



MEMORANDUM

TO: Sebastopol General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC)

FROM: Ben Ritchie and Beth Thompson, De Novo Planning Group

SUBJECT: December 9, 2015 Meeting – Final GPAC Meeting

DATE: November 30, 2015

INTRODUCTION

December 9th will be the final meeting of the General Plan Advisory Committee. The GPAC's efforts have been instrumental in the creation and development of the Preliminary Draft General Plan Update.

The December 9th meeting is an opportunity for the GPAC to provide feedback, input, and edits to the entire Preliminary Draft General Plan. All of the Policy Sets that have been developed and reviewed by the GPAC over the past year-and-a-half have been finalized, formatted, and compiled to create the Preliminary Draft General Plan. The Policy Sets now include introductory paragraphs and supporting information in the form of text boxes with key terms and graphics. Additionally, an Introduction Chapter has been prepared, along with a General Plan Implementation Element. The Implementation Element lists all of the Actions contained throughout the General Plan, and identifies the City department responsible for implementation of the Action, and identifies the general timeframe for implementation of the Action.

This final GPAC meeting will provide an opportunity for the GPAC to review the Preliminary Draft General Plan in its entirety, and to provide feedback and edits to the complete draft document.

On November 19th the City and the consultant team hosted a community open house workshop. The Open House provided the public with an update on the work completed on the General Plan to-date. It also provided an opportunity for the public to comment on key issues, gain a better understanding of how the General Plan is coming together, and provide input on policy issues and priorities. This memo includes a summary of the input and questions received during the Open House.

This memo also identifies the next steps that will be undertaken as part of the General Plan Update.

WORK EXERCISE FOR DECEMBER 9TH

During previous GPAC meetings, all of the topics addressed in the General Plan Update were discussed in detail. The input provided by the GPAC, including the detailed edits and revisions to the Draft Policy Sets, has been incorporated into the Preliminary Draft General Plan.

The December 9th meeting provides the GPAC with an opportunity to review the entire Preliminary Draft General Plan and provide specific feedback and input. Each member is asked to read the entire Preliminary Draft General Plan and be prepared to discuss the following:

1. Is the document clear, understandable, well formatted, and easy to follow?
2. Are there any key definitions or concepts that should be added as call-out boxes to improve the readability of the Draft General Plan?
3. Is the overall look and feel of the Draft General Plan acceptable?
4. Are there any additional edits or changes that should be made before the Draft General Plan is forwarded to the Planning Commission and City Council for review and comment?

OPEN HOUSE WORKSHOP SUMMARY

Approximately 50 people attended the Open House. The workshop began with a presentation by the consultant team that provided a summary of the GP Update process, explained the role of the General Plan, and then transitioned into an informal workshop with various stations that identify and explain key General Plan issues and approaches (circulation/traffic, land use, economic development, conservation, etc.).

Many workshop participants asked questions and provided input on key issues they think should be addressed in the General Plan Update. Some participants filled out comment cards in order to provide written comments.

In general, the issues and concerns raised by the public during the workshop were similar to the issues and concerns raised during the initial public visioning workshops at the outset of the General Plan Update.

The most prevalent questions and comments focused on the issue of downtown traffic congestion. Many people expressed support for a bypass solution, coupled with some frustration over the lack of tangible options for short-term solutions. Many people expressed interest in returning to a 2-way street system downtown to ease traffic speeds and promote economic vitality.

A summary of some of the input and questions received during the Open House Workshop is provided below (in no particular order).

- Permeable pavement should be provided in all new development to support groundwater recharge.
- 2-way streets (downtown) should be emphasized in the GP. We should plan for ways to reconfigure Main Street and Petaluma Ave. for traffic calming and encouraging economic vitality on those streets.
- Provide for more open space and preserve undeveloped small lots for pocket parks.
- Sebastopol needs more affordable housing in the central downtown area. Make this a GP priority. Also provide for more co-housing opportunities in the SOI.

- Concern over increased traffic on local collector roads. Commuter traffic should continue to be concentrated on the State Highways, and local roads should remain rural and free from pass-through traffic.
- Areas within the SOI should be changed from Light Industrial to Rural Residential (near Elphick and Sparks Rd.). This would provide a more compatible land use pattern and avoid industrial use nuisances near existing residential areas.
- Street modifications downtown should be considered in order to improve traffic conditions. Right-of-way acquisition may be the best solution in some cases and should not be avoided in order to construct roadway improvements and improve downtown traffic flows.
- Focus on Healdsburg Ave. gateway from Murphy to High School Road. Work with Caltrans to slow and mitigate traffic by a boulevard approach. Bulb-outs at red-zone no parking, lower lighting and wider sidewalks on the north side of the street. The model could be borrowed from Hwy 12 at El Verno near Sonoma.
- Traffic noise is problematic, especially from uphill traffic.
- Work to create a pocket park on the corner of Murphy and Healdsburg Ave.
- Consider internal bypass solutions in addition to bypass solutions that move traffic outside of Sebastopol.
- What is the Sphere of Influence and Urban Growth Boundary?
- How does the timing of GP adoption influence local efforts to put a UGB renewal measure on the ballot?
- Why is the Sphere of Influence proposed to expand?
- What are the potential changes to the industrial area designated in the southeast portion of the SOI?
- The proposal to allow increased noise in the downtown area is concerning.
- There is already plenty of noise in the downtown area and more noise may affect residents in the vicinity.
- Why are some of the smaller parcels with single family, historic homes near downtown proposed for high density uses?
- Concern regarding the conversion of small farming, open space parcels on Leland Street to high density residential uses as these parcels represent Sebastopol's unique character and development with residential uses would result in the loss of this special, unique resource.

- Concern regarding the potential for high density residential development between Leland Street and Bodega Avenue to impact the creek in that area.
- Tiny houses need to be allowed.
- Provisions for emergency shelter and similar types of housing are important.
- There is currently a lack of affordable housing options, but also concerns over increased density.
- Need to change name of hospital on maps to reflect recent re-opening.
- Local affordable housing providers are currently renting to non-residents, which should be fixed. Priority for affordable housing should be given to locals.
- Revisit Land Use notes from GPAC to verify if GPAC directed that the General Commercial and Office designations be combined.
- Add pedestrian-scale streetscape enhancements to Healdsburg Avenue from Murphy to Safeway.
- Seek bypass solutions (most want eastern bypass outside City, one referred to a western option outside City, and one provided details on how to create bypass within the City using collector streets).
- The Circulation Element does not solve downtown auto circulation problems and bypasses are infeasible.
- Need to refer to “Street Smart Sebastopol” study and its identified improvements.
- Need to implement more traffic calming; prioritize low-cost traffic calming solutions like edgeline striping.
- Concern about how many collector streets are shown on diagram (specifically, Elphick and Lynch should not be collectors)
- McKinley and Brown should be one-way streets: McKinley eastbound one-way from Petaluma Ave to Brown, McKinley westbound one-way from Morris to Brown, and Brown one-way southbound.
- Laguna Park Way can handle more traffic and should be emphasized as a traffic carrier.
- Woodland Avenue is too steep to be a designated bike route.
- High School Road has a huge cut-through problem, speeding problem, and safety problem, maybe a safe routes to school plan is needed to identify improvements.
- Vigorously coordinate with Caltrans and Sonoma County to implement a bypass solution.

NEXT STEPS IN THE GP UPDATE PROCESS

- **Joint Planning Commission/City Council Workshops:** *January 12th, February 9th, and March 8th, 2016.*

The Planning Commission and City Council will hold a series of three joint workshops to review and comment on the Preliminary Draft General Plan. Each workshop will focus on 3-4 General Plan Elements, and the Planning Commission and City Council will be asked to provide specific feedback and direction on the contents of the Preliminary Draft General Plan.

These workshops will be open to the public, and will be publicly noticed as soon as the dates and times are finalized.

The intent of these workshops is to receive final direction on the content of the General Plan and to receive direction to distribute the Draft General Plan for a 45-day public review and comment period.

Public Review of Draft General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report: *Estimated to be in late spring or early summer, 2016.*

The consultant team has begun work on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR), which is required under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Draft EIR will analyze and disclose potential environmental impacts associated with implementation of the General Plan.

The Draft EIR and the Draft General Plan will be released concurrently for a 45-day public review and comment period. The public is welcome and encouraged to submit comments on both the EIR and the Draft General Plan during this period.

General Plan Finalization and Adoption: *Estimated to be in fall, 2016.*

Following the public review period for the Draft General Plan and Draft EIR, all comments received will be presented to the Planning Commission and City Council for their review and consideration.

The consultant team will prepare the Final EIR, which will include all comments received on the Draft EIR, written responses to these comments, and any minor changes or corrections to the Draft EIR analysis and contents.

The Planning Commission and City Council will direct the consultant team to make changes, if any, to the Draft General Plan in light of the public comments received.

The Final General Plan will be presented to the Planning Commission and City Council for adoption, and the EIR will be presented for certification.



TO: Sebastopol General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC)

FROM: Ben Ritchie and Beth Thompson, De Novo Planning Group

SUBJECT: General Plan Advisory Committee Meeting Summary from September 9, 2015
(Land Use #2)

DATE: November 30, 2015

This memo provides an overview and summary of the input received during the September 9, 2015 GPAC meeting on the topic of Land Use. The GPAC meeting on September 9th provided an opportunity for the GPAC to continue its discussion of the Land Use Map, and to provide comments and input on the Land Use Policy Set. As with all of the elements in the Preliminary Draft General Plan, the Land Use Element reflects the input the GPAC provided on the policy set during its review.

Initial Public Comment

- GPAC should reconsider all of the requests from the previous meeting to include additional parcels within the SOI. This would provide more housing opportunities.
- Request for GP noise data.

GPAC Input and Discussion

- Verify in Circulation Element that we have actions/policies to reduce/revisit parking standards across the board in all zoning districts- particularly in Downtown Core and Light Industrial areas.
- The Vacu-Dri site should be focus for new industrial job growth.
- Leave the Barlow land use designations as-is.
- Establish a minimum FAR for new major development in the Downtown Core.
- Revise Action LU-4a to more closely match language in existing GP. Add more standards and priorities re: what the city is looking for:
 - Reduce sprawl
 - Protect bio and ag resources
 - Protect groundwater recharge areas and watersheds
 - Ensure quality development
 - Protect riparian corridors
- Look at new policies that support and facilitate congregate housing.

- Add new goal or policy/action to encourage and incentivize property owners to convert unused office space to residential uses.
- Define “secondary uses” in the Zoning Code.
- Change max FAR in Light Industrial from 0.55 to 0.75.
- Change max FAR in Community Facilities from 1.0 to 2.0.
- Add parking and lot coverage requirements to Action LU-1a.
- Revise Action LU-3b (GMO) to allow up to 50 units per year; provide for a 2-year rollover of unused units; cap total new units at 750 over the life of the GP; and exempt Downtown Core from annual unit allocation, but not the 750 total unit count.
- Revise Action LU-6b to reference micro apartments and allow tiny houses in any district that allows residential uses.
- Miscellaneous text revisions and clean up to various policies and actions.