environment, and a statement of goals, objectives, and policies designed to minimize existing and foreseeable noise impacts. The Element is intended to be used as a guide in decision-making for public and private development matters where noise is a concern, and in assessing compliance with California Noise Insulation Standards.

The State of California mandates, through Government Code Section 65302(f), that a general plan contain a Noise Element which “identifies and appraises noise problems in the community.” The ultimate purpose of noise control policies and programs, as stated in the Government Code, is to “minimize the exposure of community residents to excessive noise.” The Noise Element is required to recognize the guidelines adopted by the Office of Noise Control in the State Department of Health Services, and shall quantify, to the extent practicable, current and projected noise levels for the following sources:

- Highways and Freeways
- Primary arterials and major local streets
- Ground rapid transit systems and classification yards
- Other ground stationary sources identified by local agencies as contributing to the community noise environment.

### ***Infrastructure Element***

This is a new element which will allow the city to address sustainability issues, water conservation and greenhouse gases. Compliance with S.B. 375 requires local jurisdictions to work the their regional planning agency to develop a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), which will reduce urban sprawl and vehicle miles traveled, which is seen as a major factor in increase green house gas emissions.

### ***Safety Element***

The Safety Element enables the City to assess the potential risk of natural or man-made hazards and proposes procedures and design measures to reduce personal and property damages which may result from a disastrous event. The information contained in this Element can also be used to avoid or minimize exposure to potential hazards by providing data and policy input to support the land use decision making process.

California Government Code Sections 65300 and 65302 require every city and county to develop and adopt a “comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical development of the community.” Section 65302(g) specifies that the plan shall include a “safety element for the protection of the community from any unreasonable risks associated with the effects of seismically-induced surface rupture, ground shaking, ground failure, tsunami, seiche, and dam failure; slope instability,... subsidence and other geologic hazards...; flooding, wild land and urban fires.”

***Healthy Community Element***

The Healthy Community Element is an optional element that addresses the relationship of planning with public health. This element includes policies that address transportation and active living, access to nutritious foods, access to health care, mental health, quality of life, and environmental health. Prior to the General Plan update the city promoted these types of policies through its Healthy Murrieta program.

***Housing Element***

In accordance with State Government Code, Article 10.6 (65580) the legislature has declared that the attainment of decent housing and the provision of a suitable living environment to meet the needs of all economic segments of the population is of the highest priority. The legislature also recognizes that to meet this statewide goal, cooperation between government and the private sector is necessary, and that local and state governments have a responsibility to utilize the powers vested in them to facilitate the development and improvement of housing.

The Murrieta Housing Element is being prepared through a separate process and will be presented to the City Council and Planning Commission for adoption in December 2010.



# **Draft Goals from Healthy Community, Recreation and Open Space, Air Quality, and Noise Elements**

## **Chapter 7 Healthy Community**

- Goal HC-1 Application of innovative and model best practices in the community health field.
- Goal HC-2 Health and well-being for those who live, work, and play in Murrieta.
- Goal HC-3 Land use patterns and urban design that support healthy and sustainable lifestyles and businesses.
- Goal HC-4 Pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods.
- Goal HC-5 A mix of housing types and affordability that supports a diverse population for every stage of life.
- Goal HC-6 Clean, breathable indoor and outdoor air.
- Goal HC-7 A community that is protected from the harmful effects of hazardous materials, hazardous waste, and environmental contamination.
- Goal HC-8 Noise levels that support a high quality of life in Murrieta.
- Goal HC-9 Green infrastructure and technology that supports ecological and human health.
- Goal HC-10 Reduced vehicle miles traveled per capita.
- Goal HC-11 A community that is inviting for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Goal HC-12 Safe, active, and comfortable commutes to and from school.
- Goal HC-13 Local and regional transit that is efficient, frequent, convenient, safe and reliable.
- Goal HC-14 Public spaces that foster positive human interaction and healthy lifestyles.
- Goal HC-15 Access to a variety of high-quality parks, facilities, and recreational opportunities.
- Goal HC-16 A broad range of recreational and cultural programs and services that meet diverse community needs.
- Goal HC-17 Diverse employment opportunities that support a healthy jobs-housing balance and jobs-skills match.

- Goal HC-18 Socially and environmentally responsible businesses that provide meaningful employment opportunities to residents.
- Goal HC-19 A range of choices for accessible, affordable, and nutritious foods.
- Goal HC-20 A variety of businesses that help create complete neighborhoods and support community health.
- Goal HC-21 Accessible health care and preventative care.

## **Chapter 9 Recreation and Open Space Element**

- Goal ROS-1 Parkland is provided within a convenient distance from all residential areas, in a range of park types that meet different needs for active and passive recreation.
- Goal ROS-2 Facilities that support recreation needs, programs, and community events are located throughout the City.
- Goal ROS-3 City resources for parks and recreation facilities are leveraged through partnerships, joint use agreements, private facilities, outside funding, and community volunteers.
- Goal ROS-4 Recreation programs enrich the lives of residents across a broad spectrum of ages, interests, and abilities.
- Goal ROS-5 Recreation programs foster a sense of community and civic involvement, and promote interaction between residents.
- Goal ROS-6 Youth are a special focus of recreation facilities and programs.
- Goal ROS-7 A system of bicycle, pedestrian, and multi-use trails allows residents to travel between parks, schools, neighborhoods, and major destinations without driving.
- Goal ROS-8 Open space areas are planned to protect, conserve, and utilize resources of unique character and value for the community.
- Goal ROS-9 New development is part of a coordinated system of open space, parkland, recreation facilities, and trails.
- Goal ROS-10 Public plazas or green spaces provide additional open space opportunities for existing and future residents and employees.

## **Chapter 10      Air Quality Element**

- Goal AQ-1    Improved air quality through regional and local efforts.
- Goal AQ-2    The relationship between land use and air quality in order to protect public health and improve air quality is considered in policy decisions.
- Goal AQ-3    Reduced emissions during construction activities.
- Goal AQ-4    Mobile source emissions are reduced by providing a balance of jobs and housing that serve the needs of the community.
- Goal AQ-5    Air quality is improved through an efficient circulation system, reduced traffic congestion, and reduced vehicle miles traveled.
- Goal AQ-6    Stationary source pollution (point source and area source) are minimized through existing and future regulations and new technology.
- Goal AQ-7    Particulate matter and fugitive dust emissions are reduced throughout the City.

## **Chapter 11      Noise Element**

- Goal N-1      Noise sensitive land uses are properly and effectively protected from excessive noise generators.
- Goal N-2      A comprehensive and effective land use planning and development review process that ensures noise impacts are adequately addressed.
- Goal N-3      Noise from mobile noise sources is minimized.
- Goal N-4      Reduced noise levels from construction activities.