

City of Petaluma, California
General Plan 2000-2020
Workshop #1 - Kickoff Visioning

FACILITATOR SUMMARY OF COMMENTS*

Tuesday, September 25, 2001 - 7:30-9:30 PM

***PLEASE NOTE:** Each bullet point represents one table's comments.

"Out the Door" - Common Themes

- ▶ Quiet, safe, trees and parks. Clean well kept neighborhood/hate stop sign system. Quiet Streets, more street trees on Main Avenue. Wants to feel safe - lack of flooding, more sense of community and small town flavor. Like to see more walkers, more trees, and people using transit. Trees that provide shade in parking lots. Paths along creeks. More co-op type businesses. Like trees in downtown area to make it more vibrant. Develop and implement bike and walking trails. Clean up corridors. Maintain infrastructure. Need things for children to do.
- ▶ Transportation. Maintained streets. Opportunities for river area. Circulation. Art in Petaluma. Parks. Shopping (lack of). Central Specific Plan. Housing. Agriculture. Drive smooth streets with good traffic flow. Well maintained streets. Bike paths. Public transportation - keep up with growth with more stops, more runs, light rail and more enticements to get out of the car. See people walking. Continued use of air space at our airport. Know your neighbors - safe community. Keep our good things - no parking meters. Green space. Opportunities around the river. Building heights to a minimum. Sufficient cross-town connectors. Unifying East and West side residents. Arts Center in Petaluma. Performing Arts - music and museums. Facility like Luther Burbank. Working museum - take classes in fine arts. Add on to parks - incorporate recreation with facilities. Business parks - zero scape landscaping. Respect other neighborhoods. Shopping out of town - need centers. Attract businesses. Funding to maintain parks. Enclose swimming pools. Outreach to minority businesses. Funding to maintain streets. Maintain existing streets. McNear Peninsula comes into being. Central Specific Plan enacted mix use. Lynch Creek trail and use corridors. Safety aspect of trails. Grant funding. Open up river. Working and living mixed use. Maintain landscape - green environment. Homeless situation -

homeless center going in by Corpyard. PEP and Burbank for senior housing. Expand senior center and teen center. Expand community center. Lawn bowling. Second skate board park – mobile skate board park. Need places for teens. Softball/sports complex. Parks interface with schools. Green belt around City. Sustainable water supply. Keep agricultural business and land. Old train station area developed with Haystack Landing – Thursday and Saturday markets. Transportation center. Ferry service to the City. Need Movie Theater. Diversity – ethnic/age/culture. Trains to Eureka and San Francisco.

- ▶ Quaint downtown. Open space kept as open space, not subdivision. Development along the River. Historical preservation. Business expansion – department stores and movie theaters. Retention of small businesses - downtown Wharf business. Better communication with residents regarding issues, meetings, etc. Affordable housing. Diversity of housing types and income groups in same neighborhood. Better school facilities. More control by neighborhood groups over neighborhood specific issues – City to provide resources. Formalized neighborhood groups. Preservation of the creeks. Streets in better condition (and sidewalks). Neighborhood services. Commuter rail and ferry service – opportunities for transit. Good hospital/medical services. All services growing with City population. Schools focus on local industry training. Better shopping located near Kaiser.
- ▶ Safe, secure, community feeling. Everything needed for a complete life (retail, places to play and not too much traffic). River-greenbelt. Cross-town connection (East-West). Cultural Center – kids learn art. More open space – public art. Cultural Arts plan. Maintaining historic downtown. River not going to keep people out of homes. Community – no separation division. Build environment but with nature. No area far from nature. Maintain significant historical areas. Upgrading school system – level of services maybe unified. More bikes – students. Mixed use development near transportation Hub – redevelopment transportation Hub downtown under development. Feeling safe, secure, camaraderie and trust. More retail so we don't have to go to Marin or Santa Rosa. Concentrated downtown, not strip malls. Feeling of community. Nobody disenfranchised. Play and work in other communities. Want more opportunities to play in Petaluma. Everything needed for a complete life-work, affordable housing, safe, tolerant, traffic not overwhelming, pleasant and healthy ways to get around and places to play. Schools good enough to not have to send kids out of town. Lifelines - water, sewage, cultural and creative arts. How do we keep Petaluma a vital, interesting place?

- ▶ Community pride. Economic diversity and opportunity. Multi-culturalism strengthened and encouraged. Bicycle and pedestrian pathways throughout the City. Healthy and diverse downtown. Take advantage of opportunities for lively new mixed use development. Consultants training citizens to be able to come up with “double” solutions. More public spaces and opportunities for socialization. Needs to be a lot of compromise and balance. Things have to be economically feasible. Need amazing education process. Need to be able to understand trade-offs. Want opportunities in the future, not challenges. Planning needs to focus on creating opportunities. Need to allow others the opportunities of current residents, but need to maintain quality of life. Need information about demographic, housing, employment and other characteristics.
- ▶ More than one stage/film theater in town. More walking downtown and parking garages (like on Keller Street). Trolley. The mill still here - landmarks (keep integrity and sense of community history). Transportation (bus) system improved. Do not become San Francisco - no high-rises and use the land available. Transportation for elderly. Urban separator maintained. River protected - park (turning basin kept), riverwalk (along whole length). Traffic within City controlled and not be surrounded by cars. Appreciate City's emphasis on parks. Airport still alive. Traffic and trolley follow bike path. Transit other than buses. East/West divide one school district (elementary). Low cost housing not subsidized. Victorians narrow streetscape. Sense of community. Architecture/Streetscapes. Rural 'secure' feeling (ambiance). Room to run, walk and bike. Keeping small businesses centered downtown. Riverfront.
- ▶ City designed for ecology sound living (buildings, ponds, energy sources, large parks and lots of green). Performing arts and arts center (support for this is strong). Affordable housing. Keep it small Not In My Backyard (NIMBY). Clean, sweet air (no allergies). Nature predominates. More parks and large parks. Dark night skies. Less street lighting. Outdoor lighting. Safe streets for letting kids run around. Green City. More open space. Affordable housing. More people living and working in Petaluma and not commuting. More Performing Arts possibilities - A Performing Arts Center. Quiet and less obtrusive noise. Better designed buildings that are ecologically sound with small ecological footprint. Develop River at recreation area for walkers and boaters. More bike paths around town. Clusters of mixed retail and residential neighborhoods. Self-sufficient economy. Strong education element. Keep access to open county (bike, pedestrian corridors). More natural water treatment process, less use of chemicals. More renewable energy resources for City use.

- ▶ Walking/Biking access to downtown. Less traffic. Multi-use building, retail and residential. Opportunity with vacant lands. More roundabouts. Less traffic. Get to the downtown easier (bike or walk). Places to sit. Kentucky Street mall. Like to see regional thinking vs. City vs. County. Taller buildings with mix of retail/residential. More access to the downtown area. Opportunities with vacant land. Go up three to four stories. Live and work. Like existing country setting in the West (like a small town). Develop those lots that have City services. Performance spaces – Art and expositions. Integrate the East with the West sides. Shop in town. Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) a place. Creating cluster housing that is energy efficient. Paths for walking. Movie theaters. Nice community places. Parks and plazas with covers. See more people walking, riding bikes. Would like to hear birds. Children playing and music with less car noise. Pedestrian-friendly experience. Would like the town to look like it had a population of 35k. Make Kentucky Street downtown pedestrian only. Would like to move away from cars. Freeway should be incorporated instead of a dividing line. Plentiful alternative transportation (bike/pedestrian). Improvement to East/West connectors (one North and one South). Would like to hear nature (less dogs). Encourage smaller stores. Embrace “new urbanism neighborhoods.” Narrow streets with trees.
- ▶ Individuality, ownership and young keep it this way - possibly at risk. The kids. Public Arts. Transportation. District boundary. Mountains. Pathways. Housing opportunities for diversity. Smaller grouped high density housing. Transportation beyond Petaluma. Retain unique community events. Trains transportation. Revitalize town with more parks. More youth involvement. Bridges for adult to youth. Unique education opportunities, i.e., Fish Hatchery, school sustainability, i.e., gardens spiritual diversity.

Opportunities & Challenges - Common Themes

OPPORTUNITIES

- ▶ Historic downtown – own identity. Small town feeling. Opportunities with River. Central Specific Plan. Hub group. Land in floodplain for parks. Maximize/reuse recycling. Need one can for recycling. Expand Shollenberger Park with new sewer plant. Mass landing – canoeing. Grant money for habitat. Airport attracts business and visitors. Telecom valley. Agriculture. Rail. Open creek areas for bike/walking. Work with Junior College to utilize park land. Open space funds – funnel to Petaluma. Need a “high end” store like Macy’s.

- ▶ Downtown. Riverfront and river access. Intelligent residents. Non-profit organizations. Historical resources. Open space along Railroad tracks (hotel, playing fields, shops and housing). Business parks/industry. SMART Rail Project. Community college and trade schools. Shopping areas at Kaiser/Lakeville Highway or near outlet stores.
- ▶ Powerplant (green energy) in Petaluma. Reuse of waste water for parks, etc. Build storage facilities for reclaimed water and wetland. Rail from Willits to Larkspur. Small scale community power-independent power plant (not in low income housing areas). Clean power that is self-sustaining. Recreational Plan for more parks needed. Restore creeks. Concentrate growth as infill and redevelopment. Add SOI line to maps. Petaluma as Cultural Art Center - performing and visual. Public art educational programs for all ages-also retail end. Live/Work – studios, art center-what's unique to Petaluma. New millennium networking with more collaboration. Different segments of community to common network. Something in place so agencies and private sectors and cultural elements work on common projects.
- ▶ Areas available downtown for redevelopment. Association with a small town - parks, amenities and close to homes. People - lots of different groups with lots of resources. Farmland and urban land.
- ▶ Smart use of current open space. Possibility of improving riverfront and floodplain. Project at Casa Grande Road with mixed-uses. Rainier overpass, the cross-town connector to relieve congestion and create a more accessible system. Creating parkland. Partnerships: school district and City, the Hub (mixed use in midtown with nonprofit pool).
- ▶ The "Hub." Kenilworth School site.
- ▶ Opportunities to build that infrastructure. To make a difference in traffic.
- ▶ Arts Center and theater. Integrated pest management. Agency interaction-outside vs. inside (City).

CHALLENGES

- ▶ Involve people - seniors to youth. Identify mentors and provide that to the youth.
- ▶ Traffic flow concerns. Cross-town connector. Need funding. Park bonds. Transportation tax. Shopping. Affordable housing.

- ▶ Traffic and circulation. Lack of voter participation. NIMBY's. Lack of water supply. Flooding issues. Cross highway 101 access from Southern Petaluma. Lack of affordable housing (blue collar). Public workforce. Flooding concerns: Washington Creek at the edge. Planning process – citizen outreach and interest with more residents at the meetings.
- ▶ Water – Municipal water supply. Transportation needs unification. Make 101 work. Get around town. Transportation plan without Community Development. Rail from Willits to Larkspur – and make it fit with future development. Don't have adequate infrastructure for broadband services and telecommunications. Better picture of 2020. When are we built-out? Penngrove and Rohnert Park. Rohnert Park overlapped boundaries. How much developed land do we have? Legal constraints? Flooding. County/City coordination for UGB and water. UGB, SOI and City Limits. Consider entire watershed – make sure you do not build future disasters. Parking is not well designed in downtown areas. Review urban design. Preserving and enhancing historic heritage. Enjoy life – want kids to come back. Support youth in teams and have fun things to do for retaining youth. Municipal water supply to be active part of the solution. Participation in larger region. Leadership. Foster communication.
- ▶ Cost of living. Water. Tax money leaving Petaluma. UGB in the future. Need businesses that won't strain resources and provide revenue. Elections and representation. Paradox of personal use of land and public stewardship of land. Cost of living.
- ▶ Eleven school districts are redundant. Growth pressure and keeping small. Living/Working in same community. Housing (need to introduce attached housing). Many people earn too much for subsidized and can't afford the market rate. Already a lot of eyesores of empty land. Water and sewer as constraint. Traffic/Transportation. Making the Hub happen. Junior High and High Schools far apart. Shopping and grocery shopping all in the center of town.
- ▶ Transportation issues maintaining the will to work through problems. High cost of housing is putting more and larger parks in residential neighborhoods. Keep government out of things.
- ▶ Seeing problem as greater challenge to innovate new best practices. Open area of land to go up versus out (not too late). Where are the resources? Affordable community to work and retire. Connect people with downtown (like underpass). Maintain small town feel. NIMBY. Self tax. Simplified recreation opportunities (i.e., walking) and passive use. Use spaces i.e., old Helen Putnam Plaza.

- ▶ Recycling issues as a community.

“Headline” - Common Themes

FACILITATOR NOTES (HEADLINES)

- ▶ Petaluma Voted Friendliest City in the US. Petaluma: Destination for Food, Fun and Recreation. Petaluma the Safest City in California. Petaluma in 2021 is the Favorite Tourist Attraction in the US. Petaluma Ideal City for Raising Families.
- ▶ Petaluma A Community for Everyone. Petaluma: Most Desirable City to Live In. Petaluma: The Jewel of Sonoma. Petaluma: City for Families. Petaluma Successfully Works With County to Plan Central Green Belt and Development. City of Many Interests. City With a Heart.
- ▶ Everything You Need and More. Historical Petaluma Welcomes You. City Council Demands Water Source Identification Before Development. Petaluma: A City in Balance. Petaluma Voted Most Desirable Community – Top 10 Cities in California (But No One Else Can Move Here). Annual Boat Race From Petaluma River to San Pablo Bay Starts Tomorrow. Petaluma: A Place of Growing Promise. Petaluma The Best Place to Raise Children in the Bay Area. Neighborhood Parks Open for Youth. Interpretive Center on Petaluma River Opens. Flood Control is Successful in Petaluma. Coho Salmon Return. Petaluma: Great Place To Live - Best Kept Secret. Residents Work and Live in Petaluma.
- ▶ The Most Connected Community in the Country. Every School a World Class School. From Bicycle Lanes to Buses – Petaluma Transit System Superior. Greenbelt Capital of Sonoma. A River Runs Through It – Walk, Bike or Paddle Past the New Cultural Center and Historic Shops. River-Long Central Park. Petaluma Achieved Balance of Job/Home and Has Made It a Self-Sustaining Community Complete With Excellent School System and Many Cultural Activities.
- ▶ Petaluma as a Small, Relatively Self-Contained, Friendly Town. Political Activism and Energy to Get Things Done and Make Positive Changes. Economic and Cultural Diversity. Commonality and People Rejoicing Together and Everyone Gets Something. #1 Sustainable Community. Petaluma Economically Viable City that Maintains.
- ▶ Best Place to Live in U.S. Iron Front Buildings. Time Capsule-3-Story Height Limits. Bay Area Back roads: A Slice of 2000.

- ▶ Petaluma Wetlands Visitor Center Opens. Petaluma Voted Most Ecologically Sustainable City in the U.S. Petaluma Celebrates Community Service Award. Petaluma wins Conservation, Preservation and Restoration Award. Petaluma voted most affordable City in the U.S.
- ▶ Best Roads-From Worst in 2000 to Best in 2020. Best Place to Live in the County. Petaluma Reduces Vehicle Use by 30%. Petaluma is Still a Wonderful, Innovative Place to Live. Petaluma – A Small Town Feeling. Knowing and Caring About Family.

*PLEASE NOTE: Personal comments regarding City officials were not included.