



County of Monterey Planning Commission

Item No.1

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

Agenda Item No.1

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REFERRAL 22.02(A) - 1982 GENERAL PLAN ANALYSIS AND BIG SUR COAST LAND USE PLAN

- a. Consider receiving a report from staff regarding a consistency analysis of the Big Sur Coast Land Use Plan (BSLUP) and what updates may be needed to ensure the BSLUP contains all the necessary elements of a general plan; and
- b. Provide direction to staff.

Project Location: Big Sur Coast Land Use Plan

Proposed CEQA action: Statutory exemption pursuant to Section 15262 of the CEQA Guidelines as an early discussion of possible future actions that do not involve commitment to a project.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Planning Commission:

- a. Receive a consistency analysis report from staff concerning the Big Sur Coast Land Use Plan (BSLUP) and what updates may be needed to ensure the BSLUP contains all the necessary elements of a general plan; and
- b. Provide direction to staff.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

Referral No. 2022.02(a) is a request from the Planning Commission for staff to provide a report on a proposed process for updating the 1982 General Plan and how to ensure that the Big Sur Coast Land Use Plan (BSLUP) no longer needs to rely on the 1982 General Plan. This referral was in response to a request for information regarding the 1982 General Plan, which serves as the current General Plan in the Coastal Zone, and how staff plan to update it. All four of the County's coastal Land Use Plans (Big Sur Coast, Carmel, Del Monte Forest, and North County) rely on the 1982 General Plan in instances where the land use plan is missing required general plan elements. The County's coastal Land Use Plan's shall be updated to be consistent with the current mandatory requirements for General Plans (GP) pursuant to California law.

As part of the BSLUP update, the Planning Commission requested that staff evaluate which general plan mandatory requirements may be out of date. This referral will help staff, and the Planning Commission better understand the effort required to update the BSLUP to ensure its update includes all current mandatory requirements for general plans pursuant to California law. While this referral is focused on the BSLUP, it is likely that each of the other County Land Use Plans (Carmel, Del Monte Forest, and North County) are missing similar mandatory requirements and that updating each would require a similar amount of effort.

A Local Coastal Program (LCP) is the planning guide used by local governments for development within the Coastal Zone. An LCP contains goals and policies for development and protection of coastal resources throughout coastal cities and counties in California. An LCP can act as a General Plan for a local jurisdiction's Coastal Zone. LCPs identify appropriate locations for various land uses based on their goal of environmental protection and sustainable development. Each LCP contains two components: a Land Use Plan (LUP) and an Implementation Plan (IP) (Public Resource Code section 30108.6). Generally, the LUP contains the Coastal Element of the General Plan and provides the overall goals and policies that protect a county's coastal resources. The IP is intended to implement the goals and policies in a county's Land Use Plan and includes sections of a county's Zoning Ordinance, and Specific Plans within the Coastal Zone.

General plans serve as a guiding document for future development and land use planning. Government Code section 65301(b) states that a general plan may be adopted as a single document or as a group of documents relating to subjects or geographic segments of the planning area. California law requires general plans to address mandated elements listed in Government Code section 65302. General plans are required to include specific elements, and the required elements do not have to be organized in a specific order. The degree of specificity and level of detail of the discussion of each element shall reflect local conditions and circumstances.

The County of Monterey Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) has been working with the Big Sur community and Planning Commission Ad Hoc Committee to update the BSLUP. The updated BSLUP will return to the Planning Commission for review and will be an opportunity for the public to provide feedback to the County. The required elements will be included in the BSLUP update to address Government Code 65302.

Required Elements for General Plan

The mandatory elements for all jurisdictions are land use, circulation, noise, conservation, open space, environmental justice, housing, and safety. Cities and counties that have identified disadvantaged communities must also address environmental justice in their general plans, including air quality. The purpose of the following sections is to outline the content of each element as required by statute and identify if the BSLUP satisfies the requirement.

Land Use

The land use element identifies general distribution, location, and extent of housing, business, industry, open space, education, public facilities, waste, timberland production, potential for flooding, greenways, military land use compatibility, and correlation with circulation element. The BSLUP currently satisfies the requirements outlined in Government Code section 65302(a) and 65302(b)(1).

Circulation

The circulation element identifies existing and proposed major throughfares, including future acquisitions and dedications based on proposed land use patterns (Government Code section 65302(b)). Additionally, the circulation element shall include public transportation, bicycle, pedestrian, automobile, and commercial goods transportation which the existing BSLUP satisfies.

To ensure the BSLUP satisfies all existing circulation element requirements, the BSLUP update will need to include a discussion transportation needs of children, persons with disabilities, and seniors and will need to discuss potential sources of funding for any infrastructure updates identified in the BSLUP.

Noise

The BSLUP currently does not have a noise element and has minimal discussion of noise. The noise element for a general plan shall identify and appraise noise problems within the community (Government Code section 65302(f)). The noise element should identify and map noise contours which shall be used as a guide for establishing a pattern of land uses. The noise element shall include implementation measures and possible solutions to existing and foreseeable noise problems.

Conservation

The existing BSLUP currently satisfies some requirements of Government Code sections 65302(d)(1) and 65352.5.

The conservation element describes the jurisdiction's natural resources and land. The conservation element shall establish policies that reconcile conflicting demands on resources such as forests, soils, rivers, and other water, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, and minerals. Conservation of environmental and agricultural resources is one of the State's three planning priorities and helps to achieve the State's climate goals. The existing BSLUP currently satisfies these requirements.

To fully satisfy the conservation element statutory requirements, the BSLUP update should include updates to the floodplain maps if newer, more accurate maps are available.

Open Space

The open space element encompasses the comprehensive and long-range preservation of open space lands that are crucial to the conservation of the state's natural resources (Government Code sections 65302(e) and 65560). Specifically, this requirement is addressed for recreational development plans in the BSLUP.

The existing BSLUP will require minor updates to the existing discussion of open space, which is currently interspersed throughout the existing BSLUP. These minor updates will include a discussion of actions that can be taken to conserve open space and existing locations that are required for the preservation of plant and animal life.

Environmental Justice (REF220017), Housing (REF220020), and Safety Elements (REF220018)

The County is currently working on its 6th Cycle Housing Element, Environmental Justice Element, and Safety Element, which will be Countywide, including the Coastal Zone. These updates are running as a separate process from the BSLUP update. Therefore, these three elements are not being analyzed in the BSLUP update process.

Next Steps

Staff plans to return with the BSLUP to the Planning Commission in the Spring/Summer of 2025. Staff will present the proposed BSLUP updates that satisfy the GP statutory requirements to the Planning

Commission, as well as a summary of potential amendments. The final proposed amendments to the BSLUP require a recommendation by the Planning Commission, approval by the Board of Supervisors, and then certification by the California Coastal Commission.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This staff report is statutorily exempt pursuant to Section 15262 of the CEQA Guidelines as an early discussion of possible future actions that do not involve commitment to a project.

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Cc: Front Counter Copy, Planning Commission, Supervisor Daniels, Big Sur Coast Land Use Plan Update (REF210024) Interested Parties List, Big Sur Byways Organization - Members Distribution List, Monterey County District 5, California Coastal Commission, Land Watch, Big Sur Byways Organization Interested Parties Distribution List, Big Sur Chamber of Commerce, Big Sur and South Coast LUACs.