

# County of Santa Clara

Department of Planning and Development  
Planning Office

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STAFF REPORT  
Planning Commission  
March 26, 2015  
**Item #5**

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**File: 10184-11GP**  
**Health Element, Santa Clara County General Plan**

**Summary:** The project is an amendment to the General Plan to establish a new, separate Health Element, including related revisions the current Health & Safety Chapter, and deletion of the Social Well-Being Chapter.

**Applicant:** County of Santa Clara  
**Owner:** NA  
**Address:** NA. Applies countywide.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission:

- A. Forward a Favorable/Unfavorable recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to adopt a Negative Declaration for an amendment to the General Plan for the Health Element;
- B. Forward a Favorable/Unfavorable recommendation to the Board of Supervisors regarding amendments to the Santa Clara County General Plan for the Health Element, including:
  1. Adoption of the proposed Health Element;
  2. Deletion of the Social Well-Being Chapter;
  3. Deletion of the Air Quality and the Health and Safety Facilities Planning sections of the current Health and Safety Chapter, Books A and B; and,
  4. Renaming the Health and Safety Chapters of Books A and B of the General Plan to Safety and Noise.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

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### **PROJECT PROPOSAL AND REVISIONS SINCE FEBRUARY HEARING**

At its February 26, 2015 public hearing, the Planning Commission continued the public hearing until March 26, 2015, in order to refine the draft. The Commission established an ad hoc committee consisting of members Schmidt, Couture, and Ruiz, to continue its focused review. Commissioner Lefaver joined the committee in response to the departure of Commissioner Couture from the Commission. The Commission also requested a copy editor contribute to review and editing of the final document.

Staff met with the Planning Commission committee twice to review progress in editing, streamlining, and simplifying wording. The group also reviewed the work of a copy editor whose services were obtained through the existing agreement with the main project consultant, Raimi + Associates. In brief, at the last meeting of the ad hoc committee Thursday, March 19, 2015, Commissioners Schmidt and Lefaver, with Ruiz absent, agreed to forward the revised March 2015 draft to the whole commission for its consideration and possible recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

The work of the copy editor, completed March 13, 2015, was thorough, thoughtful, and productive. Staff was able to incorporate or utilize nearly all of the hundreds of suggestions offered by the editor, and the Health Element draft has continued to undergo review and revisions to date to incorporate and reflect suggestions by the ad hoc committee, and further review by staff. A comparison document is attached illustrating all the revisions between the March and February Planning Commission drafts. Staff believes the work of the committee, editor and staff has resulted in a more readable, shorter, more concisely worded document, without changing the policy or informational substance of the Health Element. A table of contents has also been added per Commission request for this draft.

Several final requests or observations from the committee concerned possible use of graphics, illustrations, page formatting, for improved appearance. Staff agreed with the desire to utilize those features, but the current budget, scope of work, and schedule will only permit consideration of such features in a future web-based publication, if requested by the Board of Supervisors. The Commission may wish to include such an option among its recommendations for Board consideration.

Commissioner Lefaver also requested consideration and inclusion of brief text and policy(s) on the subject of veterans' health issues, which is under review by staff and will be a subject presented at the hearing.

The March 26, 2015 staff report hereby references but does not repeat the entire text of the February 26, 2015 staff report for sake of brevity. The Recommended Actions remain the same as in the prior report.

In conclusion, staff recommends the Planning Commission forward a favorable recommendation to the Board of Supervisors on all proposed actions on page 1, based on the excellent work of the consultant, Commissioners' committee, and staff reflected in the March 2015 Health Element.

**STAFF REPORT REVIEW**

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Approved by: Rob Eastwood, Interim Planning Manager



**Exhibits Included with this Staff Report:**

Exhibit A: Revised Health Element, March 2015

Exhibit B: Comparison Document with Revisions from February 2015 Draft

Note: Please refer to the February 26, 2015 Planning Commission Staff Report for supporting documentation, information, reasons for recommendation, and project history.