Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Mill Valley 2040 General Plan
- Notice of Availability -

Date: Wednesday, July 10, 2013

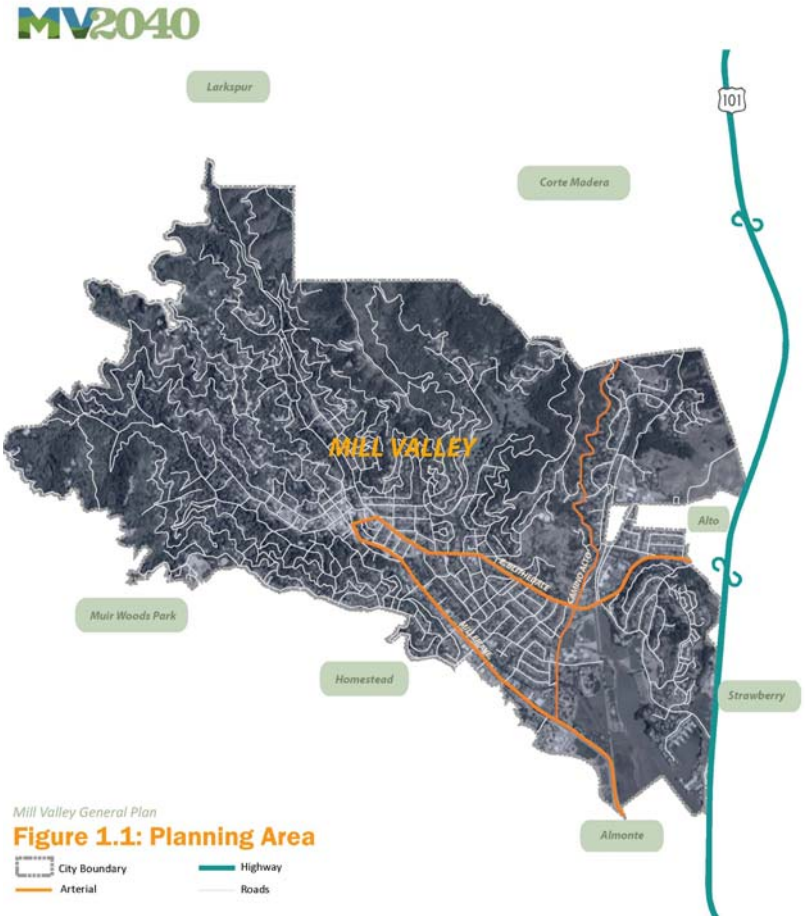
To: Public Agencies and Interested Parties

From: Mike Moore, Director of Planning & Building, City of Mill Valley

Subject: Notice of Availability for the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Mill Valley 2040 (MV 2040) General Plan, including the 2009-2014 Housing Element

As lead agency, the City of Mill Valley has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Mill Valley 2040 General Plan, including the 2009-2014 Housing Element (described below), in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and State CEQA guidelines. The project description, location, public review period and possible significant environmental impacts of the Mill Valley 2040 General Plan, including the 2009-2014 Housing Element are summarized below.

Project Location: The designated planning area for the MV 2040 General Plan area consists of the existing Mill Valley city limits. The City of Mill Valley is generally bounded by Mount Tamalpais State Park (west); Corte Madera (north); US 101 and Strawberry (east); and the unincorporated communities of Homestead and Almonte (south). See map for details.



Project Description: The City of Mill Valley is undertaking an update of its General Plan, including the state-mandated Housing Element for the current Housing Element cycle (2009-2014). The planning horizon for the updated General Plan (except for the Housing Element) is 2040 (hence the "2040 General Plan" title).

The 2040 General Plan contains the following elements:

- Land Use
- Mobility
- Community Vitality
- Natural Environment
- Climate Action
- Hazards and Public Safety
- Noise
- General Plan Administration
- Housing (Under Separate Cover)

Each element begins with a purpose statement and a summary of existing conditions, followed by goals, policies and programs for action.

Potential Environmental Effects: The Draft EIR for the MV2040 General Plan is a "Program EIR". Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines defines a "Program EIR" as "an EIR which may be prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project and are related either geographically, are logical parts in the chain of contemplated actions or in connection with issuance of . . . plans." A program EIR focuses on "broad policy alternatives and program-wide mitigation measures . . . that apply to the program as whole" (in this case, the update of the General Plan and Housing Element). In addition, the program EIR can identify those probable environmental effects that can be identified, but allows the lead agency to defer more specific environmental analysis to later, site-specific projects or program implementation.

The Draft EIR evaluates whether the proposed project may potentially result in one or more significant environmental effects. The topics listed below were analyzed in the EIR.

- Aesthetics, Light, and Glare
- Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology, Soils, and Seismicity
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use
- Noise
- Public Services/Recreation/Utilities
- Transportation

The proposed project would result in the following significant unavoidable impacts:

- Exposure of Persons to Excessive Noise: Development and land use activities contemplated by the City of Mill Valley 2040 General Plan may expose residential land uses to excessive exterior noise as a result of additional vehicle trips on local roadways. Although the General Plan contains policies requiring new residential uses to comply with California Building Standards Code requirements for interior noise attenuation, there is no feasible mitigation to reduce exterior noise levels at new residential development sites along major roadways to "normally acceptable" levels due to existing noise levels; therefore, the residual significance of this impact is significant and unavoidable.

- Permanent Increase in Ambient Noise Levels: Development and land use activities contemplated by the City of Mill Valley 2040 General Plan may expose residential land uses adjacent to major roadways to a permanent increase in ambient noise levels as a result of additional vehicle trips on local roadways. Although the General Plan contains policies requiring new residential uses to comply with California Building Standards Code requirements for noise attenuation, it would not fully reduce the impact to a level of less than significant.

Public Review Period: Your comments on the Draft EIR are welcome anytime during the 45-day public review period from July 10 to August 26, 2013.

The Draft EIR, the Draft MV2040 General Plan and the Draft 2009-2014 Housing Element may be viewed and downloaded online at www.cityofmillvalley.org/generalplan or reviewed at Mill Valley City Hall (26 Corte Madera Avenue, Mill Valley, CA) or the Mill Valley Public Library Reference Desk (375 Throckmorton Avenue, Mill Valley, CA) during normal business hours. (Note: Mill Valley City Hall is closed every other Friday and from 12-1pm every day).

Public hearings on the Draft MV 2040 General Plan, including the 2009-2014 Housing Element and the Draft EIR will be held by the Mill Valley Planning Commission during this public comment period. See the schedule of Planning Commission public hearings below:

Hearing Date & Time	Topics	Location
Monday, July 22, 2013: 7:00 pm	Introduction and overview of the Draft EIR and MV2040 General Plan; MV2040 (Community Vitality, Natural Environment, Climate Action and Noise Elements)	Mill Valley City Hall Council Chambers 26 Corte Madera Avenue Mill Valley, CA All of the scheduled public hearings can be viewed online on the City's webcast page: http://www.cityofmillvalley.org/Index.aspx?page=1167
Wednesday, July 24, 2013: 7:00 pm	Draft EIR; MV2040 (Mobility, Hazards and Public Safety Elements); and follow-up as needed	
Thursday, July 25, 2013: 7:00 pm	Draft EIR; MV2040 (Land Use and 2009-2014 Housing Element); and follow-up as needed	
Monday, July 29, 2013: 7:00 pm	Draft EIR; and follow-up as needed	
Monday, August 26, 2013: 7:00 pm	Consider a resolution to recommend that City Council certify the MV2040 General Plan Final EIR and adopt the MV2040 General Plan, including the 2009-2014 Housing Element	

If you are unable to attend any of the public hearings listed above, you may submit written or electronic comments on the Draft EIR by or before **3pm August 26, 2013**. Address your written comments to:

Danielle Staude, Senior Planner
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Mill Valley, CA, 94941
or via e-mail at dstaude@cityofmillvalley.org

For More Information: Contact Danielle Staude at (415) 388-4033 or dstaude@cityofmillvalley.org with an questions or comments regarding the General Plan project, or visit the project website at www.cityofmillvalley.org/generalplan.

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