



San Diego County DPLU News



January 2009

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IMPORTANT JANUARY DATES FOR ADVANCED PLANNING:

- Jan 10 Steering Committee Meeting
- Jan 16 Deadline to Submit Comments on the Draft General Plan
- Jan 28 Board Of Supervisors: Meteorological Testing Facilities
- Jan 30 Interest Group
- Jan 31 Steering Committee

For more information and additional upcoming meetings, please visit the Calendar on our Web Site at www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/gpupdate/index.html.

From the Director

Happy New Year! Here at the Department of Planning and Land Use we're planning to make 2009 a great year. This first month includes several important dates for us, including Jan. 16, the end of the 60-day public comment period on the Draft General Plan Update we released in November.

We made great progress on the GP Update last year, and addressing the public comments will keep us on track to continue that progress. We expect to reach the project's next big milestone later this year when we release its Draft Environmental Impact Report.

In other news, we'd like to announce that we're expanding this monthly newsletter, which has been known as "Advanced Planning News," to include other DPLU Divisions.

This month we're adding updates from our Building Division, in an effort to eventually release a comprehensive, monthly departmental update to our customers and the public.
- Eric Gibson, Director

Advanced Planning News

General Plan Update

Draft GP Update mapping designations can now be obtained at the click of a button!

The Department of Planning and Land Use has created an online tool that will let people see the various land use designations the plan proposes for their areas. Land use designations determine how many homes, what types of business and land uses the general plan will allow. Just type in a parcel number or address, and the tool will show the designations that each of the General Plan Updates four alternatives propose, as well as what is in the existing General Plan. The Web tool can be used to look up the proposed designations for any area or property in the unincorporated County. To access the website, click on the following link: [GP Update Interactive Mapping Application](#)

Note: The "Property Profile" tab at the top can be used to

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Advanced Planning

General Plans:

General Plans guide community development. In general, they set the philosophy and policies that determine what gets built where — how communities will accommodate growth while preserving character and protecting what the community values.

The County's General Plan Update would improve the current plan by balancing growth with the need to control traffic congestion, protect the environment, and ease the strain on essential services such as water supplies and fire protection.

That will be accomplished in part by shifting 20 percent of future growth to western unincorporated communities with established infrastructure such as roads.

The General Plan Update would reduce the growth that the current general plan would allow by 15 percent. But it would still allow 168,000 to 198,000 more people to live in the unincorporated communities that now house roughly 491,800 people.

search additional properties once you're in the Mapping Application. The "Help" feature can be used to answer questions.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact GP Update staff with additional questions.

Public Review of Draft General Plan Document!

The draft General Plan was made available on the [Draft General Plan](#) website for a 60-day public review November 14, 2008. The deadline to submit comments is 5 p.m. January 16, 2009. Printed copies of the plan can be purchased for \$23.70. Copies of the plan on CD are available for free. For more information about where to submit comments, please visit the website or contact us at gpupdate.DPLU@sdcounty.ca.gov. The project remains on track to meet the [Project Schedule](#) for completion in the Fall of 2010.

Advisory Group Meetings

The Steering Committee has meetings scheduled for Jan. 10 and Jan. 31. The Interest Group is tentatively scheduled to meet Jan. 30.

Community Plan Update

We are currently reviewing the Community Plans that our community planning and sponsor groups have submitted. We plan to contact those groups in early 2009 to continue our coordination on their plans. For questions contact your Community Planning/Sponsor Group Chair or County staff at gpupdate.DPLU@sdcounty.ca.gov

PODs (Policy and Ordinance Development)

Wind Turbine Testing and Residential Turbines

On September 24, 2008, the Board of Supervisors directed staff to return with options for the processing of Meteorological (MET) Testing Facilities and residential wind turbines.



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About the PODs:

We created our "PODs," Policy Ordinance Development teams, in early 2008 to address a crying need: Many of the ordinances our department and the public relies upon haven't been updated in years. As a result some of ordinances are often confusing, overly complicated or just plain out-of-date.

Our POD team, many times at the direction of the Board of Supervisors, other times when planners realize changes are needed, review our ordinances and offer ways to streamline, improve them or bring them up to date.

DPLU Director Eric Gibson said recently that of all of our department's programs, he believes the POD program could have the most positive, long-lasting effect on our land-use process over the next decade.

The Zoning Ordinance amendment for MET Facilities and the wind turbine options will be presented to the Board of Supervisors on January 28, 2009.

Farm Employee Housing

Advanced Planning staff is in the process of proposing changes to the Zoning Ordinance that would make existing Farm Employee Housing regulations consistent with State law. The Negative Declaration prepared for the Zoning Ordinance and draft Ordinance will be available for public review in January and can be accessed at the [DPLU Public Review Webpage](#).

Fall Zoning Ordinance Update

On December 10, 2008, the Board of Supervisors approved amendments to the County Zoning Ordinance to clarify our regulations and make the ordinance easier to read and understand. The Ordinance amendments also included allowances for Certified Farmers' Markets. The Fall Zoning Ordinance Update can be viewed at the [DPLU Public Review webpage](#). Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance become effective January 9, 2009.

Landscape Ordinance Update

Looking to find ways to improve local water conservation, the Board of Supervisors directed DPLU on Oct. 15, 2008 to research the status of regional efforts to create a "model landscape ordinance." The State's [draft model ordinance](#) was made available for review on November 26, 2008. Staff is working with local water agencies and other jurisdictions to look into the possibility of creating a regional model ordinance. Staff will return to the Board on this matter in early 2009.

View our website for more information:

www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/advancedplanning.html or
www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/gpupdate

Or visit www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu and click Advanced Planning or General Plan Update.



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Building Division News

Important Telephone Numbers

Building Offices:

Toll Free:

2003, 2007 Wildfire Survivors:

(858) 694-3876

Important Online Sites:

Building Division:

www.sdcounty.ca.gov/building

Building Forms:

www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/bldgforms/index.html

Zoning Ordinance:

www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/zoning/index.html

Improving Our Process

At the end of October, the Building Division set out to improve how we serve our customers by completely rethinking and redesigning our permit application process, from the pre-submittal stage to the moment we issue a permit. This "Business Process Re-engineering" effort will help our customers by:

- Cutting down on how often customers have to personally hand-carry their plans from one permitting counter to another. Instead, we'll introduce an "internal routing" system where staff will move the applicants' plans for them, saving customers' time.
- Reducing the number of trips that people must make to County offices to get permits.
- Streamlining and speeding up our permit process --- especially for regular applicants who are already familiar with our regulations and requirements.
- Smoothing the process for customers who are not familiar with our regulations by meeting with them to offer guidance even before they have to submit their plans.

We've created an action plan to accomplish these goals and hope to have them in place by April 2009. We expect this to be an exciting, major change to the way we do business and we'll keep you informed along the way.

Land Development Counter

We've also taken steps to improve how our Land Use counters serve our customers by consolidating the Department of Public Works land development counter into DPLU. At least for now, our lobby will look the same. But this consolidation will make the land use process easier for our customers by improving how our departments talk to, and coordinate actions with, one another. Our counter operations will be more efficient and flexible, which will speed up our permitting process.

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Building by the numbers:

Average Wait times: (Through Oct.)

Building Counters: 18 min.

Building Proj. Pre-Submittal Counter: 18 min.

Zoning Counters: 5 minutes

Building Permits Issued:

484 (October)

Code Enforcement:

Responded to 334 complaints (October)

Online, not In Line

DPLU and the Building Division have already put into place several new Internet-based tools to help customers --- by reducing wait times and offering services people can access without having to visit County offices. And we're not finished. We have plans to create tools that will tell customers exactly how long the waits are at our building counters at any given minute; let customers schedule building permits online; and to build an electronic express kiosk in our main lobby for counter check-in and service. We hope to introduce these new services throughout 2009.

Services that we've already created include:

Kivanet Public: Research building permit and property histories online. <http://landinfo.sdcounty.ca.gov/Index.cfm>

Kivanet Citizen: Apply for some building permits via the Internet. <http://sdcountyluegepay.com/kivanet/citizen/>

Building Permit Estimator Calculator: Find out how much your building permit will cost. <http://sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/bldgforms/index.html#feest>

Wait Time Charts: Find out when our counters are busiest and avoid the rush. Charts based on monthly averages and updated weekly. http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/bldg/bldg_waits.html

Downloadable Plot Plan Templates: Save time by filing plot plans right the first time. <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/bldgforms/index.html>

All of our online services can be found at the DPLU main Web site at www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu