

# Environmental Impact Report

## GENERAL PLAN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR)

**PURPOSE.** The California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended, provides an opportunity for public officials and interested citizens to review the possible effects of specific development proposals. The review procedure allows information to be available in advance of decisions to approve or deny significant projects and allows a determination to be made regarding the effects on the physical environment and consequently on the quality of life.

**LEVEL OF DETAIL.** There is a distinct difference between the level of detail of a General Plan and that of precise plans for actual development at any specific locations described in the General Plan. Similarly, the EIR for a General Plan is intended to identify major critical issues on a citywide basis. This early warning system permits public officials and interested citizens to be aware of specific information which should be further explored and included in EIRs prepared for specific development projects.

**RELATIONSHIP TO THE GENERAL PLAN.** The intent of the General Plan is to include much of the pertinent environmental analysis in each of the plan elements rather than in the separate EIR document. This EIR is a separate section of the General Plan which reviews and identifies those locations in the plan where the environmental setting, impacts, and mitigation are included. Together, this General Plan and EIR should provide an overall framework against which subsequent, more specific action plans can be evaluated.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT AND SETTING

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION.** The project consists of an update and revision of the Carmel-by-the-Sea General Plan. The revision is intended to supercede the General Plan of 1973, as amended.

**PROJECT JUSTIFICATION.** The General Plan is mandated by State law; see Purpose of the General Plan, General Plan page 1.

**PROJECT SETTING.** See Regional Setting and Physical Characteristics, General Plan page 8.

**PLAN STUDY AREA.** See State and Regional Maps, General Plan page 8; and Figure 1.4, Proposed Sphere of Influence and Urban Service Boundaries, General Plan page 45, and the Figure 1.6 General Plan Map, page 47.

WHOM THE PROJECT SERVES. See Purpose of the General Plan, General Plan page 1; Citizen Participation, General Plan page 3; and Residents, General Plan page 10.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAN AREA ENVIRONMENT

Natural resources are discussed in the Conservation Element; specific environmental detail is further discussed in the Environmental Safety Element, Scenic Highways Element, and the Open Space Element. Existing physical facilities are discussed in the Sociocultural and Public Facilities Element, Circulation Element, and the Environmental Safety Element. Also, see the Regional Setting and Physical Characteristics Sections of the General Plan.

### SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS OF THE GENERAL PLAN

The General Plan serves as a basis for evaluating individual specific projects and their impacts on the surrounding community. The impact and effects of the General Plan policies on the City and its environment have been continually evaluated in the development of the policies. The entire General Plan document has been prepared with careful consideration of the effects on the total environment of the whole City: economic, social, and physical; thus, many of the policies will have beneficial impacts on community development.

The impact of the General Plan as a policy document is difficult to measure until implementation of the proposed policies is initiated. The overall environmental impacts of the General Plan revisions are limited since the City's basic structure and land use pattern are set. The land development projected to the year 1993 consists mainly of infilling of the few remaining undeveloped and underdeveloped parcels with the City. The continuance of existing development patterns in the Sphere of Influence is also planned. The revision of the General Plan will serve to better control existing, new or proposed land uses and, therefore, reduce any environmental impacts.

The following element by element discussion presents the effects expected from implementation of the associated General Plan policies. In some cases, policies may be evaluated by the City and not implemented, in which case some of the effects would not occur.

#### 1. Land Use Element

- Maintenance of the City's residential character by limiting the number and types of nonresident serving commercial uses.
- Definition of a precise boundary for the commercial district.
- Increase in opportunities for residentially oriented commercial uses.
- Eventual increase in residential uses in the commercial districts with a corresponding decrease in retail uses; potential sales tax revenue reductions.
- Reduction over time in certain types of commercial uses (such as restaurants, bars, art galleries, real estate offices, gift shops, and jewelry stores).

- A reduction of hostelry tax revenues; based on a policy to limit or eliminate motels in the single family residential neighborhoods.
- Maintenance of existing schools, churches, clubs, and foundations in the R-1 District.
- Reduction of employee related parking in the single family residential neighborhoods; corresponding increase in residential parking.
- Protection and enhancement of the City's traditional village scale and character.
- Improvement of visual aesthetics through zoning regulations.
- Improvement of City planning for development in its Sphere of Influence.
- Improved enforcement of City Zoning Code policies; increase in City staff costs.

## 2. Circulation Element

- Land use measures to reduce commercial uses may decrease existing congestion and improve traffic flow.
- City expense for purchase of traffic counters.
- City expense for establishment of ongoing, accurate local traffic volume data.
- Improvement of circulation patterns through restricting delivery times and establishing truck parking spaces at certain times.
- Reduction in parking opportunities for employees because of residential parking program or other methods. Unless replacement parking is sufficient and/or public transportation incentives are effective, persons looking for parking may adversely affect traffic patterns.
- Preservation of the City's unique roadway and median design.
- Elimination of tour bus parking throughout the City (and related noise); possible traffic conflicts at a new long term bus parking site (location to be determined).

## 3. Housing Element

- Increased supply of low and moderate cost housing. This is not expected to result in a significant population increase, since many of the units already exist.
- Improvement in the quality of low and moderate cost housing; increased City administrative expenses for inspection of dwelling units.

- Preservation of existing residences through improved maintenance.
- Increased availability of residential uses in the commercial district.
- Preservation of the existing design, scale, and residential character of the City.

#### 4. Sociocultural and Public Facilities Element

- Continuation of the availability of local facilities for social, cultural and public services activities.
- Preservation and improvement of the level of service at the Harrison Memorial Library; potential user charge to non Carmel residents.
- Expense for expansion of City Hall facilities.
- Improvement in fire protection services.
- Increased recreational opportunities at local schools; expenses for maintenance, equipment and supervision.
- Preservation of City parks and open space.

#### 5. Significant Buildings Element

- Increased review of public and private plans to maintain and preserve local significant structures and locations.
- Development of an inventory of significant sites.
- Development of incentives to preserve buildings through private ownership.
- Potential establishment of a Historic District within the Zoning Code to protect whole areas where several individual significant structures may exist.
- Possible protection of very significant buildings with local, state, or federal historic place or landmark status.

#### 6. Open Space/Conservation/Scenic Highways Element

- Establishing priorities and listing of desired open space land.
- Potential reevaluation of the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District water allocation formula.
- Conservation of additional water through implementation of new water saving measures, including retrofitting of water conserving devices.
- Plan recognition of Carmel's limited water resources and adoption of measures to preserve the resources.

- Development of a water use prioritization schedule giving highest consideration to residential uses; could adversely affect other uses if implemented.
- Additional City control over development within the potential archaeologically significant zone.
- Preservation of the scenic vistas along Junipero Street and Scenic Road.
- Preservation of beach, forest and park resources for appropriate public use and as important biological and natural resources.
- Impacts of the plan on water quality and air quality are not adverse and will not affect local, regional or state, plans for these resources.
- Energy consumption increases are not to be significant.

#### 7. Environmental Safety Element

- Continued exposure of residents to seismic, ground shaking, flooding, forest fires, high winds and tsunamis and other natural hazards which presently exist in Carmel.
- Reduced exposure of land uses to unacceptable risks.
- Greater survivability of essential transportation, utility communication and emergency shelter facilities in or near high hazard areas.
- Increased public awareness of hazards and safety plans.
- Increased knowledge of potential geologic hazards.
- Improved construction of structures to resist seismic hazards.
- Development of a tsunami warning and evacuation plan.
- Reduction of fire hazards.
- Increased fire detection capabilities.
- Reduction of potential flood damage.
- Designation of specific, essential primary and secondary facilities and evacuation routes to be used in the event of a major disaster.
- Increased City expense for public tree inspection program.

#### 8. Noise Element

- Compatibility of new developments with the surrounding environment.
- Reduced vehicle noise emissions.
- City expense for purchase of sound monitoring equipment.

- Reduced noise from delivery trucks and tour buses, through restrictions on travel routes and parking, and from barking dogs and electronic amplifiers.

#### SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS RESULTING FROM IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENERAL PLAN

No significant, unavoidable, adverse impacts are anticipated due to the adoption and implementation of this revised General Plan. The adoption of these revisions will reduce adverse effects on the City's predominantly residential character and "village in a forest" atmosphere due to the new policies and land use controls. Impacts identified in the previous section can be eliminated over time as the policies are implemented.

#### MITIGATION MEASURES PROPOSED TO MINIMIZE ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The primary adverse impacts of the General Plan relate to the two types of costs inherent in the proposed increase in City regulatory policies: reduced revenues and increased expenses. As previously noted, sales tax and hostelry tax revenues would be reduced based on a general reduction in commercial uses and based on the number of hotels which are eliminated and replaced with other uses. One source of increased revenues may be parking ticket fines if a stronger ticketing policy is implemented. Increased staff and capital expenses were also identified in conjunction with the hiring of an additional code enforcement officer, purchase of traffic and noise monitoring equipment, and implementation of various inspection and permit programs, especially in the areas of land use, housing, significant buildings and environmental safety. The following measures are recommended to mitigate the adverse impacts associated with this General Plan.

- Phase reductions of revenue generating uses so as to not create an undue burden on the municipal budget which presently depends heavily on hotel and retail sales generated taxes. Such phasing may occur naturally over time.
- Charge user fees for all appropriate permits, inspections, recreation programs and other services provided by City staff. Review charges annually to ensure that applicable expenses are recovered.

#### ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION

Preparation and periodic updating of the General Plan are required by State law; hence, the "no project" alternative is not viable.

Another alternative is to continue with the 1973 General Plan as amended. The purposes of the proposed revisions, however, were to improve previous policies, update and correct deficiencies, and incorporate new goals of Carmel's citizens. Furthermore, the new plan contains additional elements permitted by State law.

Alternatives to specific items within the various elements have been evaluated in the development of the plan. Relevant portions of those discussions have been included in the Supporting Information section of each element.

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG TERM PRODUCTIVITY

As this plan is implemented, vacant land (in limited supply in Carmel) may be committed to urban use and existing uses will change over time. Major physical and cultural attributes of the community setting are identified in the plan, and policies and programs have been set forth to preserve, use and maintain them. If the plan were not available, it is quite possible that more of the distinctive characteristics of Carmel's setting would be obliterated. It is quite possible that Carmel's distinctive identity would be lost, that future conflicts between incompatible land uses would occur and that opportunities to enhance the City both visually and socially might be foreclosed.

## GROWTH INDUCING IMPACTS RESULTING FROM PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The General Plan defines appropriate areas for growth in the future, but adoption of the plan does not induce development. Urban growth limits are defined and densities consistent with community goals are set forth. Legalization and acceptance of previously unapproved but existing second food preparation areas is recognized by the City as one means of insuring these units are decent, safe, and sanitary primarily for the current residents and, therefore, are not growth inducing. Major annexations are not proposed as part of this plan. Over the long term if the Sphere of Influence area is proposed for annexation, impacts should be reevaluated prior to such an action.

## EIR DISTRIBUTION LIST

The list of people and agencies to which EIR materials are forwarded are on file with the City Clerk.

## PREPARATION OF THE GENERAL PLAN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

This General Plan EIR was prepared by Earth Metrics Incorporated, in consultation with the Carmel Planning Department.

## ORGANIZATIONS AND PERSONS CONSULTED

The following organizations were consulted:

- City of Carmel, all departments
- Monterey County Planning Department
- Monterey County LAFCO
- California Coastal Commissioner
- CALTRANS
- AMBAG
- Monterey Peninsula Unified Air Pollution Control District
- Monterey Peninsula Water Management District
- California Department of Finance
- Monterey-Salinas Transit
- Carmel Foundation
- Carmel Sunset Center
- Carmel General Plan Advisory Committee

WRITTEN COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND THE  
DRAFT GENERAL PLAN AND RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

The Draft Environmental Impact Report (State Clearinghouse #83022908) and Draft General Plan received full public review pursuant to state and local guidelines. In addition, the City of Carmel Planning Commission held a public hearing on the Draft EIR April 20, 1983 and public hearings on the Draft General Plan on April 20, April 27, and May 4, 1983.

COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT EIR AND RESPONSES TO COMMENTS. As indicated below, most of the comments received were on the Draft General Plan and not on the Draft EIR. The only agency submitting formal comments on the Draft EIR was the Carmel Planning Commission. At their April 20, 1983 meeting, the Planning Commission submitted the following comments on the Draft EIR.

"The Planning Commission returned to its consideration of the Draft EIR.

Commissioner Mertens referred to Page 3, Issue 7, 'Circulation Element' and asked which policy in the General Plan itself was related to this statement. Ransom stated that Policy 2-6, Page 51, 'Circulation Element' addresses this statement in the EIR. Ransom suggested the word 'traffic' be amended to 'parking' in the EIR statement.

Commissioner Mertens referred to Page 3, Issue 5, 'Housing Element'. He requested this statement be clarified. Ransom explained this statement is related to a General Policy in the Housing Element of the General Plan; she added the General Plan Committee did not define the statement. McNulty suggested '...existing design, scale, and residential character of the City be substituted. Ransom explained that the EIR addresses the policies in the General Plan and that the policies themselves will have to be amended if changes are made in the EIR.

Commissioner Mertens referred to Page 4, Item 6, 'Sociocultural and Public Facilities' Element. He suggested the word 'existing' be deleted.

Commissioner Mertens referred to Page 4, Item 1, 'Open Space...'. McNulty suggested 'Establishing priorities and listing...' be substituted.

Commissioner Mertens referred to Page 5, Item 1, 'Environmental Safety'. He suggested adding 'forest fires, high winds' after the word 'flooding'.

Commissioner Mertens referred to Page 5, Item 4, 'Noise'. He suggested that 'barking dogs and electronic amplifiers' be added to this item.

Motion of McNulty/Wright TO ADOPT THE CHANGES RECOMMENDED BY COMMISSIONER MERTENS carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

Motion of Mertens/Logan TO ADOPT THE CHANGES RECOMMENDED BY THE PLANNING AND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE carried unanimously on a roll call vote."

Source: Planning Commission Minutes, page 2729.

All of these comments have been responded to and incorporated into the EIR.

COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT GENERAL PLAN AND RESPONSES TO COMMENTS. The following agencies and individuals have submitted written comments on the content of the Draft General Plan. The Carmel Planning Commission has reviewed all of the written comments received and has also considered all of the public testimony received on the General Plan. When deemed appropriate by the Planning Commission some changes have been made to the text of the Draft General Plan and incorporated into this General Plan. Actual copies of these written comments are on file in the Carmel Planning Department.

Public Agencies

Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), April 6, 1983  
(Freeman): vacancy rates, household incomes, overcrowded households, female headed households, second homes, county median income, low income households, regional housing needs challenge.

Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), April 6, 1983  
(Smith): truck delivery zones, tour bus staging areas, carpool incentive parking, public transit incentives, environmental safety public awareness and education.

California Coastal Commission, Central Coast District, April 19, 1983:  
environmentally sensitive habitat areas.

California Department of Transportation, District 5, April 4, 1983:  
transit fares, ridesharing, flex time, Hatton Canyon, traffic counters, employee parking controls, Highway 1 volume/capacity ratio.

Carmel Planning Commission, Minutes of April 20, April 27, and May 4, 1983:  
all elements.

Monterey County Transportation Study, April 19, 1983: Hatton Canyon,  
Serra Avenue.

Monterey-Salinas Transit, March 28, 1983: agency name, employee bus fares.

Individuals and Groups

Billwiller, Jack: Circulation.

Campbell, Gordon: Land Use, Circulation.

Cava, Eugene, Planning Commissioner: Land Use, Circulation.

Grace, Jean: Land Use, Circulation.

Lillard, Dorothy: Land Use, Circulation, Housing.

Lillard, Harold: Housing.

Logan, John, Planning Commissioner: Land Use, Circulation, Housing,  
Sociocultural, Significant Buildings, Open Space/Conservation/Scenic  
Highways, Environmental Safety, Noise.

Mayer, Jane: Land Use, Housing.

McNulty, Fred, Planning Commissioner: Significant Buildings, Environmental Safety, Introduction, Historic Perspective, Land Use, Circulation, Community Profile.

Mertens, Arthur, Planning Commissioner: Community Profile, General Plan Elements, Land Use.

Planning and Conservation Committee of Carmel: all elements.

Wright, James, Planning Commissioner: Circulation, Housing, Public Facilities, Land Use.