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SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

NEWS RELEASE

COUNTYWIDE PLAN

"Our County – Our Future"

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Countywide Plan public outreach effort begins

County residents and other community stakeholders will play a key role in developing the first-of-its-kind Countywide Plan, which will be used by the Board of Supervisors to evaluate development projects, establish County priorities, and make budgetary decisions for years to come.

"This is a historic and pivotal moment for San Bernardino County," said Board of Supervisors Chairman James Ramos. "Some counties and cities have made their general plans more comprehensive than before, but no one has set out to create anything like the Countywide Plan, which will address and improve all areas of life in all of our great and diverse communities."

During the past six months, the County initiated work on the plan and conducted a pilot outreach effort in Bloomington. The majority of outreach will take place this year as the County conducts events and meetings throughout the county nearly every month. Additional outreach will take place during 2017 and 2018.

The Countywide Plan outreach program will build upon the previous five years of public engagement conducted through the Countywide Vision, Community Vital Signs Initiative, and Renewable Energy and Conservation Element. Thousands of residents, all 24 cities and towns, and hundreds of stakeholders from local, regional, state, and federal agencies and organizations participated in those engagement efforts.

Public input will be sought at both the community and countywide level through workshops, meetings, events, and through the project's website, www.countywideplan.com, where a timeline of the outreach schedule will be maintained.

The new Countywide Plan website serves as a key component of the public participation and engagement process for updating the Countywide Plan and Community Plans.

The site serves as a 24-hour resource for the public to provide input and access background information, public meeting schedules, and copies of relevant documents, presentations and other meeting materials. Draft documents and other work products will be added to the website as they become available. Visitors to the site will be able to take surveys, and submit comments and photos for use in the Countywide Plan. The public can use the website to sign up for email or text notifications to stay up-to-date on project-related news.

Also, beginning next month, the County will publish the Countywide Connection, an electronic newsletter specific to the Countywide Plan project. The Countywide Connection will provide timely information about progress on the project, meeting announcements, how residents can be heard during the planning process, and links to the latest project surveys, documents, and resources.

The first issue of the Countywide Connection will focus on an overview of the Countywide Plan, provide an update of major project components, and highlight public outreach events for Community Plans. Three more newsletters are anticipated to be released over the duration of the project to provide updates to the community of key milestones and achievements of the process. Countywide Connection will be available at www.countywideplan.com, on CountyWire at http://wp.sbcounty.gov/cao/countywire/, and on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/countywideplan/. Residents will also be able to subscribe to Countywide Connection and have it emailed to them.

The Community Plans component of the Countywide Plan effort will generate customized action plans for recognized communities in unincorporated areas. Outreach to various community areas will begin in the spring and be conducted in multiple phases throughout this year and 2017.

Workshops for the first 11 communities are planned for February, March, and July at locations within each community. Specific workshop locations, dates, and times are available on the page of the Countywide Plan website dedicated to Community Plans: www.countywideplan.com/cp.

The workshops will focus on identifying and prioritizing what each community values, explore what each community wants for its future, and identify specific actions to implement community goals and objectives. Ultimately, the County is seeking to partner with the public to prioritize how County resources should be utilized for each community and how the community can participate in the creation of its own future.

Those who are unable to attend the workshops will be able to participate by exploring workshop materials online and taking online surveys on the website.

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