

**General Plan 2020  
Interest Group Committee Meeting Minutes  
April 2, 2002**

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**Interest Group Committee:**

Bonnie Gendron	Back Country Coalition
Bruce Tabb	Environmental Development
Carolyn Chase	Coalition for Transportation Choices
Dan Silver	Endangered Habitats League
Eric Bowlby	Sierra Club
Eric Larson	Farm Bureau
Greg Lambron	Helix Land Company
Jim Whalen	Alliance for Habitat Conservation
Karen Berger	Citizen Coordinate for Century 3
Karen Messer	Buena Vista Audubon Society
Kevin Doyle	National Wildlife Federation
Liz Higgins	SD Association of Realtors
Lee Vance	Building Industry Association
Phil Pryde	San Diego Audubon
Terry Barker	American Society of Landscape Architects
Thure Stedt	Save Our Land Values
Tom Acuna	American Planning Association

**Public at Large:**

Brent McDonald	Caltrans
Charlene Ayers	
Dave Abrams	Fairbanks Ranch Assn.
Dave Shibley	
David Pallinger	Ramona
David Younkman	NWF
Devore Smith	Sierra Club
Dutch Van Dierendonck	Ramona CPG
Florence Sloane	SDCWF
Jeanne Pagett	
Mary Allison	USDRIC
Mike Thometz	MERIT
Parke Troutman	UCSD
Patti Krebs	Guejito
Paul B. Etzel	SDSU/Astronomy
Ruth Potter	
Troy Murphree	Sweetwater Authority

**County Staff:**

Karen Scarborough (DPLU, group facilitator)  
Gary Pryor (DPLU)  
Ivan Holler (DPLU)  
LeAnn Carmichael (DPLU)  
Timothy Popejoy (DPLU)  
Michelle Yip (DPLU)  
Tom Harron (County Counsel)

### Agenda Item I: Logistics –

- a&b) Minutes for March 5, 2002 and March 19, 2002
- No changes made. Pryde moved to approve. Bowlby seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- c) “Tools” Sub-committee Update
- Larson stated the group is still pending a meeting with Rick Pruetz, in order to receive comments, fatal flaws, or missing items on the papers drawn up by Whalen, Silver, and Larson. Scarborough clarified that the sub-committee will meet with Pruetz to flush out ideas and bring them back to the committee, to see where the committee agrees or disagrees with the concepts.

### Agenda Item III: Process –

- Scarborough reiterated that Adams wanted to finish the Goals & Policies before reviewing the map and anticipated finishing the revisions at this meeting in order to view the map at the next meeting.
- Holler stated that staff is anticipating bringing in the draft distribution map on the 16<sup>th</sup>, modeled for population, and would like to give this group the opportunity to view the map with their respective interests as in the past. A status report will be presented to the Board of Supervisors on the 24<sup>th</sup> however, certainty within the schedule will not be known until the next two days. The status report will also be an opportunity to present the distribution map to the Board to say that we are going out to the communities again. There will be no action taken. Higgins asked what the committee will be doing during the time staff is out in the communities and whether the committee will be making changes prior to public review. Holler responded that this committee has the same comment opportunity as everyone else has and that there should be ample opportunity for review. Scarborough added that all comments would be reviewed for the next rendition.

### Agenda Item II: Draft Revisions to the Goals & Policies –

- a) Follow-Up on Items Referred to Staff
- Popejoy explained that the draft Circulation policies that were handed out at this meeting was a collaborative effort prepared by staff and Terry Barker. Barker brought eight or nine different circulation policies from a variety of sources, mainly the Otay Ranch General Development Plan. It was given to the Department of Public Works, after being reviewed by planners, who organized it into the subcategories of general, public transit, and roads. Furthermore, policy I is an evolution of policy A as discussed at the last meeting and the goal was modified slightly to make it more precise in terms of movement of people and goods.
  - Bowlby questioned eliminating trails from Circulation because it can contribute to circulation if it is made well. Carmichael responded that trails are more recreational and that bike paths and right-of-ways are still under Circulation. Bowlby suggested adding a new heading. Popejoy responded that the goal is to try to avoid redundancy and the fact that it is only within Public Facilities does not give it any less weight.
  - **Motion:** Vance mentioned that LOS is addressed under two policies and felt it should not be in policy A but can continue to be in policy G. He suggested to amend policy A to *For new development, ensure timely provision of fair share contributions for regional and local circulation systems in response to planned growth*. Whalen moved to approve staff’s proposal with the suggested amendment to policy A. Stedt seconded the motion.
  - Vance also suggested to replace *reduce single-occupant automobile trips to encourage transit-oriented development* in policy B.
  - **Motion:** Chase moved to table the discussion because she wanted to take the information back to her board and claimed she did not receive the information prior to the meeting. Whalen stated the reason policy A was being amended was because it is not possible for new development to follow a law that requires a nexus and to maintain a certain level of services. Messer stated that she did not mind tabling the discussion because she felt the new information was an improvement from before. Barker asked if it would be more productive to take the policies one by one and take comments. Chase responded that the group can vote against the motion but advised against it.

- **Vote:** To table discussion on the draft Circulation policies: 13 – 1 – 2
- Whalen commented that there is a purpose for each of the members being present at the meeting and that each need to find some way to have a representational view rather than going to their board. Bowlby responded that when there is a whole paradigm shift, it should not be acted upon.
- Barker suggested that Chase work with staff on the matter.
- Pryde requested that the new rendition of the draft Circulation policies that staff sends out include Vance's recommendations on policies A and B.

b) Discussion & Action

- **Motion:** Messer moved to amend Conservation Goal I with Doyle's language of adding *Integrate the protection of* at the beginning and adding *habitat and after wildlife*. Pryde seconded the motion.
- Stedt suggested replacing *floodplains* with *floodways* due to FEMA standards and other standards that allow us to work within floodplains but not floodways. Higgins added that floodways are the specific areas where the water does go so [the development industry] is very much for eliminating floodplains. Silver asked why things such as floodplains should not be protected, which are important for a number of environmental reasons, since it does not hurt the development industry in the slightest way. It does not change the number of units allowed to build but rather indicates where it should be distributed to produce the best environmental results.
- **Motion:** Whalen moved to table final action so that he could present Doyle's recommendations to his board. Stedt seconded the motion. Whalen commented that he has been very watchful of elements of MSCP that conflict with the General Plan and MSCP does not restrict floodplain development per se.
- Pryde stated there is a huge difference between floodways and floodplains. Floodway, by definition, is statutorily described as an area that carries away floods; it does not need to be natural and has almost no meaning in this context in the Conservation goal. Floodplains make far more sense from a common sense standpoint because if you develop in the floodplain fringe, inevitably you are increasing flood flows downstream.
- Harron mentioned with regards to the way things are stated, OPR recommends in the Guidelines that the goal be an end state. This is not a legal requirement but we should try to comply with the State Guidelines.
- Vance asked if the intent of the language was to further restrict what can currently be done within the floodplains. Pryor responded that it was the intent since not all floodplains should be filled in just to protect a floodway because floodplains do serve as groundwater recharge areas and some other things. Although the Steering Committee went with 100% protection, staff did not agree with this, however, there does need to be protection on the floodplains. Since the statement says it will be *integrated into the overall development*, we will need to come up with some standard that retains development rights, so you are either going to use that transfer of development to get out of there or allow a certain amount of encroachment into the floodplain so they can still take advantage of development on their property. There will be a set of code and ordinances that are going to deal with what level of protection is associated with this. Vance asked if the department's position was that this language be revisited to protect floodplains but not necessarily preclude development. Pryor agreed.
- **Vote:** Messer moved to call the question on the motion of tabling final action but to continue discussion: 9 – 7 – 1.
- Bowlby stated that there are many reasons to integrate the protection of floodplain areas into our Goals and Policies. One of the reasons is safety as floodplains flood. Also they provide as recharge areas and serve as a filter of pollutants from urban areas, so these are areas that improve our water quality. Wetlands are in the floodplain areas and the most sensitive habitat resources are along creeks and streams. These are the reasons that the County should "pull their guns" on steering development away. And as Silver had pointed out, we are going to have units in and around the country towns, in a more consolidated fashion, to fill the housing need, so we do not have to continue developing in the sensitive areas.
- Silver stated that staff's proposal appears to read as a watershed or a representational example of a floodplain. He suggested changing the language to *An environment in which...are protected*, including the word *habitat* and agreeing with staff to exclude *greenbelt* because it is vague.
- Tabb stated he had a problem with adding *habitat*. He believes that the corridor should be protected but *habitat* changes the meaning substantially. Doyle responded that they want these to be values to uphold, so some habitat is protected, not the whole thing and they are not suggesting stopping all development.

- Doyle requested to have staff review his revisions since they are substantial enough to have discussion. Whalen stated that the BIA's proposal should be equally analyzed and brought back by staff.
- Bowlby responded to Tabb's comments, stating that animals need more than corridors to get from one habitat to another, as they need areas for foraging and to live. Added that having *habitat* in the Conservation goal is not an absurd gesture and obviously does not mean that we will protect every area that can be considered wildlife habitat.
- Silver stated that in general, he would like to see development not go into the floodplains. He proposed inserting ...*sensitive lands, wildlife and natural resources* to address Tabb's concerns.
- Higgins stated that she was concerned with the impacts and that we need to talk about where housing goes. Scarborough clarified that this is a goal, which is a general idea, and not a code or ordinance. Carmichael added that the policies get more specific. Higgins responded that we need to put in a caveat, that even though it is a goal, it is very specific and we need to look at it.
- Stedt agreed with Doyle and was comfortable leaving the goal with Doyle's changes and suggested *where appropriate*.
- Bowlby stated that the basic components for wildlife resources are habitat and thinks we need to say that since it is the Conservation goal.
- Pryde suggested using *significant* or *important habitat*.
- Messer argued against singling out this goal to use *where appropriate* since it can apply to other goals. Stated that there are different perspectives here – her perspective is that if the language is not there, the County cannot address these issues, whereas, the other perspective is that if it is too strict, it means you cannot build. Added that it is understood that we are not protecting the last of the habitat. The issue here, regarding wildlife habitat, is that the County has to have some way to address habitat that is important on a global scale that is not necessarily sensitive all by itself.
- Scarborough suggested using *integration* in lieu of *appropriate*, since integration takes that balance and actually requires it to be integrated. Messer stated she liked the language because it specifically says that we are not trying to stop development, but rather have these values. Scarborough added that it takes specificity into account.
- Chase stated that the environmental interests have shown a commitment to do housing and Smart Growth and asked the development interests where their support was for a Conservation goal, which is not even enforceable.
- Larson stated that staff's recommendation looks better as it states *An environment that includes*, so it does not mean all. He added that it needs to be vague, as Carmichael mentioned, and asked how we are supposed to get through the policies if the group cannot get through the goal. Also mentioned that agriculture is a manufactured land use and is addressed under Land Use, so it should be omitted if we want to avoid redundancy. Pryor responded that State Guidelines recommend including agriculture in Conservation since we are looking at soils of state significance that needs to be conserved, not the business of agriculture.
- Stedt stated that he wants to see a Conservation goal and that this goal is substantially what he would like to see, but that understanding of flexibility needs to be brought into the goal. Chase asked if he was willing to revoke his request to replace floodplains with floodways. He agreed if we could put in a more graphic understanding of flexibility and stated he liked *integrate*.
- Silver stated that Chase brought up a good point, that the Housing element does not say supply an adequate supply of housing, as long as it is integrated with the overall conservation of the County. Our [environmental interests] willingness to use this idea of using *integrated into the overall development of the County* is very forthcoming and addresses all the concerns of knocking the absolutes. Suggested *An environment in which...wetlands, environmentally sensitive lands and wildlife habitat resources, air quality....* Bowlby asked how habitat resources differ from habitat. Silver responded that it means that you are looking at it more as a listed way as opposed to the notion of every inch of built backyard.
- Whalen suggested *An environment that integrates the protection of...air quality, water quality, and sustainable wildlife resources*. Messer questioned *sustainable*. Pryor responded that when we begin to draft codes and ordinances, it may or may not be what you envision today but the ordinance is what is going to define the term. So when you are talking about sustainable and if you can agree on that term, that is fine, however there is a mechanism you are going to have to agree upon.
- Scarborough suggested *An environment that integrates the protection of...with valued wildlife habitat resources*, so you are defining value, and rather than using sustainable, you are using value. Messer reiterated that by using *integrate into the overall development of the County* is bending over backwards to assure everybody that this Conservation goal is not the overriding goal but has to be integrated.

- Doyle stated that he did not like the qualifiers in the goal – sustainable, important, most valued, or appropriate. Agreed that the *integrate into the overall development of the County* provides as the qualifier.
- Larson suggested going through the policies to have the goal create itself. Thinks there are fundamental philosophical differences here that are trying to be wordsmithed around, in which, the group will probably fail and from a procedural standpoint, feels that the group will be discussing this for a long time.
- Whalen suggested *An environment that integrates the protection of...water quality, and wildlife systems.*
- **Motion:** Messer requested to have Silver re-read his original suggestion: *An environment in which...environmentally sensitive lands and wildlife habitat resources, air quality, water quality, and wildlife corridors are protected and integrated into the overall development of the County.* Messer was concerned that it leaves out natural resources in terms of plant resources. Given that it is just a goal, she thinks Dan's language is something the group can agree upon. Motion to table the discussion was withdrawn. Messer withdrew her original motion and moved to approve this language. Tabb seconded the motion.
- Lambron stated that when you are already giving up 60% of land to MSCP, the goal needs to be generic enough for it to apply to those within and outside of MSCP and that is why *integrate* needs to be there.
- Bowlby felt Doyle's language was a stronger revision.
- Doyle requested to hear from the public. Scarborough allowed for public comments to be made on the issue.
- **Public Comment:** Susan O'Neill, an environmental lawyer, thought the original proposal was better because the verb was at the beginning, which makes the sentence clearer and felt it would be better to emphasize that habitats are being protected rather than just corridors. D. Smith (Sierra Club) stated that the whole system is important, not just a grove, and suggested using *ecosystems*. Brent McDonald stated that greenbelts would be a good opportunity for biking, hiking, and serve as alternative transportation. Dutch Van Dierendonck liked Doyle's suggestion but can live with Silver's amendment, and was concerned with the separation of habitat and corridors. An unidentified member of the public stated he would vote for Doyle's amendment because it is clearer and suggested *significant wildlife habitat and corridors*. Paul Etzel urged everyone to keep the goal general and overarching because the policies are where the action is to provide guidance.
- **Amendment:** Whalen suggested using *ecosystems* and felt that the language of habitat and corridors should be in the policies. He proposed *Integrate the protection of watersheds, groundwater resources, dark skies, cultural and historical resources, agriculture, natural floodplains, wetlands, environmentally sensitive lands and natural resources, air quality, water quality, and wildlife ecosystems into the overall development of the County.* Silver was concerned that by throwing in *ecosystem*, it is meant to create a tiering system. Messer accepted the amendment with the understanding that Whalen was willing to address wildlife corridors in the policies. Tabb accepted the amendment.
- Silver did not like the amendment and felt that it says that if it is not part of the ecosystem, it is not long term viable, then it can be written off. Feels that throwing in *ecosystem* is equal to *significant*, which is not appropriate for the goal. Scarborough clarified that Whalen was probably trying to incorporate the Sierra Club's recommendation made during public comment.
- Barker reiterated that the reason it was changed originally was because the state directives are an end statement. Harron responded that the Guidelines are not a legal requirement and will not change it if the group feels strongly about it.
- **Vote:** *Integrate the protection of watersheds, groundwater resources, dark skies, cultural and historical resources, agriculture, natural floodplains, wetlands, environmentally sensitive lands and natural resources, air quality, water quality, and wildlife ecosystems into the overall development of the County: 16 – 0 – 1 (Pryde).*
- Scarborough asked Pryde if he wanted to explain why he abstained. Pryde stated that the motion was absurd and that Silver was correct. By saying *preserve an ecosystem*, you are basically saying to protect everything.

### **Agenda Item III: Process (Status & Next Steps) –**

- Scarborough reiterated that the map would be ready for review at the next meeting; however, Adams requested to finish the Goals & Policies prior to reviewing the map. We can have two viewings prior to the

16<sup>th</sup> or have the map available on the 16<sup>th</sup>, have a precursory look, continue the discussion on Goals & Policies, then have the two viewings post the 16<sup>th</sup>.

- Bowlby asked at what stage can members have a copy to review with their committees. Holler replied when we have a product after input from the Interest Group, Steering Committee, and public review. Scarborough clarified that there will be a succession of time of 45 days for the group to discuss, you can bring in people to have meetings at DPLU to look at the map, and then the Interest Group will reconvene to agree on official input to send to staff. She added that Bowlby is asking for us to distribute a map that none of us have seen or know you agree with, which draws more concern in her opinion, than would seeing if we can gather all input from Interest Group, Steering Committee, and community groups to get a map consistent with all of those opinions.
- Tabb suggested viewing the map prior to the 16<sup>th</sup> in order to have constructive comments prior to the meeting and postpone the Goals & Policies. Scarborough agreed that it would be appropriate to view the map prior to the 16<sup>th</sup>, however, had trepidation over viewing the map prior to finishing Goals & Policies because it will be a long conversation. Tabb responded that it appears the Goals & Policies will be another three or four sessions. Barker asked if a subcommittee on Goals & Policies would be productive. The group disagreed.
- Larson felt that the Goals & Policies should be done before bringing in the map because once the map is out, priority will be focused on the map. He added that it would be fine to view the map but do not bring it into the meeting. Pryor agreed stating that the reason we are doing the Goals & Policies is to try to set a verbal framework for the future of this County and if we cannot agree on the Goals & Policies, then we cannot agree on a map.
- Doyle suggested a double meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> in order for the group to get done. The group disagreed. Tabb preferred two meetings in the same week. Doyle stated he liked Larson's idea of no goals, no map. Scarborough commented that that is what was requested at the beginning of this meeting. It does not take four hours but rather a personal commitment inside each of us to put aside the innuendos, put aside the personal fronts, and get at the work at hand. She asked the group to try to focus on what the issues are over the next two weeks in order to get it all done.
- Bowlby suggested having the map available for viewing but not be placed on the agenda. Scarborough asked Bowlby if he really thinks he would be able to concentrate on the Goals & Policies with the map at the meeting.

#### **Agenda Item IV: Public Comments –**

- Mike Thometz mentioned that people have been asking when 2020 will be done and that we are losing the public. Would like to see what is going to be done and what needs to be done listed. Added that MSCP does not apply to the most important part of the County, East County, and that we need to take care of that land.
- Dutch Van Dierendonck agreed with Holler and Pryor, stating that we should take care of the Goals & Policies before getting into the map.
- Dave Shibley stated that cards need to go out again telling people that the maps are going to be out. Added that 40% live outside of the County and do not know what is going on. Thinks the card should be in color this time.
- Troy Murphree commented that Scarborough was doing an excellent job with such a diverse and loquacious group.