

RELATIONSHIP OF THE GENERAL PLAN PROCESS AND THE CEQA PROCESS



For efficiency's sake, the planning process and the environmental analysis should proceed concurrently.

Doing so prevents unnecessary delays or duplication of work.

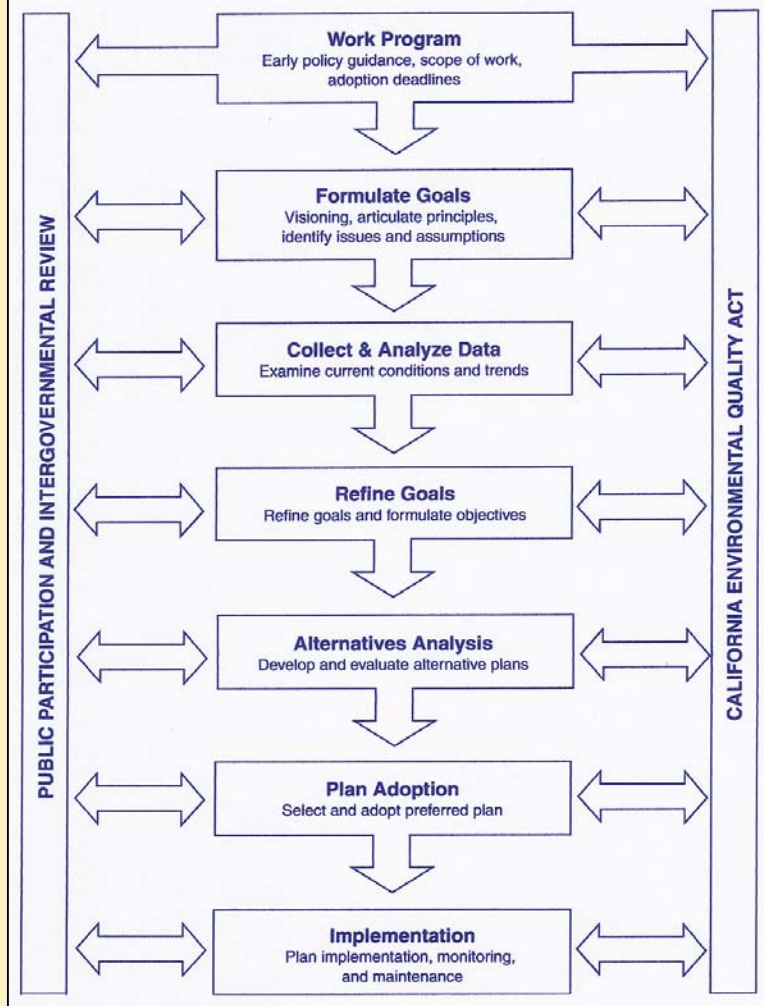
In other words, one process does not have to be put on hold while the other process "catches up." It might help to think of the two documents—the draft General Plan and the draft Environmental Impact Report—as different streams of information which eventually merge.

Because the draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must examine the alternatives being proposed in the draft General Plan (GP), it is not usually released for review until the draft GP is nearing completion. Most often, the draft EIR will be released after a preferred GP alternative has been identified.

If the plan undergoes too much change at this point, the draft EIR may need to be revised and re-circulated—a costly and time-consuming delay.

The EIR must describe the existing local and regional physical environment, emphasizing those features that are likely to be affected by the plan and the environmental constraints and resources that are rare or unique to the area.

Suggested Local General Plan Process in California



It should describe existing infrastructure, such as roads, water systems, and sewage treatment facilities, along with their capacities and current levels of use. The EIR should also discuss any inconsistencies between the proposed plan and adopted regional plans as they may relate to environmental issues.

Flow chart courtesy of the Governor's Office on Planning and Research.

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<http://ucanr.org/landusefactsheets>

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