

# Report

## MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

**MEETING DATE:** January 9, 12, & 17 2012

**SUBJECT:** Draft General Plan and Environmental Impact Report

### **Recommendation**

Staff recommends the following Planning Commission actions:

- A. Receive staff presentation
- B. Discuss and comment on the Draft General Plan and Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
- C. Consider Staff Recommended Alternatives and recommended modifications
- D. Take public testimony on the draft documents
- E. Adopt findings and modifications in support of adopting the General Plan and certifying the Final EIR
- F. Recommend to the City Council the adoption of the City of San Marcos General Plan and Finalization of the EIR; incorporating the modification to the General Plan as included in the Errata Attachments A and B; incorporating any further modification to the plan as directed by the Planning Commission at the meeting(s).

### **Introduction**

The Draft General Plan is a comprehensive update of the City's existing General Plan. The last comprehensive update occurred in 1987. The proposed General Plan update comprises the following State mandated elements, and optional elements (denoted in parentheses); Land Use (and Community Design); Mobility; Conservation and Open Space; (Parks, Recreation, and Community Health); Safety; Noise; Housing. The Housing Element is required to be updated in a separate process by 2013 as a result of SB 375/575 which extended the due date for housing elements; however, the 2005-2010 Housing Element was certified by California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) in 2006 and has been included in the Draft General Plan as Chapter 8.

The Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) is the environmental review document for the Draft General Plan as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The DEIR reviews the environmental impacts associated with the adoption and implementation of the General Plan; it is intended to be utilized for future tiering projects/activities associated with the General Plan including but not limited to the adoption of the comprehensive Zoning Ordinance update to follow in 2012.

### **Discussion**

#### **A. Project Description**

California state law requires each city to adopt a comprehensive, long-term General Plan to guide the physical development of the incorporated City and any land outside the City boundaries that bears a relationship to its planning activities, otherwise referred to as a

city's Sphere of Influence. A General Plan clarifies and articulates a city's intentions with respect to the expectations of residents and businesses, and the long-term vision for the community.

The City of San Marcos General Plan is organized into seven separate chapter elements plus four appendices as follows:

1. Introduction
2. Land Use and Community Design Element
3. Mobility Element
4. Conservation and Open Space Element
5. Parks, Recreation and Community Health Element
6. Safety Element
7. Noise Element
8. Housing Element (to be updated separately per State law SB 375/575)

Appendices:

- A. Implementation Plan
- B. Related Regulations, Plans and Programs
- C. Glossary
- D. Focus Areas and Specific Plan Summary
- E. References

This proposed General Plan update provides for an expected development capacity of 121,446 persons (population) and a housing stock of 41,551 homes for the City over the life of the plan. For the total planning area, including the sphere of influence areas and Lake San Marcos, the expected development capacity is 128,040 persons (population) and 41,843 homes.

The General Plan update includes 9 guiding themes, 45 goals, 194 policies and 109 implementation programs. Implementation programs, part of Appendix A Implementation Plan, are action items to accomplish the policies and goals of the General Plan.

A Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) (SCH #2011071028) has been completed for the City of San Marcos General Plan update. The planning area for the General Plan encompasses 21,162 acres (33.06 square miles); this includes approximately 15,579 acres (24.30 square miles) within the City's corporate limits and 5,586 acres (8.73 square miles) of unincorporated land within the City's Sphere Of Influence (SOI).

State law requires the City conduct a public hearing on the General Plan and its environmental document prior to adoption. The State General Plan Guidelines suggest that the adoption process provide broad public access to the plan prior to adoption. However, there are no specific standards in the law except for the normal public notice requirements. The public process described herein, in conjunction with the January/February 2012 series of Planning Commission and City Council hearings, are being conducted in accordance

with public noticing requirements and are intended to serve as the official public hearings for the General Plan and EIR.

### **B. Background**

In Fall 2009, the City of San Marcos initiated a collaborative program to complete a comprehensive update of its General Plan by appointing the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC). The GPAC held 24 public meetings which included public input, staff and consultant collaboration. The proposed General Plan update provides a framework to accommodate future growth through development, redevelopment, infill, and mixed-use development based on the recommendations of the GPAC and the community outreach efforts. The Draft General Plan and DEIR was circulated for public review from November 21, 2011 to January 5, 2012.

The objectives for the public participation program were to involve a broad spectrum of community members and stakeholders; build consensus for the plan step by step; focus on topics to be addressed in the updated General Plan; and transparently communicate research, analysis and recommendations from the staff, GPAC, stakeholders and community members. The multi-pronged approach for public participation included the following elements:

- General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) meetings open to the general public
- A telephone survey was conducted with statistically valid results
- Three (3) Community Workshop Series (4 separate locations, 12 total workshops)
- Newsletters and GP updates in the San Marcos 360° Article mailed out to all San Marcos residents during the update process
- Youth Program
- A General Plan website and dedicated a phone line for public interaction
- Special General Plan presentations given to:
  - Mobile Home Parks
  - Palomar Pomerado Health Group
  - San Marcos Economic Development Committee
- Participated at City street fairs

The outcome from this public participation program included development and refinement of the guiding themes to be used as a "vision framework" for updating the General Plan. Results from the telephone survey indicated general support (67% of those participating in the community opinion survey) for moderate growth within the City; and 26.8% (of those participating in the community opinion survey) identified the natural surroundings, hills and lakes of the community as the element they liked most about the City. Community workshops resulted in the public generated statement that San Marcos should be traffic conscious with better distribution of traffic; have a well-designed downtown with charm; be an educational capital; become a Solar City USA, meaning green and sustainable; prosperous; and walkable. Planning issues that need to be addressed and/or change/improved were a greater diversification of businesses; developing a cultural destination or landmark; maintain focus on open space; maintain security in residential areas; must have better public transportation; promote more "green" development for the City; focus on mixed-use hubs; and upgrade older sections of the City. The General Plan update addressess these community generated issues through the goals, policies and implementation programs.

### C. Major Policy Issues by Element

The draft General Plan update represents a complete overhaul of the vision and goals for the community, having evolved since the last General Plan update in 1987. Factual information in the General Plan text has been updated to reflect current conditions; guiding themes have been established, and the goals and policies have been updated to convey the values and directions of the community at this time. The following is a brief summary of key policy changes recommended by the GPAC and reflected in the draft General Plan update:

#### 1. Land Use and Community Design Element

The Land Use and Community Design Element provides the main policy framework for decisions about where and how the City will grow and change over time. The Element's Land Use Plan, Figure 2-5, designates land use by property throughout the incorporated City boundary and Sphere of Influence (SOI) areas as recommended by the GPAC. Table 1 summarizes the conversion of existing land use designations to the updated land use designations.

Land use designations have been updated, including:

- Consolidation and reclassification of some land uses (See Attachment B to this report for the proposed land use designations and their comparison to the previous General Plan.)
- Addition of 4 mixed use designations; Mixed Use 1 and Mixed Use 2 incorporate residential and commercial development, Mixed Use 3 and Mixed Use 4 integrate compatible office, commercial and non-residential uses. Mixed use land use designations will allow for the vertical and horizontal integration of supportive residential, office, commercial and business park uses adjacent to highly-traveled transit corridors and strategic areas within the City to promote sustainable economic and environmental growth in close proximity to transit opportunities or complimentary to existing land use design. Mixed use land uses are located along S. Rancho Santa Fe Road, Mission Road, the north side of San Marcos Boulevard, on Barham Drive east of Woodland Parkway and within the Hanson property, Focus Area 9.
- Land use designation revisions described above and summarized in Attachment B of this report result in the revisions of the land use designation for identified areas of the City; this may be in name only or a revisions of allowed land use practices and development intensities. Noticing for changes have been conducted subject to public noticing requirements.

Changes to land uses were considered in 47 focus areas. During the General Plan update process, these focus areas were identified in a variety of ways.

- Study Areas, (Focus Area 1, 2 and 3) changes in planned land use for transit corridor smart growth areas determined through the General Plan update program
- Consideration Areas, changes in planned land use in specific areas determined through the General Plan update program

- Property Owner Initiated Areas, changes requested by the actual property owner during the General Plan update program

Land use alternatives were considered for these areas through public workshops and GPAC meetings. Ultimately, 33 of the 47 areas were recommended by the GPAC for land use revisions from the existing land use plan. Land use alternatives considered and recommended are identified in Attachment D of the General Plan. During the land use alternatives analysis process, City staff also identified land use configurations different from GPAC recommendations for seven of the 33 areas. These staff recommended alternatives have been included in the EIR alternatives for the Planning Commissions consideration.

Updating of the General Plan will result in potential additional residential development capacity to the City through adjustment of the land use plan addressed above, addition of residential units within some Focus Areas, and existing development/redevelopment potential within the City. Current population, housing and non-residential development is compared to future expected development capacity under the updated General Plan below (Table 2.0-3 of the DEIR).

	City	SOI	Planning Area Total	Net Change	Percent Change
<b>Population</b>					
Existing 2010	84,391	5,994	90,385	---	---
Expected Development Capacity	121,446	6,539	128,040	37,655	42%
<b>Housing</b>					
Existing 2010	27,744	2,891	30,635	---	---
Expected Development Capacity	41,551	292	41,843	11,208	37%
<b>Non-Residential Square Feet</b>					
Baseline	N/A	N/A	11,584,883*	---	---
Expected Development Capacity	N/A	N/A	32,917,133	21,332,250	184%

Source: SANDAG 2011b; AECOM 2011

\*Note: Under-reported. Estimated by retail, industrial and office inventory (KMA & CoStar), does not include full inventory of City owned buildings

The draft General Plan update expands the traditional and required Land Use Element by incorporating a "Community Design" portion into the element. Community design addresses community planning trends and design concepts to guide physical development. Community design concepts addressed include smart growth, form based codes, infill development, green buildings and designing for healthy communities.




































The Land Use and Community Design Element also addresses public services, infrastructure, and utilities. Existing services, goals and future improvement plans are addressed in Section 2.3 of the element.





## 2. Mobility Element

Complete Streets is a requirement of the California Complete Streets Act of 2008 which requires circulation elements to address the transportation system from a multi-modal perspective. A complete street network should prioritize and provide mobility for all users including pedestrians, bicycles, transit and vehicles. The Complete Street network in San Marcos will incorporate and prioritize mobility elements per Table 3-2, Complete Street Guide provided below.

Street Typologies relate to how Complete Streets interact with all users of the

Table 3-2  
Complete Street Guide, Mode Preferences

Sample Street	Prioritized Modes	Non-Prioritized Modes	Prohibited Modes	Sample Street Typology
San Marcos Boulevard, Discovery to Grand	 			Multi-Way Boulevard
Rancho Santa Fe Road, Portions of Twin Oaks Valley Road		  		Arterial with Class II or Class III bike facility and sidewalks
Mission Road, Portions of Twin Oaks Valley Road	   			Arterial with Enhanced Bike/Ped Facilities
Freeway State Route 78 (SR-78)			 	Highway
Collectors	 	 		Collector
Bicycle/Pedestrian Trails	 		 	Class I Bike/Ped Path
Neighborhood Streets	 	 		Neighborhood Streets
Industrial Streets		  		Industrial Streets
Main Street (University District)	  			Main Street Concept

Priorities:  Pedestrian  Bicycle/Non-motorized  Vehicles  Transit/Bus service

system (bicycles, pedestrians, transit, etc.) by ensuring that the roadway is designed and implemented in a way that is supportive of the preferred modes through certain street types. Street Typologies also include assessment of the adjacent land uses, and strive to provide a mobility system that is complementary to the adjacent development. Street Typologies for San Marcos include:

- Multi-way boulevard
- Arterial
- Arterial with enhanced bike/pedestrian facilities
- Freeway

- Collectors
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Trails
- Neighborhood Streets
- Industrial Collectors
- Main Street

The Multimodal Level Of Service (MMLOS) approach is a component of the City's complete streets goal and will provide guidance on appropriate service levels for all modes of travel. Policy M-1.4, on page 3-20, proposes the utilization of MMLOS technique to evaluate transportation facilities and proposes a "flexible LOS" standard where warranted to provide minimum levels of service based on prioritized modes.

An Intra-City Shuttle system is proposed to connect key activity centers including the San Marcos Creek District, University District, Palomar Community College, California State University San Marcos, the Civic Center and Sprinter Transit Stations. Figure 3-3 identifies proposed intra-City shuttle routes.

Mobility/circulation improvements within San Marcos are identified by the SANDAG 2050 Regional Transportation Plan and supported by the Mobility Element of the General Plan. These improvements are identified in Figure 3-7 including but not limited to:

- Expanded light-rail and express light-rail service through San Marcos extending between Oceanside and Escondido
- Streetcar/shuttle service through the core of San Marcos
- Managed lanes added to State Route 78
- Freeway/Carpool lane connectors at the I-5/State Route 78 interchange
- Carpool lane connectors at the I-5/State Route 78 interchange
- Bicycle improvements at:
  - Carlsbad/San Marcos Bicycle Corridor
  - Encinitas/San Marcos Bicycle Corridor
  - Inland Rail Trail Bicycle Corridor
- Eight (8) bridge/overcrossings or undercrossings
- Interchange improvements at Smilax Road, S. Rancho Santa Fe Road, and E. Barham Drive.
- Seven pedestrian bridge improvements at various locations
- One Sprinter grade separation at Pacific Street and W. Mission Road

### 3. Conservation and Open Space Element

Consistent with Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), the Conservation and Open Space Element addresses issues related to air quality, climate change, and energy use and conservation measures to contribute to the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020. Goals, policies and implementation programs are aimed at addressing these issues. Air quality and greenhouse gas emission policies include but are not limited to:

- Participate in regional efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

- Encourage energy conservation and the use of alternative energy sources within the community.
- Promote efficient use of energy and conservation of available resources in the design, construction, maintenance and operation of public and private facilities, infrastructure and equipment.

This Element also addresses conservation of water and land resources. The City of San Marcos is committed to being a leader and key player in the regional stewardship of watershed and water quality protection. Since the initial municipal stormwater permit was issued in 2001 by the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (SDRWQCB), the current 2007 Municipal Stormwater Permit and the upcoming draft Regional Municipal Stormwater Permit have shifted significantly to address the region's water bodies under a watershed-based principal to protect the region's water quality and beneficial uses of water bodies and groundwater basins. Goals, policies and implementation programs are included to address local and regional issues for watershed and water quality protection. Water quality and watershed protection policies include but are not limited to:

- Support water conservation efforts to reduce energy consumption resulting from transport and treatment of water from outside the region.
- Promote watershed stewardship as the community norm.

#### 4. Parks, Recreation and Community Health Element

Citywide parkland, trails and recreational facilities total 340.05 existing acres and 260.17 future planned acres for a total of 600.23 acres; these numbers are from Table 5-2 on page 5-7 of the draft General Plan. This acreage includes nearly 270 acres of existing developed parkland including approximately 149 acres of neighborhood parks, 98 acres of community parks, and 20 acres of mini-parks, and 3 acres of other recreational facilities. Expansion of parks is planned throughout the City and included in the numbers below. Park expansions are planned to include but are not necessarily limited to:

- Future or expansion parks identified in Table 5-2 of the Element
- The linear park, designated open space within Focus Area 2
- Parks planned for the Hanson property, Focus Area 9

The City's established parks standard is to provide a ratio of 5 acres of parks/recreation land per 1,000 residents. The existing parkland ratio is 4.03 acres/1,000 residents; this calculation includes community parks, neighborhood parks, mini-parks and trails as listed in Table 5-2 on page 5-7 of the draft General Plan. Based on planning and expected development capacity of the General Plan, the future ratio as evaluated by the EIR will be 4.94 acres/1,000 residents.

Voluntarily the City has included a section of Community Health and Family Enrichment, page 5-9, within this Element. This portion of the element and associated policies are aimed at addressing access to healthy foods, health care and medical services as well as promoting physical activity and community involvement.

## 5. Safety Element

This Safety Element documents safety conditions in the planning area and identifies preliminary geologic, seismic, flood (including dam failure or breach), fire, and airport hazards present. In addition, this section discusses hazardous materials and emergency preparedness. Information in this section provides a context for evaluating potential hazards and creates a foundation that will help to proactively address planning and development of the City.

A new segment of this Element is Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) starting on page 6-17; San Marcos will continue to encourage design and redevelopment of projects and buildings to take a proactive approach to crime prevention.

San Marcos Fire Department (SMFD) utilizes the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) and Hazard Risk Assessment (HRA) for the San Marcos community and unincorporated areas in the San Marcos Fire Protection District. This assessment and the CWPP/HRA identify areas as Wildland Urban Interface study areas to prioritize hazardous fuel removal and reduce overall community fire risks. This is a departure from the traditional CALFIRE mapping of hazard zones. SMFD's approach provides more detailed information of current ground level conditions and evaluates on a per-parcel basis.

Information was updated regarding law enforcement practices, emergency preparedness procedures, and identification of needed flood control improvements to manage flooding within 100-Year floodplains.

## 6. Noise Element

San Marcos relies on the San Diego County Noise standards to regulate land use noise compatibility, transportation noise, and non-transportation noise. Utilizing the County's established interior and exterior noise standards, the City can rate compatibility using the terms normally acceptable, conditionally acceptable, normally unacceptable, and clearly unacceptable. The basic standards are:

- 60 dBA CNEL/Ldn for exterior spaces of rural and low density residential land use designations throughout the City.
- 65 dBA CNEL/Ldn are permitted for multiple-family housing and housing in mixed-use contexts.

Implementation of these standards includes use of the County's "Noise and Land Use Compatibility Guidelines for Transportation-related Noise" and the associated "Noise Standards." Implementation Program N-3.1, see Appendix A of the General Plan, states the City will update the Noise Ordinance to incorporate new noise standards consistent with the Noise Element and a list of goals for the update.

Table 7-3  
Noise and Land Use Compatibility Guidelines for Transportation-related Noise

Land Use Category		Exterior Noise Level (CNEL)					
		55	60	65	70	75	80
A	Residential—single family residences, mobile homes, senior/age-restricted housing						
B	Residential—multifamily residences, mixed use (residential/commercial)						
C	Lodging—hotels, motels						
D <sup>2</sup>	Schools, churches, hospitals, residential care facility, child care facilities						
E <sup>2</sup>	Passive recreational parks, nature preserves, contemplative spaces, cemeteries						
F <sup>2</sup>	Active parks, golf courses, athletic fields, outdoor spectator sports, water recreation						
G <sup>2</sup>	Office/professional, government, medical/dental, commercial, retail, laboratories						
H <sup>2</sup>	Industrial, manufacturing, utilities, agriculture, mining, stables, ranching, warehouse, maintenance/repair						



Acceptable - Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved



Conditionally Acceptable - New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed noise analysis is conducted to determine if noise reduction measures are necessary to achieve acceptable levels for land use. Criteria for determining exterior and interior noise levels are listed in Table 7-4, Noise Standards. If a project cannot mitigate noise to a level deemed Acceptable, the appropriate County decision-maker must determine that mitigation has been provided to the greatest extent practicable or that extraordinary circumstances exist.



Unacceptable - New construction or development shall not be undertaken.

## 7. Housing Element

The 2005-2010 Housing Element was adopted and certified by the California Department of Housing and Community Development in April 2006. This version has been included as the Housing Element in this General Plan update. California State Senate Bill (SB) 375/575 has since realigned the update cycle for local housing elements; thus the City's Housing Element is required to be updated and certified within 18 months of the adoption of SANDAG's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) or by April of 2013 under a separate effort. Goals, policies and implementation programs for the 2005-2010 Housing Element have not been updated as part of this General Plan update process.

### D. Zoning Ordinance

An update of the Zoning Ordinance is forthcoming in 2012 to be consistent with the land use element of the adopted General Plan. Issues relating to the Zoning Ordinance, such as non-conformation uses and a new "Transition Zone," were addressed within the General Plan GPAC process. Outcomes and recommendations from that process will be included in the Zoning Ordinance update. As part of comprehensive Zoning Ordinance update, Staff will recommend inclusion of a "Transition Zone" to facilitate operating business retention and expansion of existing industrial properties until such time as redevelopment occurs by the property owner or subsequent property owner.

### E. Draft Environmental Impact Report

For the purpose of evaluating the proposed General Plan update, a Program level Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared. A Program level EIR is intended to be used for projects that are a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project (such as a General Plan) to allow:

- Consideration of broad policy alternatives and program-wide mitigation measures,
- Avoid duplicative reconsideration of basic policy considerations,
- Ensure consideration of cumulative impacts and establish a framework for "tiered" project-level environmental documents that are prepared in accordance with the overall program.

As the proposed General Plan update does not propose specific development projects, the Program level EIR evaluates the anticipated physical environmental impacts related to implementation of the overarching policies. Furthermore, this Program level EIR provides mitigation measures necessary to decrease those impacts to a less than significant level. The EIR process also allows public review of the expected environmental effects by agencies and the public, and provides a method for identifying unavoidable significant impacts and adopting overriding considerations, if deemed necessary. EIRs also identify project alternatives and cumulative impacts of a project.

The EIR for the City of San Marcos General Plan (SCH #2011071028) was prepared by AECOM. Specialized sub-consultants associated with AECOM in the environmental assessment process included Fehr & Peers for the Mobility Element and Wilson Geosciences for geology and hazards analysis in the Safety Element.

The draft EIR has identified potentially significant physical environmental impacts that are expected to result from the Project. The EIR also provides appropriate measures to mitigate the impacts and to reduce anticipated physical environmental impacts to less than significant levels. Impact levels by issue area are summarized below. Significant Environmental Effects Requiring Mitigation include impacts on aesthetics and visual resources; agricultural resources; biological resources; cultural resources; greenhouse gas emissions; hazards and hazardous materials; hydrology and water quality; land use; noise; public services, utilities, and energy; and transportation and circulation. Impacts and mitigation measures are summarized in the EIR Executive Summary, Attachment E to this report.

**Table ES-1**  
**Summary of Environmental Significance Conclusions for the San Marcos General Plan**

Environmental Resource Area and Issue Analyzed	Program-Level Significance	Cumulatively Considerable?
LTS: Less than significant; SM: Significant but mitigable; SU: Significant unavoidable		
<b>3.1 AESTHETICS AND VISUAL RESOURCES</b>		
Scenic Vistas	SM	No
Scenic Resources within a State Scenic Highway	LTS	No
Visual Character	LTS	No
Light and Glare	LTS	No
<b>3.2 AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST RESOURCES</b>		
Conversion of FMMP Farmland	LTS	No
Existing Zoning or Williamson Act Land	SM	No
Other Changes Converting Farmland	LTS	No
<b>3.3 AIR QUALITY</b>		
Conflict With or Obstruct Implementation of the Applicable Air Quality Plan	LTS	No
Violate Any Air Quality Standard or Contribute Substantially to an Existing or Projected Air Quality Violation	SU	Yes
Impacts to Sensitive Receptors	LTS	No
Objectionable Odors	LTS	No
<b>3.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES</b>		
Critical Habitat, Sensitive Vegetation Communities and Jurisdictional Waters Including Wetlands and Riparian Habitat	SM	No
Special Status Species	SM	No
Wildlife Corridors	SM	No
Habitat Conservation Plans/Natural Community Conservation Plans or other Local Ordinances and Policies	SM	No
<b>3.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>		
Archaeological Resources	SM	No
Human Remains	LTS	No
Historic Resources	SM	No
<b>3.6 GEOLOGY, SOILS, AND MINERAL RESOURCES</b>		
Faulting and Seismicity	LTS	No
Soil Erosion	LTS	No
Unstable Geologic Units	LTS	No
Expansive Soils	LTS	No
Septic Systems	LTS	No
Mineral Resources	LTS	No
<b>3.7 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS</b>		

**Table ES-1**  
**Summary of Environmental Significance Conclusions for the San Marcos General Plan**

Environmental Resource Area and Issue Analyzed	Program-Level Significance	Cumulatively Considerable?
LTS: Less than significant; SM: Significant but mitigable; SU: Significant unavoidable		
Generation of GHG Emissions	SU	Yes
Conflict With An Applicable Plan, Policy, Or Regulation Adopted To Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions	LTS	No
<b>3.8 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS</b>		
Routine Use, Transportation, Disposal, and Release Of Hazardous Materials	SM	No
Hazardous Materials within 0.25 Mile of Schools	SM	No
Development on a Known Hazardous Materials Site	SM	No
Airport and Aircraft Hazards	LTS	No
Interference with an Adopted Emergency Plan	SM	No
Wildland Fire Hazards	SM	No
<b>3.9 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY</b>		
Water Resources	LTS	No
Watershed Protection/Water Quality	SM	No
Flooding and Inundation Hazards	LTS	No
Tsunami, Seiche, and Mudflow	LTS	No
<b>3.10 LAND USE AND PLANNING</b>		
Dividing an Established Community	LTS	No
Conflict with Existing Land Use Plans, Policies, and Regulations	SM	No
<b>3.11 NOISE</b>		
Compliance with Local and Applicable Noise Standards	SM	No
Groundborne Vibration or Noise	SM	No
Ambient Noise Levels	SM	No
Aircraft Noise	LTS	No
<b>3.12 PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES</b>		
Paleontological resource, site, or unique geological feature	LTS	No
<b>3.13 POPULATION AND HOUSING</b>		
Population Growth	LTS	No
Population and Housing Displacement	LTS	No
<b>3.14 PUBLIC SERVICES, UTILITIES, AND ENERGY</b>		
Fire Protection and Emergency Services	LTS	No
Police Protection	LTS	No
Schools	LTS	No
Libraries	LTS	No
Water and Wastewater Infrastructure	SM	No
Water Supply	SM	Yes
Wastewater Capacity	SM	No
Solid Waste	LTS	No
Stormwater Drainage Facilities	LTS	No
Energy Infrastructure	LTS	Yes
<b>3.15 RECREATION</b>		
Increased Use and Physical Deterioration of Recreational Resources	LTS	No
Construction or Expansion of Recreational Facilities	LTS	No
<b>3.16 TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC</b>		
Establishing Measures of Effectiveness for the Circulation System Performance	SM	No

**Table ES-1**  
**Summary of Environmental Significance Conclusions for the San Marcos General Plan**

Environmental Resource Area and Issue Analyzed	Program-Level Significance	Cumulatively Considerable?
LTS: Less than significant; SM: Significant but mitigable; SU: Significant unavoidable		
Congestion Management Program (CMP) Intersection Level Of Service (LOS)	LTS	No
Air Traffic Patterns	LTS	No
Roadway Design Hazards	LTS	No
Emergency Access	LTS	No
Public Transit, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Facilities	LTS	No

The DEIR identified Significant Unavoidable Impacts that cannot be mitigated below the relevant threshold of significance. These impacts include air quality and greenhouse gas emissions which are regional, cumulative issues that cannot be fully handled, mitigated or solved at a local level. The DEIR identified mitigation measures to reduce local contributions, however significant unavoidable impacts associated with air quality and greenhouse gas emissions are expected to occur with the implementation of the City of San Marcos General Plan; adoption of a statement of overriding considerations for these two issues would be required.

Significant Cumulative Environmental Effects resulting from the General Plan implementation are described in Section 4.2 of the DEIR. Significant and unavoidable impacts were found in the area of air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and public services, utilities and energy.

Issues to be resolved include deciding whether the benefits of the project override those environmental impacts that cannot be feasibly avoided or mitigated to a level of insignificance (i.e., adopting a Statement of Overriding Considerations). The DEIR Executive Summary has been included as Attachment E of this report.

#### 1. Alternatives

Alternatives: Four project alternatives were analyzed in Chapter 5.0 of DEIR per CEQA standards. The alternatives included:

- Alternative 1, No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative
- Alternative 2, Increased Office Professional Land Use in Urban Core Alternative
- Alternative 3, Staff Recommended Land Uses Alternative
- Alternative 4, Transferred Density Alternative

A summary of alternative impacts as compared to the proposed General Plan are summarized below.

**Table ES-2  
Comparison of Impacts of Alternatives to the Proposed Project**

<b>Environmental Impact</b>	<b>No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative</b>	<b>Increased Office Professional Land Use Alternative</b>	<b>Staff Recommended Land Use Alternative</b>	<b>Transferred Density Alternative</b>
Aesthetics	Greater	Greater	Similar	Greater
Agricultural Resources	Less	Similar	Similar	Less
Air Quality	Less	Greater	Similar	Less
Biological Resources	Similar	Similar	Less	Less
Cultural Resources	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Geology/Soils/Mineral Resources	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Less	Greater	Similar	Less
Hazards/Hazardous Materials	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Hydrology/Water Quality	Greater	Similar	Similar	Similar
Land Use and Planning	Greater	Similar	Similar	Similar
Noise	Less	Greater	Similar	Similar
Paleontological Resources	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Population and Housing	Similar	Similar	Similar	Greater
Public Services and Utilities	Less	Similar	Similar	Less
Recreation	Less	Similar	Similar	Similar
Transportation and Circulation	Similar	Greater	Similar	Less
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>Environmentally Similar</b>	<b>Environmentally Inferior</b>	<b>Environmentally Superior</b>	<b>Environmentally Superior</b>

Alternative 1, No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative assumes that the Draft General Plan would not be adopted, which would leave the existing 1988 General Plan in effect. This alternative was deemed environmentally similar.

Alternative 2, Increased Office Professional Land Use in Urban Core Alternative assumed a conversion of 20 acres of land from "Industrial" land use to "Office/Professional" land use to increase non-residential square footage potential and increase the jobs/housing ratio. The 20 acres proposed for this alternative were not analyzed on a site-specific basis, rather a theoretical conversion of land use not associated with any specific or individual properties. This alternative was deemed environmentally inferior.

Alternative 3, Staff Recommended Land Uses Alternative analyzed a Land Use Plan recommending alternative land use designations within seven (7) of the 33 Focus Areas. Alternative land use designations recommended by Staff are summarized in the table below. The Staff Recommended Alternative would be environmentally superior to the proposed General Plan as a result of reduced impacts to biological resources, and would more closely fulfill the Guiding Themes, goals and policies established by the community for the proposed General Plan.

Alternative 4, Transferred Density Alternative analyzed a generalized land use approach that would condense additional growth permitted in the Focus Areas into an "urban core" along major transportation corridors of the City. This alternative would permit for greater density and intensity within the urban core, while reducing permitted growth in outer lying areas. This alternative was deemed environmentally superior; additionally it does not fulfill the Guiding Themes or goals of the community.

## 2. Response to Comments

The DEIR for the City of San Marcos General Plan was distributed to interested agencies and the public for a 45-day-period (November 21, 2011 to January 5, 2012). Staff is receiving public letters and email comments from a variety of sources during the writing of the staff report. Comments received to date have included general political statements, editing notations, specific topical comments, and formal agency comments. CEQA requires written response to comments for comments regarding the EIR only; as a courtesy staff has been responding via email to other General Plan related comments.

Staff and the consultant have undertaken factual corrections and basic editing/numbering revisions where warranted. Planning Commission review of comments is recommended for discretionary topical items of the Draft General Plan. Response to comments and substantive changes for Planning Commission consideration will be presented at the third meeting, January 17, 2012.

As required per Section 21092.5(a) of the State of California Public Resources Code, a copy of the response to comments will be sent to each public agency who submitted a letter during the review period; similarly, those individuals who comment on the DEIR will receive responses as they are prepared.

**F. Items for Consideration/Modification**

**1. Staff Recommended Alternative – land use revisions by property**

The land use plan of the proposed General Plan reflects GPAC recommended land uses. Staff has proposed alternative land use plans for seven (7) Focus Areas. Staff requests the Planning Commission consider the adoption of these land use alternatives. Should these alternatives be recommended by the Planning Commission, Figure 2-5 Land Use Plan (Attachment A) would be modified for the City Council's consideration. See Attachment C for Staff recommended land use alternative by Focus Area.

**Table 5.0-6  
Staff Recommended Alternative  
Land Use Changes by Focus Area**

Focus Area		Acres	Proposed Project	Staff Recommended	Impact
1 (Mission Road Study Area)	West of Las Posas, south of Descanso, north of SR-78	5.93 (parcel 1-9a)	I (Industrial)	MU4 (Mixed Use 4)	Increase non-residential square footage
6	Southwest corner of Twin Oaks Valley Road /Borden Road	9.48	I	LI	Increase non-residential square footage
8 (Barham)		62.12 ac	LI/OP/ C/MU3	BP/ LI/OP/ C/MU3	Increase non-residential square footage
11 (Bieri)	South side of San Elijo Road	69.41	SPA(LI)/C/ MHDR/OS	SPA/C/OP/ BP/MU4	Land Use only, SOI
21	Southwest corner of Grand Avenue/Las Posas Road	0.55	C	I	Same as existing General Plan
22	North of Borden Road near "P" Mountain	122.38	SPA (LDR up to 25 units)	SPA (LDR up to 18 units)	-7 dwelling units
30	West side of Mulberry, south of Broden	10.03	MDR (15-20 du/ac)	LMDR (8-12 DU/AC)	-80 dwelling units
34	South side of San Elijo Road	15.28	SPA (BP)	SPA Movie Studio	Same as existing General Plan

**2. Land Use Special Conditions – Revision of Appendix D of the General Plan**

The land use element of the draft General Plan addresses land use designations that assign specific densities. Select properties within the City have been identified as having "special conditions" or stipulations that should be applied to the land use designation. To address these special conditions, Staff recommends:

- a. Revised Appendix D to address and identify "Land Use Special Conditions" including:
    - "up to" density caps on certain properties that will be designated as requiring a specific plan for future development (Focus Areas 10, 22 and 45)
    - Senior Housing (SH) and Specific Plan (SP) requirement (Focus Areas 5, 20, 24, and 35)
    - Land Use designations underlying "Specific Plan Area" designation (Focus Areas 2, 3, 9, 11, 22, 28, 29, 34, 46, and 47)
  - b. Insert brief language in Land Use and Community Design Element to refer user to the Appendix D for further Land Use Special Conditions.
  - c. Update the Land Use Plan, Figure 2-5, to reflect special condition locations with an asterisk (\*) to refer Staff, residents and property owners to the special conditions section in Appendix D.
3. Focus Area 2 Linear Park Policy addition
- The land use designation of Open Space (OS) is assigned to the existing utility easement adjacent to Pawnee Street from Descanso Avenue to Linda Vista Drive by the draft General Plan land use plan. This area within Focus Area 2 is intended to be developed as a linear park feature when mixed use development occurs along S. Rancho Santa Fe Road. The linear park will be privately developed by individual land owners, and cannot include structures unless expressly permitted by easement holder. The land use plan designates the easement as OS; however the goal, intent and timing of the linear park have not been addressed in the General Plan. To properly address and codify the linear park, Staff recommends:
- a. Revision of the Land Use and Community Design Element to add a linear park policy:
    - Policy LU-3.8: Require the installation of a linear park on designated open space when mixed use development occurs east of S. Rancho Santa Fe Road.
  - b. Add implementation program LU-3.4 to Appendix A, Implementation Plan:
    - LU-3.4: Developer(s) of mixed use projects shall provide lineal park amenities within the open space located on the west side of Pawnee Street, extending from Descanso Avenue to Linda Vista Drive. Amenities within the open space will provide increased pedestrian and bicycle access.
4. Errata Revisions
- a. See Attachment D for additional substantive and administrative errata revisions.

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## **Attachment(s)**


Adopting Resolution

A- Land Use Plan, Figure 2-5

- B- Land Use Designation Comparison Table
- C- Appendix D, with recommended revisions (Includes Staff recommended alternative land uses)
- D- Errata Sheet, Substantive and Administrative
- E- Program DEIR Executive Summary
- F- Public Comments on DEIR
- G- Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Consideration

Submitted by:

  
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for  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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