

# DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

COUNTY OF EL DORADO

<http://www.co.el-dorado.ca.us/devservices>

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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** September 15, 2008  
**TO:** Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Monique Wilber  
**SUBJECT:** A08-0002, Amendment to General Plan Policy 8.1.3.1, Addendum

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### **BACKGROUND**

On May 14, 2008 the Agricultural Commission approved a motion to recommend to the Planning Commission to amend Policy 8.1.3.1 and provided criteria, to be adopted by a separate resolution, which define when the exemption is applicable.

### **DISCUSSION**

Planning staff's staff report-recommended criteria differed slightly than what the Agricultural Commission recommended. After meeting with Agriculture Department staff, Planning staff is recommending revised language for General Plan Policy 8.1.3.1 and its criteria (criteria as originally recommended by the Agricultural Commission) than what was presented in staff's original staff report.

There is concern that some large tracts of land designated for development, adjacent to agricultural land, could provide a buffer and still meet their maximum development potential.

Policy 8.1.3.1 currently reads as follows:

Agriculturally zoned lands including Williamson Act Contract properties shall be buffered from increases in density on adjacent lands by requiring a minimum of 10 acres for any parcel created adjacent to such lands. Those parcels used to buffer agriculturally zoned lands shall have the same width to length ratio of other parcels.

Revised Staff/Agricultural Commission Recommended General Plan Policy 8.1.3.1 Amendment

The revised proposed amendment would provide flexibility for the decision makers on a subdivision to determine if buffers limiting the parcel size to something larger than otherwise permitted by the land use designation are necessary, yet the addendum revised language asserts that, "Buffers shall be provided where there is sufficient land to accommodate development and the buffers." The revised proposed amendment is as follows:

*Policy 8.1.3.1      Agriculturally zoned lands including Williamson Act Contract properties shall be buffered from increases in residential density on adjacent lands by requiring a minimum of 10 acres for any parcel created adjacent to such lands. A parcel size of less than 10 acres may be considered, if the approving authority finds the parcel meets certain criteria and/or findings that are recommended by the County Agricultural Commission and adopted by resolution of the Board of Supervisors. Buffers shall be provided where there is sufficient land to accommodate development and the buffers. Those parcels used to buffer agriculturally zoned lands shall have the same width to length ratio of other parcels.*

Attached is the Agricultural Commission's recommendation for the accompanying criteria that are recommended to be adopted by separate resolution. These criteria provide the framework to determine when it is appropriate to reduce or waive the 10-acre minimum buffer requirement. The basic provisions are identifying agriculturally zoned lands that are no longer in production, surrounded by other urban land uses, or are otherwise not likely to be retained long term in agricultural production or are not necessary to protect the agriculture industry in the county. The revised proposed findings criteria are contained in Addendum Attachment 1.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Forward a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to approve the Negative Declaration and adopt A08-0002, an amendment to Policy 8.1.3.1 as follows, based on the findings contained in Attachment 1 of the original staff report:

Agriculturally zoned lands including Williamson Act Contract properties shall be buffered from increases in residential density on adjacent lands by requiring a minimum of 10 acres for any parcel created adjacent to such lands. A parcel size of less than 10 acres may be considered, if the approving authority finds the parcel meets certain criteria and/or findings that are recommended by the County Agricultural Commission and adopted by resolution of the Board of Supervisors. Buffers shall be provided where there

is sufficient land to accommodate development and the buffers. Those parcels used to buffer agriculturally zoned lands shall have the same width to length ratio of other parcels.

Further, staff recommends adoption of the revised resolution establishing Criteria for Reduction of Minimum Parcel Size Agricultural Buffer Requirement of Policy 8.1.3.1, as provided in this addendum as Addendum Attachment 1.

## **SUPPORT INFORMATION**

### **Attachments:**

Addendum Attachment 1 .....Resolution adopting Criteria for Reduction of Minimum Parcel Size Agricultural Buffer Requirement of Policy 8.1.3.1