OPR General Plan Guidelines for Local Government

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Governor’s Office of Planning And Research (OPR)

- State Planning Agency
- Policy guidance and research for the Governor and cabinet

OPR:
- Legislative Unit
- Research Unit
- Office of the Small Business Advocate
- Military Affairs Advisor
Governor’s Office of Planning And Research (OPR)

• State Clearinghouse
  – CEQA state agency review
  – Guidance on planning issues to state agencies, local governments, and the public
  – Publish planning documents
    • Planner’s Book of Lists
    • General Plan Guidelines
General Plans &

The State Water Plan
General Plan Guidelines

- The premier guidance document on how local government should create and implement a general plan.
General Plans

- General plans = “blueprints” for growth and development
- Every city and county must create a general plan
  - Land use
  - Natural resources
  - Other topics
General Plan Water Element

- Water Elements are optional

- OPR recommends local governments incorporate a water element in general plans

- Water element can be useful:
  - Consolidating water policies
  - Reduced costs and increased efficiencies for water infrastructure
  - Regulatory and planning functions
  - Floodplain development issues
General Plan Water Element

• OPR survey: 41 cities and counties self-reported adopting water elements
  – Small number could be due to a lack of resources, technical expertise, and data
  – State law does not require water elements
    • Adding new elements can be difficult
    • Unfunded state mandate
California Water Plan

- CA Water Plan can provide information for water elements:
  - Regional water supply reports
  - Resource management strategies
  - Floodplain protection
  - Climate change
California Water Plan

- City and county general plans must juggle many competing objectives
  - Housing
  - Economic development

- Water is an important issue, but it should be balanced with other issues in general plans.

- Water issues are becoming more important.
California Water Plan

- DWR approaches water issues several ways:
  - Urban growth
  - Energy conservation
  - Climate change

- This approach makes CA Water Plan more useful to local governments developing a general plan.
General Plan Guidelines Update

- OPR is currently updating the 2003 General Plan Guidelines.
  - Advisory Committee
  - Statutory requirements
  - Floodplain issues
  - Greenhouse Gas Emissions/Climate Change
  - Noise element update
  - General plan meeting the needs of the community
  - Database of state agency resources
Environmental Justice
Environmental Justice

• Defined in state law:
  The fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.
  (Government Code §65040.12(e)).

• OPR - General Plan Guidelines provide guidance on integrating environmental justice into general plans.
Environmental Justice

- Problems of Environmental Justice:
  - Procedural inequity
  - Geographic inequity

- Community involvement in planning

- Compatibility in land uses must be considered and addressed
Environmental Justice

- Good information is needed to adequately address Environmental Justice issues.
  - GIS
  - Demographic/Socioeconomic information
  - Location of public facilities, including open space
  - Location and use of industrial lands
Environmental Justice

• General Plans and Environmental Justice
  – Equitable distribution of public facilities
    • Serve the entire community
    • Access to amenities
  – Set policies to avoid overconcentration of industrial uses near schools and residences
    • Buffer zones
    • Cap certain facilities
    • Change land use designation in currently over concentrated areas
Environmental Justice

- Environmental Justice and Water
  - Siting water and wastewater facilities and infrastructure
  - Ensure access to clean water
  - Ensure clean water in rivers, lakes, and streams
  - Stormwater considerations

- State Programs
  - Cal/EPA Environmental Justice Program
Native American Tribal Consultation
Tribal Consultation

• State Law
  – GC 65352.3 (Senate Bill 18, 2004) Consultation between Cities and Counties and California Native American Tribes during the general plan process.

• Requires local government consultation with all tribes, whether federally recognized or not.

• SB 18 only applies to cities and counties, not other public agencies
California Native American Tribes

- Great diversity throughout the state
  - Economic diversity
  - Cultural diversity
  - Strong desire to preserve cultural sites
Cities and counties must contact and consult with California Native American Tribes before:
- Adopting a general plan
- Amending a general plan
- Designating land as Open-Space

Protection is for site specific resources.
SB 18 Consultations

- California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC)
  - SB 18 Specific List of Tribes

- Cities and Counties: Contact the NAHC when amending/updating/adopting a General Plan
Potential Consultation Results

- Building working relationships which may result in mutually beneficial outcomes
- General Plan Policy Language
- Consultation and Notice Protocols and Procedures
- Native American Advisory Committees
- General/Project Specific Mitigation Measures
- Site Protection Policies
OPR and SB 18

- General Plan Guidelines
  - *Tribal Consultation Guidelines*

- Statewide SB 18 Consultation Training Program
  - 29 sessions
  - Explain Tribal Issues
  - Describe Planning Issues
  - Productive Consultation Guidance
  - Develop relationships and understanding
Conclusion

• Many issues are integrated into local general plans.
  – A 19 member State Agency Steering Committee is guiding the preparation of the CA Water Plan to address multiple objectives and issues
  – The CA Water Plan and general plans become more useful using this approach.

• Public Participation
  – Environmental Justice and Tribal Consultation improve participation and can lead to better plans and outcomes.
Contact Information

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