



# City of Santa Barbara California

## PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

**REPORT DATE:** November 14, 2013  
**AGENDA DATE:** November 21, 2013  
**PROJECT ADDRESS:** County of Santa Barbara Mission Canyon Area  
City of Santa Barbara Specific Plan No. 3  
City of Santa Barbara Sphere of Influence Area

**TO:** Planning Commission

**FROM:** Planning Division, (805) 564-5470, extension 4565  
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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The proposed Mission Canyon Community Plan (MCCP) [Exhibit A] is the result of an approximate seven year effort by the County of Santa Barbara in collaboration with the community throughout the process. The area known as Mission Canyon is located in the County of Santa Barbara and within the City's Sphere of Influence.

On August 13, 1984, a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) [Exhibit B - County Staff Report {Attachment M}] between the County and City of Santa Barbara was adopted with a provision that sewer service for some areas of the Canyon would be provided by the City contingent upon the adoption of a County Specific Plan approved by the City. The purpose of the Specific Plan was to address growth inducement and planning issues, which would allow the City to know how many parcels would receive sewer service. On October 23, 1984, the Mission Canyon Specific Plan [Exhibit C] for the unincorporated Mission Canyon area was approved by the City Council and Specific Plan 3 (SP-3) was adopted for the unincorporated Mission Canyon area. The JPA states that any amendments to the Specific Plan must be approved by both the City Council and County Board of Supervisors. The primary reason for the City to review amendments to the Specific Plan is with regard to providing City sewer services to a large portion of the unincorporated area. The City also provides water service to the entire plan area. On July 10, 2008, the City Planning Commission reviewed an early version of the MCCP at a hearing to initiate the plan and also commented [Exhibit D] on the draft Environmental Impact Report on April 11, 2011 during the public review period.

Please refer to the County of Santa Barbara Staff Report for the County Planning Commission hearing on the MCCP, Exhibit A, for detailed background information about the MCCP Plan Area, reasons for the MCCP, and significant issues addressed by the MCCP. The Staff Report also describes the Residential Design Guidelines and Land Use and Development Code Amendments (note – The City Planning Commission will act only on the MCCP).

## **II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Mission Canyon Community Plan is intended to direct all aspects of preservation and development, including both policy and regulatory elements used in evaluating future development projects in Mission Canyon. The Community Plan will replace the 1984 Mission Canyon Area Specific Plan, and contains goals, policies, development standards and actions intended to regulate and guide future development and improvements.

The MCCC, once approved by the City and County, will become a part of the County's General Plan. The City's primary interest in the MCCC is to ensure accurate existing land use inventory and projected build-out to project water delivery and safe collection of wastewater for the plan area.

## **III. RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission hold a joint hearing with the County Planning Commission, focusing on the components of the MCCC that have the most direct impact on the City, and take the following actions:

1. Recommend that City Council rescind Resolution No. 84-159 (adopting Specific Plan No. 3 for the Unincorporated Mission Canyon Area), dated October 23, 1984;
2. Recommend that City Council consider the Mission Canyon Community Plan Final EIR, and make the necessary findings pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15091; and
3. Recommend that City Council adopt a resolution approving the Mission Canyon Community Plan.

## **IV. BACKGROUND**

### ***Joint Powers Agreement***

The Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) that required development of the Specific Plan in 1984 is not proposed to be revised. Review of the proposed MCCC by the City Planning Commission and City Council is consistent with the JPA. Additionally, with no proposed increase in density, the number of parcels being served by City sewer services remains consistent with the JPA.

### ***City Staff Review of the Mission Canyon Community Plan***

Since the Mission Canyon Community Plan process began, City staff has been involved in reviewing and providing comments on the draft documents. Staff presented the draft MCCC to the Planning Commission at an initiation hearing on July 10, 2008 (minutes attached as Exhibit E) and at the Draft EIR comment hearing on April 11, 2011.

### ***Environmental Review***

The County is the Lead Agency for environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because the county would have primary permitting authority over the project area. The City is a Responsible Agency under CEQA and would rely on the environmental documentation prepared, and certified, by the County for any discretionary actions of the City. Pursuant to Section 21165 of CEQA, the Lead Agency is responsible to determine if the project may have a significant impact on the environment. Under Section

21104 of CEQA, the City, in its role as Responsible Agency consulted with the County to identify the range of actions, significant effects, alternatives and mitigation measures and commented on the environmental documentation prepared by the County.

An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared for the M CCP in March of 2011 and subsequently was re-circulated in February 2013 for further traffic and emergency evacuation analysis. The EIR found significant, unavoidable impacts in two sub-areas of Biology (i.e. special status plant communities and habitat, and cumulative impacts), Cultural Resources, Wildland Fire/Emergency egress and ingress, and Traffic and Circulation (Mission Canyon Road segments).

Significant, but mitigable, impacts were identified in the areas of Visual Resources, Air Quality, Biology, Cultural Resources (cumulative), Fire Protection, Geology, Public Facilities, Transportation and Circulation (intersection of Mission Canyon Road and Mountain Drive), and Water Quality & Drainage.

## V. **DISCUSSION**

Overall, City staff is supportive of the M CCP, as it does not propose any changes to zoning that would increase density in the plan area. Furthermore, the M CCP provides updated policies and actions to address a wide range of issues including, but not limited to, septic systems, reconstruction of homes lost in the Jesusita Fire, improved circulation, and natural resource protection. The current Specific Plan has few development policies and is not reflective of many current Federal, State, or local regulations.

Generally, County staff has responded to City staff's comments throughout the process [**See Exhibit F**]. City Staff reviewing the draft and final documents include representatives from Public Works (Water, Wastewater, Engineering, and Transportation Planning), Fire, Parks and Recreation, and Community Development. The M CCP policies and actions are an improvement over the 1984 Specific Plan by applying current Federal, State, and local regulations and addressing a number of issues related to current and future development, which include, but are not limited to:

- Water & Sewer services – While there is no proposal to increase density in the plan area, goals and policies are included that encourage incorporating green design in all development to minimize water usage. Policies and standards direct new development to comply with City water standards. Review of landscape plans by City staff can occur when a homeowner requests water service from the City. Additional requirements for on-site sewer service require a redundant system in the event that one system fails.
- Residential Second Units - Limitation on second units in the entire M CCP area is proposed. In the previous plan, second units were permitted in the plan area south of Foothill Road. While the M CCP does not propose a prohibition of second units in a High Fire Area like the City currently imposes, the County's strict criteria for second units is such that only a small number (approximately 15 or less) could be constructed in the plan area.
- Aesthetics - Developing a residential design guideline document for the plan area to aid the County design board is a good tool to keep the semi-rural character of the area (note – the City of Santa Barbara Single Family Design Board received a presentation by County staff on the guidelines early in the plan development process).

- Historic Resources – Consistent with the City’s goals of historic preservation, a number of goals and policies are included in the M CCP for resource protection. The plan includes a designated Mission Canyon Scenic Corridor (Scenic Corridor – Mission Canyon [SC-MC]) overlay zone on lots adjacent to Mission Canyon Road from Rocky Nook Park to the Foothill Road/Mission Canyon Road intersection. This overlay ties in well with the important City historic resources, such as the Museum of Natural History, the Mission and other properties in the area.
- Post-Jesusita Fire development – The M CCP includes a section to address post-disaster reconstruction. As of 2012, approximately 50% of the homes lost in the Jesusita Fire are re-built. The policies in this section address improving the physical environment around the affected areas (e.g. access, brush clearance), encourage more appropriate development for the area, and encourage the same small scale development that was there prior to the fire.
- Fire Hazards – This hazard is addressed in a number of policy areas. Staff appreciates the policies that address traffic management for Conditional Use Permits for special events, improving traffic flow on narrow roads by eliminating obstructions in the right-of-way, limiting on-street parking during red flag events on some streets, and increasing on-site parking for new residential development to name a few.
- Circulation - Goals and policies are provided that facilitates improving streets for cycling and walking safely in the plan area.
- Resource Protection - The M CCP includes an action to amend the County zoning ordinance to include an Environmentally Sensitive Habitat overlay zone for the Mission Canyon area. Proposed changes to the County zoning ordinance reflect this action. While City Staff did encourage requiring a greater development setback from Mission Creek, Staff does recognize that the ESH overlay will require a justification for allowing development in ESH areas and studies to support that justification.

**VI. NEXT STEPS**

After the Planning Commission decides on a recommendation to City Council on the Mission Canyon Community Plan, City Council will take the following actions:

1. As a responsible agency accept the Final Environmental Impact Report and make the necessary findings.
2. Adopt a Resolution to approve plan the Mission Canyon Community Plan and the Resolution will include:
  - a. CEQA findings for significant impacts identified in the Environmental Impact Report.
  - b. Identified areas of mutual interest for continued collaboration in areas such as, but not limited to, water service, sewer service, street improvements at the City and County boundaries, and emergency services.
  - c. Annual reporting for the Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program (MMRP), summary of major developments, and policies and procedures implementation.
  - d. Provision that any amendment of the MCCP is subject to joint review and approval consistent with the JPA (the MCCP should mean the same as “specific plan” in the JPA Section 2 – Joint Responsibilities).

Exhibits\*:

- A. [Draft Mission Canyon Community Plan dated November 2013](#)
- B. [County Staff Report dated November 7, 2013 w/attachments I, M, & N](#)
- C. [Mission Canyon Specific Plan dated October 23, 1984](#)
- D. [Staff and Planning Commission EIR comment letter dated April 11, 2011](#)
- E. Planning Commission MCCP initiation hearing minutes - July 10, 2008
- F. County Response to City Comments dated November 13, 2013

**\*Note: Exhibits A – D are on the Santa Barbara County website and be found by opening the links or go to the website at:**

[http://longrange.sbcountyplanning.org/planareas/mission\\_canyon/missioncanyon.php](http://longrange.sbcountyplanning.org/planareas/mission_canyon/missioncanyon.php)