



City of Petaluma, California

**Community Center
320 McDowell Boulevard North
Petaluma, CA 94954**

Conference Room 2

**GENERAL PLAN 2005-2025
Environmental Impact Report
Scoping Session: 26 August 2004, 7 PM**

MEETING MINUTES

Staff: Pamela Tuft, Director of General Plan Administration
Scott Duiven, Associate Planner

Pamela Tuft, Director of GP Administration Tuft provided an introduction and background into the hosting of a Scoping Session for the preparation of the Draft Environmental Impact Report being completed in conjunction with the new General Plan 2025. No formal presentations were planned for the meeting; the intent of this evening's scoping session is to receive comments, testimony, and questions about the content of the EIR. Meeting notes will be transcribed and shared with the consultant team preparing the EIR.

Handouts: Citizens Guide to the General Plan
Chronological Listing of the Actions Taken to Date
Draft Guiding Principles
Regulatory Boundaries of the City (map exhibit)
Draft Outline of the General Plan 2004-2025

Posted on the walls were the following exhibits:

- The City General Plan website address
- For historic purposes: the map of the regulatory boundaries presently governing the City of Petaluma
- General Plan outline with list of anticipated General Plan elements

Reference documents presented include the following:

- Existing Conditions, Opportunities & Challenges Report (October 2002)
- Land Use & Mobility Alternatives Report (February 2004)
- Newsletters and other Reports (available online as prepared)
- Position Papers prepared for the Planning Commission workshops on the Land Use & Mobility Alternatives Report (additional papers being prepared)
- Planning Commission workshop summary notes

Geoff Cartwright, 55 Rocca Drive, Petaluma - Presented exhibit of FEMA map, and a map showing the ECOC exhibit of floodplains. All of the floodplains are not identified on these maps, even the FEMA map is only within the City limits. Does not show the Liberty Creek or the Marin Creek, or the other one (Willowbrook), which runs in from the east. You can see part of the creeks on different maps. Understand that the General Plan is only dealing with the City limits, so they don't show those on here. However with the development that is occurring in the west hills, that is actually being built on the Marin Creek watershed, displacing flows into the Marin Creek and downstream. These are factors that should be included in figuring out our General Plan process. The development is occurring now and is going to continue to occur in that area. Also, see on the boundaries map, we are looking at expansion along Petaluma Boulevard North. This is an area that may have an effect on flooding or be affected by flooding along PBN as development continues. Wonder how we can get this into the General Plan process. He was concerned with the XP-SWMM model showing increased flooding in the southern part of Petaluma but less through the center of town and that the increased flood depths were not showing in the planning process; and there was a conflict with the "real time data".

Matt Maguire, Petaluma asked if the EIR would be based on the Preferred Land Use Plan and was advised it would be. His question about Affordable Housing was addressed by Pamela Tuft stating that the Housing Element had been certified but it would not be amended unless there were internal inconsistencies when the General Plan was drafted.

Richard Brawn, Petaluma said that so many environmental reports do not state the standards against which environmental degradation is going to be measured or the degree to which the mitigation would be measured. He felt that quite often the standards are the personal opinion of the person writing the report. He wanted the City to define what the community standards would be to measure environmental degradation. He talked about a "cost benefit analysis" and stated that an EIR is this. He also addressed his concerns about the community's values and what the community wants to safeguard and he would like to identify these as this affects the environment. He stated that people want a small town environment and he wanted to preserve this. He asked what does the Environmental Impact on the General Plan mean: what environment and what impact and the cause of that?

GP Director Tuft explained that questions such as his would be answered in a written response so that all interested citizens would know what questions were raised and the answers to them.

Stan Gold, Petaluma wanted to address the economic impacts of energy. He mentioned that oil supplies are finite and that the City needs to prepare for this and include in the General Plan a method to enable future City Councils to address the issue of alternative energy. He wanted to see this enabling language for all alternative energy sources included in the General Plan.

Sonja Taylor, Santa Rosa commented on a bill on the Governor's desk regarding economic impact reports regarding large retail stores such as Walmart. She noted that economic impacts are not covered in EIR's and she suggested that these be included in Petaluma's land use decisions.

Clayton Engstrom, Petaluma his concern related to the expense aspect of the General Plan creating a plan that is so expensive that money is not available for the other things that are needed in the community. He stated that in the past the General Plan EIR set the zoning and when the property was developed additional studies weren't required.

Director Tuft answered that studies are typically done with a Specific Plan was done within the Corona/Ely and Central Petaluma Specific Plans. She stated the General Plan is usually not detailed enough for addressing the impacts associated with developing a specific parcel or area.

Sherri Fabre Macia, Petaluma was concerned about a specific area where pallid bats had been identified in the Kelly Creek corridor as well as the red-legged frog, and tiger salamander. She wondered if the General Plan identified what the build-out was going to be and that a PUD designation for formerly agricultural land was going to cause environmental problems without the proper mitigation. She also mentioned the water supply problem in Sonoma County and that infill affects the availability of this finite resource.

Matt Maguire, Petaluma commented that he had supported a General Plan based on sustainability of tangible resources not theoretical resources. He wanted the EIR to look at the true resources that are available and when new projects are approved, the impacts reviewed to find water inefficiencies in the existing system before more water use is allowed. He wanted to see this included, as well as air quality, traffic circulation, and the environmental impacts of all of these considered in the General Plan EIR.

Richard Brawn, Petaluma added that he would like to see within the City of Petaluma an EIR that addresses things that would affect an urbanized area. He said this would allow developers to develop in a balanced way, and if money wasn't available to preserve and protect the environment, it will continue to be degraded. He also addressed the abuse and misuse of planned development that has become a tool to do spot zoning. He wanted the City Council to have a mechanism to address zoning or changes in use that would affect a neighborhood.

Greg Colvin, Petaluma was interested in the Kelly Creek area where he lives and the subdivision that is proposed. He felt that the Urban Growth Boundary was compressing people within this and that open space within this boundary could be used to connect downtown to an extension of Putnam Park. He wanted to have park use with a pond to relieve flood potential included in this area integrated into the General Plan and did not want to have the agricultural zoning removed. He wanted to know what it would take to have his ideas considered as part of the EIR.

Geoff Cartwright, Petaluma referred to the channelization of the Payran Reach and explained the weir that is basically a dam with a keyhole that allows a certain amount of water to flow through this channel and all the other water flow remains the same as prior to the channelization. He mentioned again all of the development that is occurring near various creeks/streams and watersheds west of town adding to the flooding problem. He agreed that the areas, such as those by Kelly Creek, should be left open to avoid more flooding. He mentioned the water supply and the State of California study from the 1980's that identified water recharge areas and hoped these maps would be used in the EIR to prevent building in these areas.

Susan Kirk, Petaluma talked about active parks and asked if there was a formula for park space since more development on the west side would bring more children and there are no parks for children to use.

Director Tuft explained that the existing General Plan has park standards but it is city-wide, not neighborhood based.

Richard Brawn, Petaluma mentioned that the United States is developing at an increased rate. He asked everyone to keep in mind that change is inevitable but that change must be managed. He said houses would last 70 years at the most and that all of the houses in Petaluma would get old at approximately the same time and there is no economic incentive for developers to buy up property and build new homes because it would be an "over development" and this will cause a problem with the tax base. He wanted people to think about urban redevelopment and the increased densities it requires to make it financially viable. He wanted the EIR to address change within the City to accommodate the quality of life.

Steve Kirk, Petaluma reinforced and commented that the Urban Growth Boundary is a good concept as is the CPSP. He supported higher density in the middle of town and less density as the boundary was approached; he would like this included in the EIR. He also mentioned the systemic flooding problems that have occurred as parcels are developed and he wanted to have these impacts addressed.

Geoff Cartwright, Petaluma stated that the only constraint to prevent continued flooding in Petaluma was the Zero Net Fill policy and explained that this is not a zero net runoff policy. He suggested a Zero Net Runoff policy, perhaps in conjunction with the Zero Net Fill, so that developments have to install retention ponds and control runoff created by their developments.

Public Comments Concluded.

Written Comments in Response to the Notice of Preparation were submitted by the following:

| <u>Agency/Name</u> | <u>Date Received</u> |
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| Sonoma County Water Agency | October 1, 2004 |

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| California Regional Water Quality Control Board | September 17, 2004 |
| Map Exhibit | September 29, 2004 (fax) |
| California Department of Fish and Game | August 26, 2004 |
| North Marin Water District | September 2, 2004 |
| Petaluma City Schools | August 26, 2004 |
| Sonoma County Permit & Resources Management Department | September 10, 2004 |
| State Department of Transportation | September 17, 2004 |
| Paula Lane Action Network (P.L.A.N.) | September 3, 2004 |
| Abrams Associates | September 23, 2004 |
| Diane Reilly Torres | September 30, 2004 (email) |

Verbal and written comments will be included in the Draft Environmental Impact Report with appropriate responses.