

Ridgecrest General Plan Update

Meeting Minutes

April 24, 2007

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM

Ridgecrest City Council Chambers

1. Call to Order

2. Minutes

- The GPAC voted to approve the minutes of GPAC #1, held on March 27, 2007, as submitted
- The GPAC received the minutes from Public Workshop #1, held on March 28, 2007
- The GPAC received the minutes from Public Workshop #2, held on March 29, 2007

3. Issues and Opportunities (5:40 – 6:05)

As part of Public Workshop #1, each of the five groups identified three to five key issues and opportunities. The GPAC was asked to review the public input provided for each topic area (from the workshop minutes provided), and provide further clarification on the issues and opportunities developed in the workshops or add new items for consideration in preparation of the General Plan.

Issues

Healthcare

- Balance expectations with size of community
- No dental for Medicare
- Need to attract doctors to area

GPAC Question: How can the General Plan help with some of the issues discussed? Discussed how some items are not under the direct control of the City, and in those cases, the City needs to look for ways to encourage and provide support to other agencies and organizations. Medical and school locations were mentioned as examples.

Managed Growth

- Comment from an e-mail discussion to focus on infill first. There was a strong interest in doing this.
- Members noted the need to ask:
Where do we want to be in 23 years?
Where are we now?
What is the difference and how do we address this?
- Great opportunity to look at ways to encourage infill to happen
- Look at ways to provide incentives for infill

- Need to look at infill, but also need to start process for BLM land withdrawal (>10 year process) to address future needs
- How can we go after future areas and protect them for appropriate uses?
- Endangered species issues on fringes
Need to address this as a City (as incentive)
General Plan ties to West Mojave Plan
- Look at developing a threshold/trigger for annexation
- Fee structures for annexation

Flood/Drainage

- Develop design standards
 - Currently require sumps since no real drainage plan
 - Look at joint use of retention/detentions for parks
 - Look to soft side channel designs (instead of concrete channels)
- Need to address nuisance water urban runoff (reducing the amount)

Streets

- Coordinate with Caltrans on maintenance
- Pin down what are the major arteries in the community and expand to address future needs

Mixed Use

- See most mixed use opportunities in a horizontal pattern
Need circulation plan for bicyclists/pedestrians to development and commercial areas
- Avoid designs that set streets up as barriers

Aesthetics

- No additions

Schools

- Renewing leases on base schools for 25 years right now
- Look at future school needs and how to include the school district in future plans

Parks

- Upjohn Park has a good mix of facilities. A good model.
- Discussion on what is an efficient park size? Are pocket parks OK from a maintenance standpoint.
- Money limited for new facilities now. Need to plan to get out in front of this issue and development of future facilities.

Money

- No additions

Economic Development

- No additions

Ridgecrest Buildings

- Look at reuse, revitalization

Water Issues

- No additions

Employment

- No additions

Opportunities

For a number of these items, the GPAC felt their comments on issues addressed some of the opportunities mentioned as well.

Education

- No additions

Alternative Energy

- Look at potential for “personal” solar applications
- Appropriate landscaping can help reduce energy needs

4. Workshop #2 Land Use Inputs (6:05 – 6:30)

As part of Public Workshop #2, each of the five tables provided their inputs on future growth locations. The GPAC was asked to review and provide reactions to the ideas provided and identify the key ideas on each map that should be considered in more detail in the development of a preferred land use concept for the General Plan. The following are their comments regarding concepts they liked or wanted investigated further.

Map#1

- Use of old Navy housing area for future growth is great, but questions on:
 - Can this area be released from Navy ownership?
 - Not sure of the viability of certain land uses, like residential, due to Navy overflight
 - Business park could be good here
- Maintaining hillsides is good
- Encircle City with linear park
- Added recreational opportunities
- Dressing up entries to town

Map #2

- Bowman Corridor development/linear park (like Map #1)

Map #3

- Golf courses
 - Questions on viability concerning water supply
 - Would attract new residents
- Also supports Bowman Corridor
- Discussion on auto mall in center. A good use to include, but look at options.
- Discussion (not specific to this alternative) – Question on where is new sewer plant? Answer was it is in the same place as existing.

Map #4

- Large Low Density Residential area is in an attractive area to develop

Map #5

- Infill is very high density

5. General Plan GPAC Subcommittees

The GPAC members were asked to divide themselves equally into three subcommittees. These subcommittees will meet (typically once a month) to assist in the development of the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. The subcommittees will provide input focused on specific topics. The subcommittees formed are:

- Land Use and Circulation
- Conservation, Open Space, Parks and Recreation
- Military Sustainability, Noise, and Safety

6. Public Comments

During the public comment segment, a local development group presented an overview of a mixed use projects they are developing. The purpose was not to review the project specifically, but to use this as an example of a vertical mixed use project and to illicit comments from the GPAC on this type of land use. Comments included:

- General Plan needs to add allowance for mixed use. GPAC was supportive of including mixed use in the General Plan.
- Concerns were expressed about height. The project sample shown was three stories, and there was concern over where a three story building would be appropriate. This project was across the street from residential, and concerns over impacts on views was expressed. Other members of the public speaking during this item also expressed concerns over a three story building and its impacts on the area/views.
- Comments from some GPAC members that the current three-story Marriott under construction was eye opening for its potential to change views in the community.

7. GPAC Member Comments

- Discussion on golf courses and the ability to provide water. A good question to investigate further as the General Plan is developed.

8. Adjourn