



- CITY OF BIGGS -  
**PLANNING DEPARTMENT STAFF REPORT**

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DATE: December 19, 2011  
TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
FROM: Scott Friend, AICP City Planner  
SUBJECT: Options for the initiation of the General Plan Update Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

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**Report Summary:**

Staff is recommending that the City Council consider options and provide direction to staff on when and how to initiate the environmental review effort in support of the City's on-going General Plan Update project. City staff is recommending that the City Council authorize PMC to initiate the work effort on this portion of the project beginning in January of 2012 with a goal of having the EIR document completed in and ready for the City Council's consideration along with the final General Plan policy document in early 2013.

**Background:**

The City of Biggs initiated the current project to update the City's General Plan in the fall of 2008. The General Plan Update effort began in earnest in the winter and spring of 2009 with a series of public workshops, stakeholder meetings and research and information gathering activities. As a result of the outreach and initial work effort undertaken in early 2009, two actions or products have resulted. First, a General Plan Update Existing Conditions Report was prepared and published in August 2009 and revised and resubmitted in August 2010. This document provides a "snapshot-in-time" of the City of Biggs and contains a significant amount of quantitative and qualitative information about the City that formed the basis for many of the planning, policy and land use decisions that have helped formed the draft General Plan policy document. Secondly, the City's planning consultant (PMC) prepared and presented four land use alternatives to the City Council at a series of meetings in May, June and July of 2009 for consideration, direction and adoption. The result of these meetings was that the City Council, at its regularly scheduled meeting in July of 2009, voted unanimously to select and endorse a preferred land use diagram for the City's General Plan update effort.

Since that time, City staff and PMC have used both the Existing Conditions Report document and the Council adopted Preferred Land Use Diagram as the basis for the preparation of the draft General Plan policy document. As well, both of these products have been used and relied upon to guide the future of the City's land use vision for numerous on-going regional planning activities (e.g. Butte County General Plan; BCAG Sustainable Community Strategies Plan, BCAG Habitat Conservation Plan, etc.).

Following the adoption of the preferred Land Use Diagram by the City Council in July of 2009, the General Plan update effort was placed on a temporary hold. The project was temporarily delayed for a period of about one-year (1) and was re-started in late 2010. Upon the resumption of work activity, PMC resumed its effort, and completed the draft Plan policy elements. As part of this effort, PMC held three (3) workshop/study session meetings with the City Council to review each element and to get

feedback on the contents and policy direction of each element. The last of the three City Council workshop meetings was held in October of 2011. At this point in the General Plan Update effort, the City has now completed in a draft form, all of the background and research documents contemplated in the Scope or Work for the project and well as a draft of the General Plan policy document itself. The only remaining document to be initiated and completed is the supporting environmental analysis document.

### **Discussion:**

The approved Scope of Work and Budget for the General Plan Update effort contemplated the initiation of the environmental review component of the update effort starting concurrently with the initiation of the General Plan policy document. The original project schedule identified this step as occurring in September of 2008. Due to budgetary concerns and the placement of a temporary 'hold' on the overall Plan update project, this step has been delayed pending the identification of a better understanding of overall City fiscal condition, and subsequently, to the conclusion of the draft General Plan policy document. At this time, the City has concluded the preparation of the draft General Plan policy document leaving only the environmental analysis portion of the Plan update effort remaining.

The original project schedule contemplated a 14 month process for the completion of the environmental review process. At this time, PMC still believes that this is an accurate schedule. The approved budget for the EIR effort is approximately \$150,566. This figure includes the cost for all technical and supporting studies necessary to prepare the document (noise, air quality, traffic, biological services, cultural resource services, etc.) and includes costs associated with staff support at required meetings and hearings, the preparation of document adoption findings and overriding considerations (if determined necessary); and, the preparation of the Mitigation Monitoring and Report Plan (as necessary). PMC believes that the budget figure remains valid and adequately and fully represents the upper-end of costs that would be associated with the completion of the full EIR process based upon the information available at this time.

In consultation with the City Administrator, staff is presenting three options for consideration by the City Council for the initiation of the environmental analysis phase of the General Plan Update effort. The three options being presented for consideration and direction are as follow:

1. *Immediate Initiation of Project:* Beginning in January of 2012, formally initiate the effort to prepare the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the General Plan Update effort and continue the effort to completion as projected to occur in late 2012 or early 2013.
2. *Delayed Project Initiation:* Delay the initiation of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) until the beginning of Fiscal Year 2012-2013 and look to complete the effort in the Summer/Fall of 2013.
3. *No Action:* Do not initiate the process to prepare the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) at this time.

### Summary Analysis of Options:

#### Option 1: Immediate Initiation of Project:

Option 1 would have the City Council direct staff to begin the environmental review process for the General Plan Update project immediately beginning in January of 2012. This option would allow for the Plan Update effort to continue without further delay and would result in the probable culmination of the project at the end of 2012 or beginning of 2013. The budgetary impacts of Option 1 would potentially be allocated across two fiscal years (2011-2012 and 2012-2013) thus distributing the fiscal burden over two budget periods. The primary budgetary impact of Option 1 would occur during fiscal year 2012-13.

Option 2: Delayed Project Initiation:

Option 2 would have the City Council provide direction to staff to delay the start of the environmental review process for the Plan update effort. This option would potentially allow the City to allocate money for this task in the 2012-2013 budget thus clarifying the fiscal impacts of the effort in the near-term future for the City. However, this option would further delay the completion of the project effort and would have the practical effect of placing another temporary 'hold' on the project until the adoption of the 2012-2013 budget. Almost the entire budgetary impact of Option 2 would occur in 2013. Should monies not be allocated for this effort in the 2012-2013 fiscal budget, the project would potentially be delayed approximately 18-months with a potential project completion date being pushed to either sometime in 2014.

Option 3: No Action:

Option 3 would have the City Council provide direction to staff to no initiate the start of the environmental review process for the plan at all. This option would effectively place a open-ended "hold" on the project. Selection of this option would postpone the budgetary impacts of the environmental review process indefinitely.

**Fiscal Impact:**

Depending upon the selection of a preferred course of action for the initiation of the General Plan Update environmental review process, the total dollar amount of the action remains consistent at \$150,566. If the City Council elects to direct staff to initiate the environmental immediately, the costs associated with this effort may be in part spread-out over two fiscal years (11/12 and 12/13). Selection of option 2, which would delay the start of this effort until the adoption of the FY12/13 budget would see the majority of the project cost impact a single fiscal year budget. Selection of option 3 would have no fiscal impact as the project would not proceed.

The City Administrator can provide additional information regarding the condition of the current fiscal year budget and the availability of funds to cover the potential costs associated with this work effort.

**Request and Recommendation:**

Staff is requesting that the City Council review and discuss the various options for the initiation of the environmental review process for the General Plan Update effort and direct staff on when and how to move forward with this work. City staff is recommending that the City Council authorize PMC to initiate the work effort on this portion of the project beginning in January of 2012 with a goal of having the EIR document completed in and ready for the City Council's consideration along with the final General Plan policy document in early 2013.

**Attachments:**

Attachment A - Approved General Plan Update Project Schedule and Budget.

# PROJECT SCHEDULE AND BUDGET

## City of Biggs General Plan Update Proposed PMC Timeline

Task	Description	2008												2009			
		July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	
Task 1	Project Set Up and Coordination																
A	Project Kick-Off																
B	Project Management and Meetings with City Staff																
C	Coordination																
D	Public Outreach Program																
Task 2	Visioning and Existing Conditions Assessment																
A	Existing Conditions																
B	Refining the Vision																
Task 3	Land Use Alternatives																
A	Develop Land Use Alternatives																
Task 4	General Plan Goals, Policies, and Actions																
A	Workshops/Stakeholder Meetings on Key Policy Issues																
B	Administrative Draft General Plan																
C	Public Draft General Plan																
D	Final General Plan																
Task 5	Environmental Review																
A	Notice of Preparation/Initial Study/Scoping Meeting																
B	Prepare Administrative Draft Environmental Impact Report																
C	Revise Administrative Draft EIR/Prepare Draft EIR																
D	Prepare Response to Comments, Administrative Final EIR and Final EIR																
E	Prepare Mitigation Monitoring Program																
F	Prepare Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations																
Task 6	Plan Adoption																
A	City Council Hearings																
	Optional Task 1																
	MSR and SOI Amendment																
	Optional Task 2																
	Economic Development Element																

# PROJECT SCHEDULE AND BUDGET

## PROJECT BUDGET

City of Biggs General Plan Update  
Proposed PMC Budget

Task	Description	Project Director		Project Manager		Senior Planner		Associate Planner		Specialist		Subtotal PMC		Pricing Costs	Fair & Peers	Lando & Associates	CA Engineering	Ambient	Grand Total
		hours	total	hours	total	hours	total	hours	total	hours	total	hours	total						
Task 1	Project Set Up and Coordination	8	\$1,000	8	\$920	8	\$800	8	\$640	8	\$760	\$4,120			\$2,193	\$2,750	\$2,750	\$2,200	\$14,013
A	Project Kick-Off	8	\$1,000	8	\$920	8	\$800	8	\$640	8	\$760	\$4,120			\$2,193	\$2,750	\$2,750	\$2,200	\$14,013
B	Project Management and Meetings with City Staff	40	\$5,000		\$-		\$-		\$-		\$-	\$5,000				\$2,750			\$7,750
C	Coordination	20	\$2,500	60	\$6,900	40	\$4,000		\$-		\$-	\$13,400							\$13,400
D	Public Outreach Program	16	\$2,000	40	\$4,600	32	\$3,200	50	\$4,000	40	\$3,800	\$17,600		\$500					\$18,100
Task 2	Visioning and Existing Conditions Assessment																		
A	Existing Conditions	4	\$500	10	\$1,150	16	\$1,600	60	\$4,800	40	\$3,800	\$11,850		\$550				\$5,500	\$25,573
B	Refining the Vision	40	\$5,000	40	\$4,600	8	\$800	8	\$640	16	\$1,520	\$12,560			\$6,600				\$19,160
Task 3	Land Use Alternatives																		
A	Develop Land Use Alternatives	40	\$5,000	60	\$6,900	60	\$5,000	40	\$3,200	40	\$3,800	\$24,900		\$485	\$4,400	\$4,950			\$34,735
Task 4	General Plan Goals, Policies, and Actions																		
A	Workshops/Stakeholder Meetings on Key Policy Issues	16	\$2,000	16	\$1,840	16	\$1,600	16	\$1,280	16	\$1,520	\$8,240		\$500	\$8,250				\$19,183
B	Administrative Draft General Plan	60	\$7,500	80	\$9,200	120	\$12,000	120	\$9,600	80	\$7,600	\$45,900		\$413				\$5,500	\$64,918
C	Public Draft General Plan	16	\$2,000	16	\$1,840	40	\$4,000	40	\$3,200	16	\$1,520	\$12,560		\$1,995					\$14,555
D	Final General Plan	4	\$500	8	\$920	16	\$1,600	16	\$1,280		\$-	\$4,300		\$815					\$5,115
Task 5	Environmental Review																		
A	Notice of Preparation/Initial Study/Scoping Meeting	8	\$1,000	8	\$920	8	\$800	8	\$640		\$-	\$3,360		\$1,010					\$4,370
B	Prepare Administrative Draft Environmental Impact Report	40	\$5,000	60	\$9,200	80	\$8,000	160	\$12,800	80	\$7,600	\$42,600		\$223	\$36,735	\$3,300	\$5,500		\$88,358
C	Revise Administrative Draft EIR/Prepare Draft EIR	16	\$2,000	40	\$4,600	40	\$4,000	40	\$3,200	40	\$3,800	\$17,600		\$1,288					\$18,888
D	Prepare Response to Comments, Administrative Final EIR and Final EIR	40	\$5,000	40	\$4,600	60	\$6,000	40	\$3,200	40	\$3,800	\$22,600		\$380					\$26,213
E	Prepare Mitigation Monitoring Program	4	\$500	4	\$460		\$-	16	\$1,280		\$-	\$2,240		\$214					\$2,454

# PROJECT SCHEDULE AND BUDGET

Task	Description	Project Director hours	Project Director total	Project Manager hours	Project Manager total	Senior Planner hours	Senior Planner total	Associate Planner hours	Associate Planner total	Specialist hours	Specialist total	Subtotal PMC	Printing Costs	Fehr & Peers	Lando & Associates	CA Engineering	Ambient	Grand Total
F	Prepare Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations	8	\$1,000	16	\$1,840	40	\$4,000	40	\$3,200		\$-	\$10,040	\$293					\$10,333
Task 6	Plan Adoption																	
A	City Council Hearings	16	\$2,000	16	\$1,840	20	\$2,000		\$-		\$-	\$5,840			\$2,750			\$8,590
	Totals	996	\$49,500	542	\$62,330	604	\$60,400	662	\$52,960	416	\$39,520	\$264,710	\$8,604	\$59,544	\$27,300	\$16,500	\$18,700	\$395,557
	Optional Task 1																	
	MSR and SOI Amendment*	8	\$1,000	16	\$1,840	24	\$2,400	40	\$3,200	16	\$1,520	\$9,960	\$1,238					\$11,198
	Optional Task 2																	
	Economic Development Element**	16	\$2,000	16	\$1,840	40	\$4,000	40	\$3,200	40	\$3,800	\$14,840	\$1,238					\$16,078

\*Estimate based on assumptions in the text of the proposal. Note that Tasks 2 and 3 will determine the extent of the effort necessary, or even if there is a need, for an MSR and SOI amendment.

Title/Staff	\$/hr
Project Director	125
Project Manager	115
Senior Planner	100
Associate Planner	80
Project Manager	115
Senior Planner	100
Environmental Planner	90
Specialist	95
Markup	10%