



# CITY OF IONE CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT



**FOR THE MEETING OF: APRIL 21, 2009**

**DATE: APRIL 17, 2009**

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL**

**FROM: CHRISTOPHER JORDAN, AICP, CITY PLANNER  
DANIEL HAMILTON, AICP, GENERAL PLAN PROJECT MANAGER**

**SUBJECT: GENERAL PLAN UPDATE – DRAFT GENERAL PLAN ROLLOUT**

**STAFF RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Staff recommends that the City Council:

- 1. Receive staff’s presentation;
- 2. Open the public hearing and take public comment;
- 3. Close the public hearing; and
- 4. Provide direction to staff, if necessary.

**SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

General Plan Services Impact Fees; Loans from various other funds

**BACKGROUND:**

In March 2008, the Council directed staff to conduct a comprehensive update to the City’s General Plan. The General Plan is the City’s overarching policy document, or blueprint, for creating a thriving, well-balanced, and sustainable community. All future development and actions of the City must be consistent with the General Plan. General Plans typically

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TYPE OF ITEM:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Consent
- \_\_\_\_\_ Departmental
- \_\_\_\_\_ Public Hearing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

City Council for the City of Ione

Upon motion of Council Member  
Seconded by Council Member  
And carried \_\_\_\_\_ by those members present,  
The Council hereby adopts the recommended action contained in this report.

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Council Order No. \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting of: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Janice Traverso, City Clerk

By: \_\_\_\_\_

have a 20-30 year life span. The City's existing General Plan was first adopted in 1982 and portions were updated in 1989, 1991, 1992, 2003, and 2005. Given the number of changes that have happened in the community since 1982 the City needs to update the plan now in order to keep it current.

A lot has happened since the General Plan Update was initiated by the Council. The following list summarizes some of the key milestones and tasks completed to date:

- Establishing a General Plan Executive Committee made up of two Council members (Andrea Bonham and Lee Ard), two Planning Commissioners (Joe Wylie and Mike McDermed), and two Parks Commissioners (Rosemary Johnson and Fraser West). The Executive Committee met twice a month between August 2008 and April 2009 to provide direction to staff on the process of the project and to ensure that the August 2009 deadline established by the Council is achieved (Note: The August deadline is also important as it is the deadline for certification of the City's new Housing Element under State law). Since January 2009, the Committee has been reviewing two administrative draft elements, or chapters, every two weeks. Their comments have been incorporated into the draft General Plan being presented this evening.
- Creating a project website ([www.ionegeneralplan.com](http://www.ionegeneralplan.com)) for people to learn about the project and stay involved.
- Conducting three public workshops at Evalynn Bishop Hall at Howard Park. The workshops provided the public with an introduction to the General Plan process and were a forum for the public to express their ideas and concerns about the future of Ione.
- Conducting a public survey aimed at gathering resident input and views outside of the workshop setting. The surveys were mailed out as part of the September sewer bill and were available for pickup at a number of locations throughout town (Curves, Claypool's, etc). Over 230 responses were received.
- A series of Planning Commission meetings on December 9 and December 15, 2008, where the Planning Commission discussed the three base land use alternatives and a fourth alternative prepared by staff and based upon comments at the November 19 public workshop. The Commission ultimately recommended an alternative to the City Council as the draft preferred Land Use Plan.
- A City Council meeting on January 6, 2009 to discuss the draft preferred Land Use Plan. The Council received the Planning Commission recommendation and took public comment. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Council directed staff on a preferred Land Use Plan to use as the basis for the preparation of the balance of the General Plan and for the initiation of the draft General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR).
- A policy workshop with the City Council and Planning Commission on February 19, 2009 to discuss circulation issues and policies for the draft General Plan. The

Council and Commission ultimately directed staff on a new series of level of service standards and other circulation policies. These standards were used to complete the initial transportation analysis of the draft Land Use Plan in late February.

- At a second circulation policy discussion on April 7, 2009, the Council directed staff to modify the draft circulation policy based upon the initial traffic model results.

The focus of this City Council/Planning Commission workshop is to receive the draft General Plan, receive staff's overview presentation, and begin the process of accepting public comments on the draft Plan. Staff understands that because of the complexity of the General Plan, a complete review of the entire Plan is not possible at one meeting. Subsequent meetings on May 5 and May 19 will focus on detailed discussions on each of the elements. At the April 21 meeting, staff will present the schedule for discussing the various chapters.

**Copies of the draft General Plan will be provided to the City Council and Planning Commission at the meeting. A limited number of copies will also be available to the public for review at the meeting and throughout the review period at City Hall. The full document will be available to download from the project website at [www.ionegeneralplan.com](http://www.ionegeneralplan.com) beginning the evening of April 21. Hard copies may be purchased from the City beginning April 22.**

## **ANALYSIS:**

### **Overview**

The General Plan is a long-range planning document that provides the City a policy framework for land-use planning based on the City's long-term vision for growth. The General Plan contains the community's desires and visions of Ione through 2030, expressing resident values, what Ione will become, and how it will get there. The General Plan achieves the community's vision by setting Goals, Policies, and Actions to preserve Ione's history and create a viable and flourishing community that current and future generations will be glad to call home. Any actions, projects, and decisions must be consistent with the goals, policies, and land use map contained in this document.

### **General Plan Vision: Guiding Principles**

Guiding principles provide the framework and benchmarks to direct Ione's future, consistent with community values and desires. They provide broad statements of purpose, intent and/or direction to achieve the community vision. The principles are used to guide the General Plan update, mapping and land use alternatives process. Additionally, the guiding principles establish a set of guidelines and benchmarks for the writing and implementation of General Plan goals, policies and actions.

The guiding principles will set the overall tone/focus for the General Plan and each of the subsequent elements of the General Plan will further guide and plan for implementation of the community development. The guiding principles are as follows and described in detail in chapter 2 of the draft Plan:

- Maintain Small Town Character
- Manage Growth
- Preserve Open Space and Agricultural Land
- Enhance Recreational Facilities
- Revitalize Downtown
- Improve Roadways and Traffic

### General Plan Structure

State law requires that certain topics, or elements, be covered in the General Plan. These include land use, circulation, housing, open space, conservation, safety, and noise. Additional topics may be covered at the discretion of the City, provided that all topics, or elements, are consistent with one another. Ione has elected to include additional elements and topics in the General Plan.

The following table displays the name, chapter number, and a brief discussion on the focus of the element, and a brief listing of the important topic areas that the City considered.

Chapter	Element	Description
Chapter 3	Land Use (LU)	This element focuses on the distribution of land uses within the City and the larger General Plan Planning Area, including residential, commercial, industrial, public services, agricultural, and open space. Topics addressed include the density, minimum lot sizes, and location of each type of development allowed.
Chapter 4	Circulation (CIR)	This element focuses on all transportation improvements and related infrastructure is needed to support the distribution of land uses in the Land Use Element. Topics include roadway service standards, adequacy of the roadway system, and future roadway improvement strategies, as well as infrastructure issues.
Chapter 5	Conservation and Open Space (CO)	This element addresses the conservation and protection of natural resources and open space, including parklands and recreational areas, agriculture, endangered species, water, and air quality. Topics addressed include mitigation requirements, protection methods, development requirements, and priority areas for the City to focus its efforts.
Chapter 6	Noise and Safety (NS)	This element addresses natural hazards and noise problems the City is vulnerable to and establishes ways to reduce their negative impact on the community. Topic issues include wildfire hazards, roadway issues, adjacent industrial and mining operations, and the adjacent state facilities.
Chapter 7	Economic Development (ED)	This element addresses economic development opportunities within and around the City. Topic issues include the downtown revitalization and expansion, significant business potential, retail shopping opportunities, and professional office space and industrial growth.

Chapter	Element	Description
Chapter 8	Public Facilities (PF)	This element identifies the existing publicly owned and operated facilities in Ione and includes potential upgrades and expansions to serve the community. Topic issues include water, wastewater, fire, police, prisons, parks, and schools.
Chapter 9	Housing (H)	This element identifies the existing housing stock, housing needs, and provides a strategy for providing housing stock for all income levels. Topics include affordable housing, growth standards, housing needs, and the adequacy of housing provided.

Each of the City’s Elements includes the following components:

- **Introduction.** This section briefly explains what the Element is intended to do and the reason for the particular Element.
- **Vision.** The Vision statement reflects the community’s desires for the City’s future relative to each individual element.
- **Related Plans and Programs.** This section highlights significant plans and programs related to a particular element and explains their relationship to the City’s General Plan.
- **Issues and Considerations.** This section briefly explains the local conditions relevant to the element and outlines those real and perceived problems and concerns identified by the community, as well as opportunities for change or growth.
- **Goals, Policies, and Actions.** Goals are overall statements of community desires and are comprised of broad statements of purpose or direction. Policies serve as guides to the decision makers in reviewing development proposals and making other decisions that affect the future growth and development of the City. Actions are the implementation steps necessary to ensure the goals and policies are carried out.

The General Plan also includes several maps and tables that help to express and describe the vision, objectives, or key components of the plan. The Glossary provides a set of definitions for technical terms used in the General Plan. The organization of the General Plan allows users to easily locate issues of interest and quickly obtain a perspective on the City’s policies on the subject.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The costs of completing the General Plan Update are being financed through the General Plan Services Impact Fee and loans from various other funds. The project remains on schedule and on budget.

### **OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:**

Development of the General Plan is a City-led effort; however, staff from Amador County, AWA, and Caltrans have participated in the public workshops to date. Additional participation from other agencies is anticipated as the General Plan document is completed and the draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is available for public review. Staff has also sent out the necessary interagency and tribal notification letters as required by law.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:**

Adoption of the General Plan will require preparation of a full EIR. The draft EIR is being prepared and it will be released to the public for comment at the completion of these policy workshops in April and May. Therefore, because formal adoption is not being completed at this time (rather, just direction to staff to proceed), no environmental review is necessary.

### **NEXT STEPS:**

The next steps in the General Plan Update process are as follows:

- Policy discussions at joint City Council/Planning Commission meetings – May 5 and May 19
- Draft EIR available for public review – May/June
- Planning Commission review of the Draft General Plan and Draft and Final EIR – July
- City Council review of the Draft General Plan and Draft and Final EIR, adoption of the General Plan, certification of the EIR – August