



Notice of Preparation Sebastopol General Plan Update Draft Program Environmental Impact Report

Date: March 1, 2016

To: State Clearinghouse
State Responsible Agencies
State Trustee Agencies
Other Public Agencies
Organizations and Interested Persons

Lead Agency: City of Sebastopol Planning Department
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Summary

The City of Sebastopol (City) will serve as Lead Agency in the preparation of a programmatic Environmental Impact Report (Program EIR) addressing the comprehensive update to the City's General Plan. This programmatic EIR will address the environmental impacts associated with the adoption and implementation of the Sebastopol General Plan (Sebastopol General Plan, or General Plan). Information regarding the project description, project location, public outreach process, and topics to be addressed in the Draft EIR is provided below. Additional information, including background documents and the preliminary Draft Sebastopol General Plan, is available at: www.sebastopol.generalplan.org

Submitting Comments

Public agencies and interested parties are invited to submit comments in writing as to the scope and content of the EIR. Public agencies submitting comments are encouraged to identify a contact person and any key agency concerns regarding the proposed project. The City needs to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection to the proposed project. Public and agency comments will be received over a 30-day period, **ending on March 31, 2016**. All comments must be received prior to 5:00 p.m. on March 31, 2016. In the event that no response

or request for additional time is received by any Responsible or Trustee Agency by the end of the review period, the Lead Agency may presume that the Responsible Agency has no response to make [CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b)(2)].

Please send your responses to Kenyon Webster, Planning Director, at the address shown above.

Scoping Meeting

The City will conduct a scoping meeting to receive public input on the scope of the Sebastopol General Plan EIR. At this meeting, individuals, agencies, and organizations are encouraged to provide the City with their input on the topics and analysis for the EIR.

The scoping meeting will be held with the Planning Commission on Tuesday, March 22, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. at the Sebastopol Youth Annex, located at 425 Morris Street, Sebastopol, CA 95472.

Project Characteristics and Background

Project Location and Setting

Sebastopol was incorporated in 1902, primarily to address critical public health concerns. Sebastopol is a 'general law' Council-Manager city with five Council members elected at large. Boards and Commissions include: Planning Commission; Design Review Board/Tree Board; Complete Streets Committee; and Public Arts Committee.

Sebastopol has a unique and highly-valued small-town character. A community of about 7,500, located in the San Francisco/North Bay region, Sebastopol is the hub of West Sonoma County. While the incorporated area is small, Sebastopol serves a much larger unincorporated area stretching to the Pacific Ocean and the Russian River. The City's 'market area' comprises a population of approximately 40,000-50,000 people, who, to varying degrees, use Sebastopol as their 'town' for goods, services, and recreational and cultural activities. Thus, the town has far more economic activity, traffic, and recreational and cultural services than would be apparent based simply on the incorporated area's population.

The City has an extraordinary location, being surrounded by vineyards, orchards, rural residential and wetlands, located minutes from the Sonoma Coast and the Russian River area, and just 60 miles north of San Francisco, one of the world's premier urban visitor destinations. Sebastopol is at the crossroads of two State Highways, Highways 116 and 12, and is just eight miles from Sonoma County's largest city, Santa Rosa. Sebastopol has an active population, highly engaged in community affairs. Although a very small city, Sebastopol has been a leader in community planning, adopting a number of innovative policies and programs.

Excepting the Housing Element, the City's current General Plan was adopted in 1994 and includes the following elements:

- Land Use
- Transportation
- Conservation, Parks and Open Space
- Housing
- Community Identity
- Economic Vitality
- Safety

The City has limited developable areas and a history of few annexations since the current General Plan was adopted. The City has a voter-approved Urban Growth Boundary and a Growth Management Program, both of which are intended to preserve the small-town character of the town, discourage sprawl, and preserve open space, agriculture and environmental resources on the town's perimeter.

Study Area

There are three key boundary lines addressed by the General Plan. These include the city limits, the Sphere of Influence (SOI), and the Urban Growth Boundary, as shown on Figure 2.

City Limits: Includes the area within the City's corporate boundary, over which the City exercises land use authority and provides public services.

Sphere of Influence (SOI): The probable physical boundary and service area of the City, as adopted by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). The SOI includes both incorporated and unincorporated areas within which Sebastopol will have the primary responsibility for the provision of public facilities and services. Lands within the SOI but outside existing city limits may be considered for development after annexation.

Until that time, the area within the SOI is under the jurisdiction of Sonoma County and its General Plan; however, City policies will influence the County's considerations of development proposals for lands within the SOI.

Urban Growth Boundary (UGB): The City's 1994 General Plan established an Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). The Urban Growth Boundary is a line beyond which development will not be allowed, except for public parks and public schools. Measure O, approved by Sebastopol voters in November 1996, amended the 1994 General Plan to reaffirm the City's UGB and amend the 1994 General Plan to keep the UGB in effect until December 31, 2016. The UGB is shown on Figure 2. Measure O also amended the 1994 General Plan to prohibit extension of City services outside the UGB, except under specific extraordinary circumstances.

Project Description

The City of Sebastopol is preparing a comprehensive update to its existing General Plan, which was last comprehensively updated in 1994. The General Plan Update is expected to be complete in late 2016.

The overall purpose of the Sebastopol General Plan is to create a policy framework that articulates a vision for the city's long-term physical form and development, while preserving and enhancing the quality of life for Sebastopol residents, and increasing opportunities for high-quality local job growth balanced with robust environmental sustainability principles. The key components of the General Plan will include broad goals for the future of Sebastopol, and specific policies and actions that will help implement the stated goals.

General Plan Elements

The Sebastopol General Plan will include a comprehensive set of goals, policies, and actions (implementation measures), as well as a revised Land Use Map (Figure 2). The State requires that the General Plan contain seven mandatory elements: Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Open Space, Noise, Safety, and Conservation. The Sebastopol General Plan will include all of the State-mandated elements, as well as several optional elements, including: Community Services and Facilities, Economic Vitality, Community Character, and Community Health and Wellness.

- The **Land Use Element** designates the general distribution and intensity of residential, commercial, industrial, open space, public/semi-public, and other categories of public and private land uses. The Land Use Element includes the Land Use Map, which identifies land use designations for each parcel in the city limits and SOI/UGB (Figure 2).
- The **Circulation Element** correlates closely with the Land Use Element, and identifies the general locations and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, and alternative transportation facilities necessary to support a multi-modal transportation system. This element is intended to facilitate mobility of people and goods throughout Sebastopol by a variety of transportation modes, with an emphasis on bicycle, pedestrian, and transit.
- The **Community Services and Facilities Element** includes goals, policies, and actions that address public services and facilities, including: parks, trails, and recreation facilities; police services; fire protection services; schools; and civic, library, medical, and other community facilities. While not specifically required by State law for inclusion in the General Plan, the Community Services and Facilities Element is a critical component in meeting the infrastructure and public services needs of businesses and residents.
- The **Conservation and Open Space Element** addresses the conservation, development, and use of natural resources, riparian environments, native plant and animal species, soils, mineral deposits, cultural/historical resources, air quality, and alternative energy. It also details plans and measures for preserving open space for natural resources and the managed production of resources.

- The **Noise Element** establishes standards and policies to protect the community from the harmful and annoying effects of exposure to excessive noise levels. This element includes strategies to reduce land use conflicts that may result in exposure to unacceptable noise levels.
- The **Community Character Element** focuses on the ways in which Sebastopol's buildings, streets, and open spaces work together to define the City's sense of place. The purpose of this Element is to provide an overall policy framework for the continued design improvement and evolution of the City.
- The **Safety Element** establishes policies and programs to protect the community from risk associated with geologic, flood, and fire hazards, as well as setting standards for emergency preparedness.
- The **Economic Vitality Element** seeks to sustain and diversify the city's economy, recognizing the importance of supporting existing and local businesses while broadening and expanding the employment base and economic opportunities within the city. Long-term fiscal sustainability will be supported by economic growth from increasing the range of business, commercial services, and high-quality jobs in the city. Providing a broader economic base is intended to improve the city's economic vitality while increasing access for residents to local goods and services and local employment opportunities.
- The **Community Health and Wellness Element** addresses a wide range of community health topics, including access to healthy foods, substance abuse, access to medical care, and maintaining healthy lifestyles.

Goals, Policies, and Actions

Each element of the Sebastopol General Plan contains a series of goals, policies, and actions. The goals, policies, and actions provide guidance to the City on how to direct change, manage growth, and manage resources over the 20-year life of the General Plan. The following provides a description of each and explains the relationship of each:

- A **goal** is a description of the general desired result that the City seeks to create through the implementation of the General Plan.
- A **policy** is a specific statement that guides decision-making as the City works to achieve its goals and objectives. Once adopted, policies represent statements of City regulations. The General Plan's policies set out the standards that will be used by City staff, the Planning Commission, and the City Council in their review of land development projects, resource protection activities, infrastructure improvements, and other City actions. Policies are on-going and require no specific action on behalf of the City.
- An **action** is an implementation measure, procedure, technique, or specific program to be undertaken by the City to help achieve a specified goal or implement an adopted policy. The City must take additional steps to implement each action item in the General Plan. An action item is something that can and will be completed.

General Plan Land Use Map

The General Plan Land Use Map identifies land use designations for each parcel within the city of Sebastopol and the City's SOI/UGB. The Sebastopol General Plan Land Use Map is attached as Figure 2.

General Plan Land Use Designations

The Land Use Element of the Sebastopol General Plan defines various land use designations by their allowable uses, minimum parcel sizes, and maximum development densities. The following describes the proposed land use designations for the General Plan. Table 1 shows the total acreage for each land use designation shown on the proposed Land Use Map.

Very Low Density Single Family Residential: Designates areas suitable for single family dwellings at a density up to one unit per acre. Smaller existing parcels within this designation would not be precluded from developing one housing unit.

Low Density Single Family Residential: Designates areas suitable for single family dwellings at a density of 1.1 to 2.5 units per acre. Smaller existing parcels within this designation would not be precluded from developing one housing unit.

Medium Density Single Family Residential: Designates areas suitable for single family dwellings at a density of 2.6 to 12.0 units per acre. Smaller existing parcels within this designation would not be precluded from developing one housing unit.

High Density Single Family Residential: Designates areas suitable for multifamily dwellings at a density of 12.1 to 25 units per acre. This designation is suitable for duplexes, apartments, townhouses, and other attached dwelling units.

Commercial/Office: This designation provides areas for commercial and office uses with off-street parking and/or clusters of street-front stores. This designation permits primarily local-serving retail establishments, specialty shops, banks, professional offices, motels, professional, administrative, medical, dental, and business offices, bed and breakfast users, and business and personal services, along with ancillary commercial and service uses. This designation is typically assigned to parcels, located on a major arterial street, that can provide sufficient land for commercial establishments that do not benefit from high-volume pedestrian concentrations found Downtown. The following types of retail uses are discouraged in this land use designation: factory outlets; large regional-serving shopping centers; and other similar retail uses generating high traffic volumes. Maximum floor area ratio (FAR) shall not exceed 1.5. Residential uses are permitted as a secondary use to the primary commercial uses permitted in this land use designation if generally located above the ground floor at the High Density Residential density of 12.1 to 25 units per acre. The residential space will not be counted in calculating the FAR for a development.

Downtown Core: This designation applies to Sebastopol's Downtown and permits office, commercial, and retail uses, as well as mixed-use residential developments. Residential uses are permitted at a density of 15.1 to 44 units per acre if combined with commercial land uses, such as office and retail. Projects shall achieve a minimum FAR of 1.0, and the maximum FAR shall not exceed 2.5 (not including the residential use). This designation is

intended to implement the Downtown Plan and enhance the vitality and character of Sebastopol's historic commercial area. Housing is encouraged on upper stories.

Office/Light Industrial: This designation synthesizes Office and Light Industrial classifications and is intended to promote well planned, integrated business parks, which will serve as major employment center within the community. The Office/Light Industrial designations only applies to sites of three (3) acres or larger and must be implemented through the PC-Planned Community zoning process. Land uses within business parks shall be limited to non-polluting, "clean" industries and businesses with primary permitted uses including corporate and administrative offices and research development uses. Ancillary uses shall be permitted under this designation, which may include warehousing and distribution, exercise facilities, child care uses, and food service uses which provides support services to primary uses. FAR shall not exceed 1.5.

Light Industrial: This designation provides for a wide variety of commercial, wholesale, service, and processing uses which do not generate excessive adverse environmental impacts. Other uses permitted in this designation include office ancillary to industrial uses; warehousing and agricultural products sales and services; auto sales and repair; food and drink processing; construction yards; research and development, laboratories, light manufacturing; and similar uses. Residential uses are permitted as a secondary use to the primary light industrial uses permitted in this land use designation at the High Density Residential density of 12.1 to 25 units per acre. Maximum FAR shall not exceed 0.75 (not including the residential use).

Open Space: This designation applies to areas of land which are essentially unimproved and devoted to the preservation of natural resources, agriculture, outdoor recreation, and for the maintenance of public health and safety. The only structures permitted are shelters, restrooms, storage sheds, and other structures needed to accommodate public use or provide for maintenance of the land. Maximum FAR shall not exceed 0.10.

Parkland: This designation applies to existing and proposed active and passive parks, and linear parks (landscaped paths) in urban areas. Structures allowed are shelters, restrooms, storage sheds, other structures needed to accommodate public use or provide for maintenance of the land, and recreational facilities. Maximum FAR shall not exceed 0.10.

Community Facilities: This designation includes public buildings and facilities, utility facilities and related easements, public libraries, city offices, fire and police stations, and school sites. Maximum FAR shall not exceed 2.0.

Table 1: Land Use Designation Acreages

Land Use Designation	Total Acres	
	City Limits	SOI/UGB
Very Low Density Residential	7.40	68.95
Low Density Residential	81.17	22.03
Medium Density Residential	356.35	67.00
High Density Residential	148.58	6.38
Downtown Core	50.83	--
Commercial Office	101.38	--
Office / Light Industrial	13.31	--
Light Industrial	29.02	44.78
Open Space	115.65	10.37
Parkland	19.11	--
Community Facilities	93.17	--
Right of Way	171.45	15.54
Totals	1187.42	235.05

General Plan Outreach and Public Input

Visioning Workshops

In April and May 2014, the General Plan Update team held two public visioning workshops and a housing workshop to help kick-off the General Plan Update process. City residents and stakeholders attended workshops at the Sebastopol Center for the Arts. The workshops provided an opportunity for the public to offer their thoughts on what they value about their community and the city, and what important issues should be addressed in updating the General Plan.

Each workshop included a presentation by the consultant team that explained the role of the General Plan, an overview of the General Plan Update process, and an opportunity for the workshop participants to ask questions and seek clarification on the process and the role of the community. Workshop participants were asked to complete activities and exercises in order to provide information to the General Plan Update team. Each workshop focused on different themes and topics to be addressed in the General Plan. A summary of the visioning workshops is provided in Chapter 2.0 of the Issues and Opportunities Report, which is available for review online at: www.sebastopol.generalplan.org.

Online Surveys and Polls

City staff and the consultant team developed an online survey to gather additional information from the public related to the General Plan Update. The online survey was available through the General Plan Update website, and was developed to pose similar questions to those posed at the visioning workshops, and to gather additional details regarding City service levels, residential homeownership, employment locations, and economic development priorities. The survey included 21 specific questions, and was completed or partially completed by approximately 700 people. Detailed survey results and responses are contained in Appendix C of the Issues and Opportunities Report, which is available for review online at: www.sebastopol.generalplan.org.

General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC)

The City Council appointed a 16-member General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC), which consisted of members from the Planning Commission, local business owners, residents, and the community at-large. The GPAC collaborated with City staff and the General Plan Update consultant team throughout the development of the General Plan. The GPAC met 12 times between July 2014 and December 2015, to identify key issues and challenges that Sebastopol faces over the next 20-30 years, and to develop the comprehensive set of goals, policies, and actions contained in the General Plan. Each GPAC meeting was open to the public, and numerous members of the public and other local interested agencies attended the meetings and provided detailed input to the GPAC.

City Council and Planning Commission Workshops

The City Council and Planning Commission has held, and continues to hold, public workshops and hearings to review and consider the goals and policies of the existing General Plan, review input from the Visioning Workshops, receive information relevant to the specific topics addressed at the GPAC meetings, and provide specific direction and guidance to staff and the consultant team regarding how goals should be achieved and how to address current issues in the General Plan Update.

Program EIR Analysis

The City, as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), will prepare a Program Environmental Impact Report for the Sebastopol General Plan. The City's General Plan will be comprehensive in scope. The EIR will be prepared in accordance with CEQA, implementing the CEQA Guidelines (Guidelines), relevant case law, and City procedures. The Sebastopol General Plan is considered a "project" under CEQA, and is therefore subject to CEQA review. As a policy document, the General Plan provides guidance and sets standards for several areas of mandatory environmental review for later "projects" that would be undertaken by local government and the private sector.

The EIR will analyze potentially significant impacts associated with adoption and implementation of the Sebastopol General Plan. In particular, the EIR will focus on areas of planned land use changes in the city. Figure 2 shows the Draft Land Use Map for the Sebastopol General Plan.

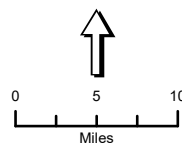
Pursuant to Section 15063(a) of the CEQA Guidelines, no Initial Study will be prepared for the proposed project. The EIR will evaluate the full range of environmental issues contemplated under CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines. At this time, the City anticipates that EIR sections will be organized in the following manner:

- Aesthetics and Visual Resources
- Agricultural Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology, Soils, and Mineral Resources
- Greenhouse Gases and Climate Change
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Population
- Noise
- Public Services and Recreation
- Transportation and Circulation
- Utilities
- Mandatory Findings of Significance/Cumulative Impacts



**NOTICE OF PREPARATION
SEBASTOPOL GENERAL PLAN UPDATE EIR**

Figure 1: Project Location



1:750,000

Sources: CalAtlas. Map date: February 5, 2016.

De Novo Planning Group
A Land Use Planning, Design, and Environmental Firm

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Figure 2: Proposed Land Use Map and Planning Boundaries



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