

8/1/08

## **Overview of the CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) Process**

Once a City (or County), which is called the Lead Agency, has decided that preparation of an Environmental Impact Report is required for a Project, the following steps must be taken:

- An Initial Study is completed to determine what impacts of a project may be significant and what topics should be analyzed in an EIR.
- A Notice of Preparation (NOP) is issued and public agencies and members of the public have 30 days to advise the Lead Agency what additional topics they would like to have included in the EIR. For the Route 238 Bypass Land Use Study EIR, the close of the NOP comment period is August 18, 2008.
- Following completion of the NOP period, the Lead Agency prepares the Draft EIR (DEIR). The DEIR is the main document where environmental topics are addressed and analyzed. Such topics usually, but not always, includes traffic and circulation, air quality, biological resources, public services and utilities and similar topics.

The City anticipates publication of the DEIR in late fall, 2008.

- Following publication of the DEIR, the DEIR is released for a 45-day public review period. Notice is provided in the local newspaper of the availability of the DEIR. Copies of the DEIR are generally sent to the State of California for distribution to potentially affected state agencies, to local agencies and notice is given to interested citizens. Hayward also posts a copy of the DEIR on the City website.
- At the close of the 45-day public comment period, the Lead Agency is required to respond to all written and verbal comments. The comments and associated responses are called the Final EIR (FEIR).
- The DEIR and FEIR are then considered by the Planning Commission and City Council at public hearings and the EIR must be certified by the City Council before the Project can be approved.

Public hearings on the EIR and the associated General Plan Amendment are anticipated in early 2009.