



Legislation Text

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TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Brian D. Bordona, Director of Planning, Building and Environmental Services
REPORT BY: Brian D. Bordona, Director of Planning, Building and Environmental Services
SUBJECT: Update to the Napa County Baseline Data Report

RECOMMENDATION

Receive a presentation on the Baseline Data Report and authorize the Director of Planning, Building and Environmental Services to issue a Request for Proposal for the preparation of an update to the Baseline Data Report.

BACKGROUND

Napa County was one of the early innovators in preparing a comprehensive scientific overview of existing conditions prior to developing a General Plan update. Having received multiple local, state and national awards, the Napa County Baseline Data Report (BDR) was integral in the success of the 2008 General Plan update and related Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The BDR has also become the foundation and framework of Planning, Building and Environmental Services' (PBES) extensive Geographic Information Systems (GIS) program.

The BDR consists of a comprehensive set of data and maps reflecting the environmental conditions and regulatory framework in the County, as they existed in 2005. Given the document was to provide support of the General Plan EIR, the document generally followed the resource topics in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines in effect at the time and as follows.

- Geological Resources
- Biological Resources
- Public Health and Safety
- Agricultural Resources
- Public Facilities and Services
- Groundwater Hydrology
- Mineral and Rock Resources
- Energy Consumption
- Population and Housing
- Transportation and Circulation
- Cultural Resources
- Surface Water Quality
- Climate and Air Quality
- Noise
- Land Use
- Visual and Aesthetic Resources
- Surface Water Hydrology
- Fire Ecology

The BDR was envisioned as an evolving work product that could be updated as necessary over time to reflect changing environmental conditions, improved technology, and other new information. However, while portions of the BDR have been updated through PBES's GIS program and policy documents, the BDR itself has not been comprehensively updated since 2005. Since that time, there have been substantive changes in the regulatory framework at a local level, but particularly at the state level. There have also been substantial physical and environmental changes, and new challenges including climate change and adaptation, wildfires and hazard mitigation planning, fire severity zones, fuel and watershed

management, drought and groundwater conditions, the extent and health of forests, special status and endangered species, designation of new earthquake fault lines in 2014, affordable housing, and changes in the built environment. An update of the BDR would provide current information and analysis on the state of the environmental and regulatory baseline in Napa County and is essential to create a strong scientific and fact-based foundation for the upcoming General Plan update and accompanying EIR.

The Napa County Baseline Data Report is available here: <https://www.napawatersheds.org/baseline-data-report>

Important Policy Documents Currently Underway

Regional Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (RCAAP)

A Climate Action Plan (CAP) is a comprehensive roadmap that outlines the specific activities that an agency will undertake to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). Climate action plans build upon the information gathered by GHG inventories and focus on those activities that can quickly achieve the relatively greatest emission reductions in a cost-effective manner, to attain long-term reduction goals.

Only about one-third of all California cities and counties to date have adopted a CAP. Cities and counties are required to meet the State goals of reducing GHG emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030 and to reduce GHG emissions to zero by 2045. GHG emissions are also required to be evaluated under the CEQA. As construction and transportation are the two primary contributors of GHG emissions, the success of any CAP depends directly on the policies of the General Plan.

The 2008 General Plan included goals, policies, and action items aimed at reducing GHG emissions, and Conservation Element Action Item CON CPSP-2 directed that an emissions reduction plan be prepared. A Draft CAP was presented to the Board of Supervisors in 2012 but was not adopted. Preparation of a new CAP began in 2015 and the draft document was released for public review in 2017. Following a public hearing, the County determined that additional changes should be made to the draft CAP and that an EIR should be prepared. A revised draft CAP was released for public review in 2019. The County's draft CAP was placed on hold when the Climate Action Committee (CAC) began meeting on regional GHG reduction strategies in 2019.

In June 2019, Napa County; the Cities of American Canyon, Calistoga, Napa, and St. Helena; and the Town of Yountville adopted Resolutions regarding the "Countywide Commitment to Address Climate Change." The Resolutions proposed to: (1) address climate change in their respective General Plans, consistent with State guidelines; (2) form a committee to identify countywide goals and strategies for addressing climate change, including an updated GHG inventory, countywide GHG goals and timelines, and common GHG reduction standards for each jurisdiction to adopt independently; and (3) identify potential threats and funding to improve community resiliency. Following the Resolutions, all six jurisdictions came together to form the Climate Action Committee (CAC) consisting of two elected appointees from each of the jurisdictions for a total of 12 members. At the December 2020 meeting, the CAC signed a Joint Powers Agreement. This is consistent with the June 2019 Resolution, which anticipated that the CAC would be collaborative, but that action would be taken separately by each local government.

The Board approved a Request for Proposals (RFP) to begin the RCAAP process on September 12, 2023. On December 19, 2023, the Board awarded a contract to Ascent Environmental to prepare the RCAAP, which is currently underway and anticipated to be completed in spring/summer of 2025.

Staff strongly believes that the BDR and General Plan update will need a clear framework to determine what land use actions will be necessary to meet the County's GHG reduction goals and related planning efforts, as well as the implementation of goals and policies related to public health, hazard mitigation planning, among other items.

Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP):

The primary function of the ALUCP is to provide guidance to the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) in reviewing

the land use plans and zoning regulations of local jurisdictions to ensure that future development is compatible with airport activities. The ALUC is an independent agency, and their decisions are final. However, the ALUC has no authority over existing land uses and has no authority over the operation of any airport.

State law requires each ALUC to prepare an Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) with a twenty-year planning horizon. Pursuant to the CalTrans Airport Land Use Planning Handbook, the ALUCP should be updated every 5-10 years to ensure consistency with General Plans, Specific Plans, etc. The current ALUCP was adopted in 1991 and was last amended in 1999. It is expected that the ALUCP update will be completed by fall of 2024.

Request for Proposals and Contents of the BDR

The PBES Director intends to issue an RFP to select a qualified consultant to develop a comprehensive update to the BDR to be used to inform the County’s General Plan update and preparation of an associated Program EIR.

Based on changes to CEQA and the State General Plan guidelines, as well as the County’s structure and operations, the RFP includes the following recommendations for the outline of topics/chapters for the updated BDR. Those topics in bold are either new chapters or existing chapters recommended to be reconfigured or merged to combine similar or overlapping areas of discipline.

- Geologic Resources
- Mineral Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- **Disadvantaged Communities**
- **GHGs/Climate Pollutants and Climate Adaptation**
- Noise
- Public Health and Safety
- Population and Housing
- Land Use
- **Tribal Resources**
- **Hazards and Safety**
- Agricultural Resources
- Transportation and Circulation
- Visual and Aesthetic Resources
- **Public Facilities and Services**
- **Utilities and Public Infrastructure**
- **Economic Development and Tourism**
- Cultural and Historical Resources
- Surface Water Hydrology
- Groundwater Hydrology
- Water Quality
- **Recreation**

Respondents to the RFP will be asked to include suggestions on substance as well as format, specifically from a graphic and GIS perspective to transition the BDR to an online, interactive GIS platform to increase transparency and accessibility of the BDR's contents and findings. The Board may also wish to provide policy direction in advance of the completion of the BDR update. The Board will ultimately approve the scope of work and related Professional Services Agreement as part of the consultant selection process, the tentative general timeline for which is as follows.

- Mid-August 2024 Request for Proposal released.
- End of September 2024 Proposals due.
- November 2024 County review and interviews at discretion of County.
- December 2024 Intent to Award Notifications issued.
- January 2025 Contract approval and contract start date.

Next Steps: The BDR update is the first significant step in updating the General Plan. Staff will return to the Board in 2025 for a discussion of overall policy direction and vision for the comprehensive General Plan update as well as public outreach and community engagement strategies. This discussion will also include a request for direction on the formation and appointment of a General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) that would facilitate public input to the process as well as provide perspectives and feedback to the consultant and staff.

Requested Action:

1. Staff Recommend the Board authorize the PBES Director to issue an RFP to update the BDR.

Procedural Requirements:

1. Staff Report.
2. Public Comment.
3. Motion, second, discussion and vote on the item.

FISCAL & STRATEGIC PLAN IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact?	Yes
Is it currently budgeted?	Yes
Where is it budgeted?	General Fund 1000, Division 17000 - Services and Supplies
Is it Mandatory or Discretionary?	Discretionary
Discretionary Justification:	An update to the Baseline Data Report is recommended to reflect significant changes since 2005, including wildfire, housing, and the economy; and to incorporate new issues regarding climate change, environmental justice, and groundwater sustainability to inform the General Plan Update.
Is the general fund affected?	Yes
Future fiscal impact:	Expenditures for the Baseline Data Report and General Plan update would begin in the 2024-2025 Fiscal Year and would likely continue for 4-5 years thereafter.
Consequences if not approved:	The update of the BDR and General Plan update would be delayed but would likely need to begin no later than 2026.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: The proposed action is not a project as defined by Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 15378 (State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines) and therefore CEQA is not applicable. As a project under CEQA, environmental review of the General Plan, ALUCP, and CAP will be conducted prior to adoption. In addition, the proposed action to seek direction is statutorily exempt under 14 California CCR Section 15262 as feasibility or planning studies for possible future actions which the Board of Supervisors has not approved, adopted, or funded.