

Agenda Item No. 6

SACRAMENTO LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION
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March 5, 2003

TO: Sacramento Local Agency Formation Commission

FROM: Peter Brundage, Executive Officer

RE: **California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)**
Local Agency Outreach Program

CONTACT: Donald J. Lockhart, Assistant Executive Officer, 874-2937

Recommendation

I recommend that your Commission direct staff to proceed with the CEQA outreach effort discussed below.

Policy Issue

It is a goal of Sacramento LAFCo to foster and maintain, open and effective working relationships with agencies throughout the County, and region, on matters of mutual interest. An area that we will be focusing on in the near term is CEQA coordination. We will be addressing the roles and responsibilities of LAFCo regarding land use projects that are initiated in or by cities, or the County of Sacramento. Such projects are subject to CEQA lead agency review by the affected city or the County, with Sacramento LAFCo as a responsible agency.

Background

The authority to make land use decisions lies with the County, and the cities within the County. This land use entitlement and planning process is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA.) Generally, the local land use agency acts as the lead agency for these projects, and LAFCo has the role of responsible agency as defined by CEQA.

On occasion, a local entitlement approval may also necessitate a subsequent LAFCo action, such as an annexation for the provision of municipal services. When this occurs,

LAFCo has a CEQA responsible agency role, and needs to review and comment on the environmental documents prior to adoption by the lead agency.

Recently, there have been several projects in which your LAFCo could not take an action because LAFCo issues were not adequately addressed in the environmental documents that were prepared by the lead agency, (i.e., Stock Ranch, Kapalua Estates). As a result, LAFCo had to prepare another environmental document, resulting in additional cost and time delay in the review process.

LAFCo Linkage

LAFCo actions must comply with the California Environmental Quality Act, Division 13 (commencing with Section 21000) of the Public Resources Code.

CEAQ Outreach Effort

Your staff will be sending out correspondence to discuss the LAFCo and CEQA coordination. We will follow-up by meeting with the planning staffs of Sacramento County, and staff of the Cities of Citrus Heights, Elk Grove, Folsom, Galt, Isleton and Sacramento. We may also discuss the matter with adjacent County LAFCos, as appropriate. The meetings will discuss the most effective means of ensuring early consultation, and coordination of responsible agency participation in the local planning process. The proposed inter-agency coordination plan is shown in the attached CEQA Flow Chart (Exhibit A.)

The issues of concern which LAFCo may comment on include, but are not limited to, the potential impacts and appropriate mitigation measures regarding:

- agricultural and biological resources
- air quality
- hydrology and water quality
- land use and planning
- population and housing
- utilities and service systems.

Further discussion of the issues of interest may be reviewed in the Initial Study Checklist that we will apply to the project review (Exhibit B.)

In addition, Sacramento LAFCo, when it assumes the lead agency role (i.e., Sphere of Influence) will encourage affected agencies to coordinate with LAFCo, so that they may be able to use our environmental documents for subsequent actions. We will report back periodically, to keep your Commission informed on this matter.

DL:Maf
(CEQA Outreach)