



DATE: April 29, 2024

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council through City Manager

FROM: Brian Oh, Community Development Director
Heather Hines, Special Projects Manager
Christina Paul, Principal Planner

SUBJECT: Receive a presentation and provide feedback related to the City's General Plan Update, including feedback on the Draft Blueprint for Carbon Neutrality and the public review process for the draft policy frameworks, and conduct a workshop to review and discuss the areas of land use alternatives.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council receive a presentation and provide feedback related the City's General Plan update, including feedback on the Draft Blueprint for Carbon Neutrality and the public review process for the draft policy frameworks, and conduct a workshop to review and discuss the areas of change/land use alternatives. No action is being requested at the meeting, rather this meeting provides an opportunity for staff and the consultant team to present the City Council with an update on three concurrent components of the larger update process:

- Review of the Blueprint for Carbon Neutrality will provide a final input loop with the City Council prior to preparation of the final draft before review and recommendation by the Climate Action Commission and Planning Commission and final consideration of adoption by the City Council.
- Overview of the draft policy frameworks will focus on the upcoming outreach effort to solicit comments from the community and the City's Commissions, Committees, and Boards. This overview will not focus on receiving City Council's in-depth comments on the content of each draft framework, which will occur at a subsequent meeting with review of the feedback received on the drafts.
- Review and discussion of the 'Areas of Change' and overarching approach to the land use alternatives.

BACKGROUND

General Plan Update

The City is currently operating under the Petaluma General Plan 2025, which was written in 2006-2007, and adopted in 2008. The City is currently preparing a General Plan Update that is anticipated to be before the City Council for adoption in late 2025. The General Plan is a guiding document, providing policies and implementation programs to achieve the City's goals, and generally has a planning horizon of around 20 years. The General Plan also serves as the City's foundation for regulating land use. Eight mandatory topical areas, or Elements, must be included in a General Plan pursuant to California State Law, including Land Use, Open Space, Conservation, Housing, Circulation, Noise, Safety, and Environmental Justice. Unlike other elements, the Housing Element is required by State regulations to be updated every eight years. Petaluma's Housing Element was adopted by City Council and certified by the State of California in March 2023.

While Climate Action Plans are not a required part of the General Plan, Petaluma is dedicated to leading climate action in our community and elected to develop a Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) as part of the General Plan update process to ensure efficient progress toward the City's commitment to carbon neutrality. While initially labeled a CAAP, the City elected to separate the greenhouse reduction component from the adaptation component due to the increased timeline to complete the flood and sea level rise modeling that was undertaken as part of this effort. The Blueprint for Carbon Neutrality will serve as the City's Climate Action Plan and the adaptation measures will be integrated as part of the General Plan itself. Alternatively, the City may decide to integrate the adaptation measures into the Blueprint with adoption of the General Plan to bring the two components back together into a single CAAP.

The General Plan update process kicked off in 2020 with an extensive public engagement process designed to identify community and decision-maker priorities for the General Plan. This effort resulted in a Request for Proposals for consultant teams to assist the City in developing its General Plan, and in April 2021, the City entered into a contract with Raimi + Associates. The Raimi team includes a suite of subconsultants with expertise in a variety of areas to support the development of a robust and comprehensive General Plan for the City.

In early 2021, the City assembled a General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) to provide insight and recommendations throughout the General Plan Update process. The committee comprises a diverse group of residents, business owners, educators, and other members of the Petaluma community who serve as advisors and project ambassadors. The GPAC works collaboratively with the consultant team, led by Raimi + Associates, and City staff, to provide input on General Plan issues and offer feedback on draft materials. Further information on the GPAC, including meeting materials, can be found here: <https://www.planpetaluma.org/gpac-page>.

Following an initial period of data gathering in 2021, the consultant team completed numerous Existing Conditions Reports, which establish baseline conditions for:

- Arts and Culture
- Biological Resources
- Climate Hazards
- Green House Gas Inventory

- Health and Environmental Justice
- Historic Resources
- Land Use
- Manmade Hazards
- Market Analysis
- Natural Hazards
- Natural Resources
- Noise
- Parks, Recreation & Public Facilities
- Retail
- Sea Level Rise
- Socioeconomic Profile
- Transportation
- Utility Infrastructure
- Water

These reports can be reviewed here: <https://www.planpetaluma.org/documents#ecr-final>

Simultaneously, the consultant team and staff engaged in a robust public engagement process that included online public surveys, listening sessions, geographical area meetings, pop-up workshops, focus groups, and engagement with the General Plan Advisory Committee. This work further refined the Existing Conditions Reports as well as informed development of Vision Statement, Pillars, Guiding Principles, and Supporting Concepts document that was unanimously recommended by GPAC to the City Council on February 17, 2022. The document was accepted by the City Council on March 21, 2022 (<https://www.planpetaluma.org/documents#gpuvision>).

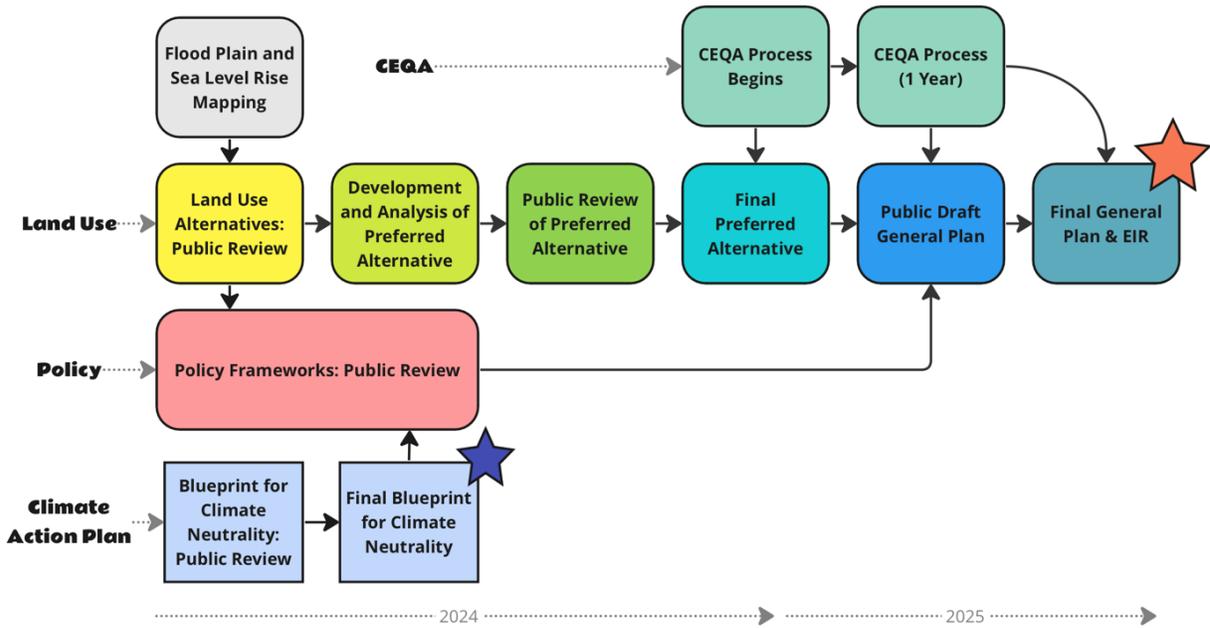
The Vision Statement describes the desired future conditions and characteristics of the city. The Pillars are the core community values. The Guiding Principles and Supporting Concepts provide broad direction and pathways to achieve the vision and honor community values, focusing on the community’s specific challenges and opportunities. The complete Vision, Pillars, and Guiding Principles are on the PlanPetaluma website (planpetaluma.org).

There have been significant milestones in the General Plan Update process since adoption of the Vision, Pillars, and Guiding Principles to continue to guide the process forward and to continue to engage the community. Some of these milestones include:

- Adoption and certification of the 6th cycle Housing Element
- Completion and outreach to review the Flood and Sea Level Rise modeling
- Release of the Draft Blueprint for Carbon Neutrality
- Release of Policy Frameworks
- Identification of Areas of Change to inform the Land Use Alternatives

This content will continue to evolve to form the core of the General Plan. Figure 1 below, diagrams the General Plan Review Process from the current point through completion, including major steps and inputs. Community engagement will continue to play an essential role in the development of the updated General Plan and guide the community’s vision for the future.

Figure 1: 2024-2025 General Plan Review Process



DISCUSSION

There are three components before the City Council for presentation and discussion, including the Blueprint for Carbon Neutrality, the Policy Frameworks, and Land Use Alternatives. Each are discussed in detail below, including context and foundation and current status and next steps. Additionally, each item includes clear summary of the input being requested from the City Council to guide a meaningful dialogue.

Blueprint for Carbon Neutrality

Context and Foundation

In 2019, the City of Petaluma officially recognized a Climate Emergency and formed a Climate Action Commission (CAC) with the aim of guiding the city towards carbon neutrality. Throughout 2020, the Commission, in collaboration with City staff and encompassing robust community engagement developed the Climate Emergency Framework (CEF). The framework was adopted by the City Council on January 11, 2021, and outlines the city's commitment to achieving climate neutrality by 2030. The CEF both presents a vision for Petaluma's future and establishes fundamental values to steer the city's initiatives in climate planning.

Recognizing the urgent timeline for achieving carbon neutrality by 2030, the City elected to separate the greenhouse gas reduction plan from the adaptation policies that were tied to a lengthy flood and sea level rise modeling effort and developed the "Blueprint for Carbon Neutrality". It is anticipated that the adoption of the Blueprint will precede the comprehensive General Plan update. The formulation of climate adaptation and resiliency policies and actions,

those that are focused on reacting to climate change rather than preventing it through greenhouse gas reductions, will be integrated into the General Plan through the applicable policy frameworks and could be incorporated into a comprehensive CAAP with the Blueprint as part of the General Plan adoption if determined most effective.

The purpose of the Blueprint for Carbon Neutrality is to provide a roadmap for how the City can move efficiently toward carbon neutral by 2030. The Blueprint lays out an ambitious action plan for the City which requires a significant change in all aspects of municipal operations but also monumental change in the activities and behaviors of the community. Implementation of the Blueprint will require focused prioritization to work towards the ultimate goal of carbon neutrality.

As outlined in the Blueprint, an inventory of Petaluma's 2018 Greenhouse Gas Emissions showed 472,422 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO₂e). The majority (67%) of these emissions are generated by on-road transportation. An additional 24% of emissions are the result of energy usage. These top two sources, transportation and building energy, make up over 90% of Petaluma's greenhouse gas emissions and quickly focused the need for urgent action to address these sectors in order to make significant change to decrease emissions.

The Blueprint also looked specifically at the City's municipal operations which are a small fraction of the overall community emissions (3,653 out of 472,422 metric tons). While municipal operations have a small impact on Petaluma's emissions, the Blueprint does recognize that city policies, programs, and standards can influence the community's overall emissions and can drive positive change towards the City's carbon neutrality goal.

To reduce emissions, the Blueprint includes seven action plans to address Clean Energy, Buildings, Transportation and Land Use, Resource Consumption, Water, Sequestration, and Municipal Operations. While some of the proposed actions in these plans will result in a more significant reduction than others, all actions are necessary to reduce emissions to the greatest extent feasible. The Blueprint also identifies each action based on the anticipated reduction in emissions (low, medium, high) and relative cost (\$, \$\$, \$\$\$) to help prioritization of actions.

The draft Blueprint proposes 22 cornerstone actions (Blueprint p. 39-40) which are brought forward as critical foundational actions for the City to take to jumpstart emission reduction. These strategies align with City Council priorities, generate significant emission reductions and co-benefits, and/or are foundational actions that prepare the city for the implementation of additional actions.

Climate Action Commission Review

As the designated advisory body with a climate focus, the CAC has played a crucial role in the development of the Blueprint. Commission ad-hoc committees provided feedback on each of the action plan focus areas to support the drafting of the Blueprint. When the Draft Blueprint was released for public review in October 2023 the CAC was the first CCB to receive a presentation to initiate review of the document. The CAC formed an ad-hoc committee to conduct an in-depth review of the plan and to make recommendations to the larger CAC.

After further review, discussion and consideration of comments from other CCBs and members of the public, in February the CAC made recommendation to modify the cornerstone actions. A comparison of the original cornerstone actions and the CAC recommended cornerstone actions with comments is provided at Attachment 3.

In addition to the Planning Commission, the CCBs that have provided review comments include the Recreation, Music, and Parks Commission, Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee, Tree Advisory Committee, Senior Advisory Committee, Transit Committee, and Planning Commission. Revisions to the Blueprint will be made in response to feedback and the final draft of the Blueprint will be brought before the CAC and Planning Commission for deliberation and recommendation to the City Council for adoption.

Community Engagement Summary

Starting in October 2023, the City solicited feedback on the Draft Blueprint, including comments from the public as well as appointed CCBs. A number of options were provided in order to solicit public input in the fall of 2023, including an in-person community open house on October 12, 2023, an online feedback form, and a series of CCB meetings. Additionally, City staff coordinated with Cool Petaluma and Daily Acts to support their targeted outreach efforts to solicit additional comments on the Blueprint.

Each CCB was provided the opportunity to provide feedback on the Blueprint and presentations were made to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee, Transit Advisory Committee, Senior Advisory Committee, Tree Advisory Committee, Recreation, Music, and Parks Commission, General Plan Advisory Committee, and Planning Commission. Each body provided feedback focused on the interplay of the Blueprint with their particular focus.

In addition to CCB feedback, approximately 1,000 public comments were received on the Blueprint. The following summarizes high level themes discussed during the outreach process:

- **General Themes**
 - Program implementation needs to be equity focused.
 - Ensure that disadvantaged communities have to resources to participate in the transition through direct install programs, new funding sources, etc., and starting program implementation in identified neighborhoods.
 - General caution about making housing more expensive.
 - Emphasis on multi-benefit strategies, e.g., complete, multimodal streets with improved tree canopy and stormwater improvements.
 - Need to ensure that there are adequate sources of funding for program implementation.
 - More community engagement as programs are implemented.
 - Recognize that technology in transportation, batteries, charging, and mode, are rapidly changing.

- **About City Operations**

- The City needs to align resources and staff; organization structure and work plans; training; and management of facilities and assets to drive implementation towards carbon neutrality.
 - The speed of delivery is essential; actions should be started sooner and be completed more quickly.
 - Staff should receive the appropriate training to foster a culture of climate action.
 - There is a need for political support to devote capital and staffing to City programs.
 - The City needs to accelerate its greenhouse gas reductions from its operations in order to affirm and illustrate its leadership.
 - The City needs to measure Blueprint implementation and provide transparency and information through monitoring and reporting in order to increase accountability.
 - Define metrics to support tracking and monitoring, e.g., miles of connected active mobility corridors, reduction in tree isolated communities.
- **Examples of Specific Recommendations**
 - Incorporate more measures related to non-residential building decarbonization.
 - Better coordination with architects, contractors, and trades to implement building strategies.
 - Prioritize a ban on gas-powered lawn and garden equipment, including leaf blowers.
 - Better coordination with the school district to implement climate change programs, education, and safe routes to school.
 - Fair-free transit and shuttles. More transit service.
 - Focus on Level 1 and Level 2 EV charging, both play an important role.
 - Strengthen the tree ordinances.
 - Focus sequestration on regional projects, including wetlands and compost application on agricultural and rangeland.
 - Make Petaluma a Sponge City, with abundant natural areas and features such as trees, ponds and parks intended to absorb rain and prevent flooding
 - **General Organization**
 - Recognizing limited time and resources, more clearly articulate the short-term priorities.
 - Create one section with Partnerships and Engagement, rather than including under each implementation strategy.
 - Consider more graphic approaches to the Blueprint to spur local action. Create a graphic executive summary.

Current Status and Next Steps

After review and discussion of the Blueprint at more than ten CCB meetings and including extensive outreach, the Blueprint is now being presented to the City Council for final feedback prior to embarking on development of a final draft of the Blueprint.

Following discussion and feedback from the City Council, the appropriate revisions will be made to create a final draft for consideration and ultimate adoption. Both the Climate Action Commission and the Planning Commission will review the final draft for recommendation prior

to the City Council's deliberations. Staff anticipates the final draft will be brought to the Climate Action Commission and Planning Commission for their recommendation in June/July and their recommendations will be brought before the City Council for consideration and adoption in September 2024.

Council Considerations

The item before the City Council is to provide an overview of the Blueprint and the outreach completed to solicit comments and to solicit any feedback from the City Council to incorporate into the final draft before consideration for adoption of the plan. The City Council is welcome to ask clarifying questions about the data presented in the Blueprint or strategies considered in developing the Blueprint. The Council may wish to provide feedback on the CAC's recommended changes to the cornerstone actions as outlined in Attachment 3.

Policy Frameworks

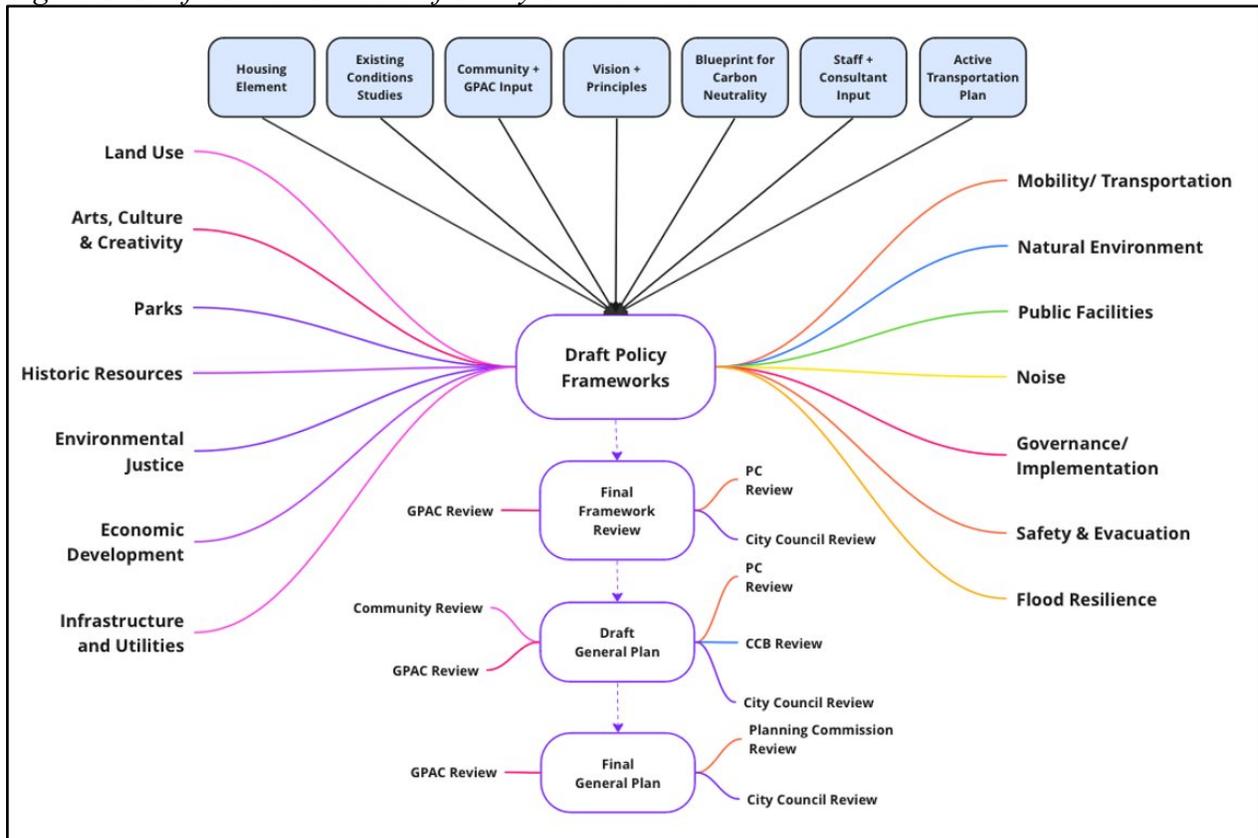
Context and Foundation

The General Plan is made up of both the Land Use Map, which displays General Plan Land Uses, and policies that relate to a wide range of topics. At present, the draft General Plan policies are contained in Policy Frameworks, which will ultimately be developed into Elements in the Draft General Plan. These frameworks were developed based on a series of inputs, including much of the work that has been done to date as part of the General Plan Update, including the Existing Conditions Report, Vision and Guiding Principles, the Blueprint and Carbon Neutrality, and the Housing Element. Additionally, the policy frameworks were shaped through the input from the General Plan Advisory Committee, expertise from the consultant team, operational expertise from city staff, and input from the community.

Twelve of the 14 policy frameworks were published for public review on March 21, 2024 (<https://www.planpetaluma.org/policy-frameworks>). The Flood Resiliency Framework is anticipated to be released for public review the last week in April. The Land Use Framework will be released later this summer alongside the Land Use Alternatives.

Figure 2 diagrams the process that resulted in the Draft Policy Frameworks, and the subsequent review process and development of the General Plan.

Figure 2: Draft Review Process of Policy Frameworks



Community Engagement Approach

The Policy Frameworks are draft policy documents that reflect topics to be covered in the General Plan. While a policy framework may evolve into an Element of the final General Plan, not all policy frameworks will be a separate element. Many of the topic areas may be combined or separated to address comments received during community engagement process or to best emphasize a particular focus or priority of the City. Additionally, the policy frameworks do not incorporate narrative that would typically be included in a General Plan Element to set the context for the reader. Finally, it is important to note that the frameworks primary focus is on goals and policies and may evolve to include additional or more measurable program implementation in the development of the Draft General Plan.

Although the frameworks were made public in late March, the public comment period kicks off in May with a community workshop and an extensive round of presentation and discussion with the CCBs. An online comment form will be posted on the General Plan webpage (planpetaluma.org) to guide public comments on individual frameworks and focusing comments to address specific goals and priorities.

Petaluma PlanFest is a community workshop being held on May 11th from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 pm. at the Fairgrounds. PlanFest will be structured as an open house with stations for each of the frameworks and including representation from the consultant team, staff, and GPAC to discuss the frameworks and receive public input. The event will be a family-friendly in-person public event with food and activities and an opportunity to come together as a community around the development of the General Plan.

Starting May 1st, the City’s CCBs will begin their review of the policy frameworks based on the expertise and focus of each group. Table 1 below lists each CCB that will be reviewing policy frameworks, when they will review them, and which frameworks they will be asked to focus on, given the charge of their body.

Table 1: City of Petaluma Committees, Commissions, and Board Review Schedule

CCB	Meeting Date	Frameworks to Review
Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee joint meeting with the Transit Advisory Committee	May 1, 2024	Mobility and Transportation
Airport Commission	May 2, 2024	Mobility and Transportation
Historic and Cultural Preservation Committee	May 7, 2024	Historic Resources
Senior Advisory Committee	May 9, 2024	Health, Equity, and Environmental Justice
Climate Action Commission	May 9, 2024	Natural Environment Mobility and Transportation Flood Resilience

Recreation Music and Parks Commission joint meeting with the Tree Advisory Committee	May 15, 2024	Parks Natural Environment Public Facilities
Public Art Committee	May 23, 2024	Arts, Culture, and Creativity
Planning Commission	May 28, 2024 June 25, 2024 July 23, 2024	Natural Environment Infrastructure and Utilities Economic Development Noise Parks Mobility and Transportation Health, Equity, and Environmental Justice Flood Resilience Land Use
General Plan Advisory Committee	Ongoing Final review June 20, 2024	Working Group Recommendations on all Frameworks

The GPAC will review all of the Policy Frameworks. GPAC members have divided up into working groups made up of anywhere from 2-4 members. These working groups are currently doing an in-depth review of each of the frameworks. Each working group will share their recommendations with the GPAC, who will provide recommendations to the Planning Commission and City Council.

The Planning Commission will review Policy Frameworks for recommendation to the City Council. To facilitate their review, they will focus on frameworks that are central to their work and will rely on the focused input of other CCBs to inform their review of other frameworks. The Planning Commission has also formed Ad Hoc Committees to facilitate their review of the Noise, Economic Development, Parks, Infrastructure and Utilities, Mobility and Transportation, Environmental Justice, Flood Resilience, and Land Use Frameworks. The Planning Commission will look to the recommendations of other CCBs on focused topics such as Historic Preservation and Creativity and Culture to inform their review and recommendation.

Current Status and Next Steps

As discussed above, 12 of the Policy Frameworks were released for public review on March 21, 2024. The Flood Resilience Framework is being released this week (week of April 22nd) and the Land Use Framework is anticipated to be released with the Land Use Framework in July/August 2024. In May an in-depth engagement effort to solicit input on the frameworks kicks off to engage the community and solicit focused input from the CCBs.

Following the outreach effort the input will be brought before the Planning Commission for review and recommendation followed by City Council consideration and acceptance.

Council Considerations

The item before the City Council is to provide an overview of the foundation and development of the Policy Frameworks and outline the community engagement effort that will begin in May. This presentation provides an opportunity for the City Council to ask any clarifying questions or provide input on the outreach effort ahead. In depth discussion or feedback on the individual frameworks is not being requested at this time to allow the City Council to comment on the individual frameworks alongside feedback from the community, CCBs, and the GPAC.

Land Use Alternatives

Context and Foundation

Land Use Alternatives are fundamentally a way of presenting map-based land use choices (or “alternatives” or “scenarios”) as part of a General Plan Update. This step allows the city to thoroughly consider several options before selecting the “Preferred Alternative” that will ultimately become the Land Use Map in the updated General Plan. This is a way of planning for and then managing the projected growth of a city. Land Use Alternatives show options for General Plan Land Uses and include location by parcel, use type, and density/intensity. The General Plan Land Use Map then gets translated into the City’s Zoning Map and associated Zoning Code.

The process of developing Land Use Alternatives as part of a General Plan update can be customized to the needs of each local jurisdiction. Historically, this is done by looking at three distinct citywide Land Use Alternatives which can be useful for cities considering accommodating growth in concentrated areas, like an old airport or adjacent farmland, for example, and there is a question of where the growth should go. Because of the unique local context in Petaluma, including the largely built out nature of the community, the commitment to the urban growth boundary, and the focus on climate initiatives and housing affordability, discussion of land use alternatives has largely focused on infill development. This strategy is reflected in the draft Land Use Alternatives, which focus on specific neighborhoods or “Areas of Change,” with three alternatives for each area.

The Land Use Alternatives outline options for the City to revise the current land use designations in the General Plan. This includes potential changes to specific geographic areas where either the land use and/or intensity of use may change. Feedback on the Alternatives will lead to the development of a Preferred Alternative. With input from the community, the Preferred Alternative will be included in the Draft General Plan and be the basis for the General Plan Land Use Map. Furthermore, the identification of the Preferred Alternative is a major milestone in the General Plan Update that will result in the initiation of the environmental review process.

Development of Land Use Alternatives

The General Plan Advisory Committee has provided ongoing feedback throughout the development of the Land Use Alternatives. GPAC met on September 21, 2023, and October 19, 2023, to receive a presentation on the Sea Level Rise and Flood Mapping updates and to discuss flood adaptation strategies that help inform the development of land use alternatives. In November 2023, and January and February 2024, the GPAC met to discuss and provide feedback on the alternatives for land uses, intensities of uses, and related policy questions. This process resulted in the development of area-specific Land Use Alternatives. To inform their discussion,

the GPAC reviewed Land Use information on this dynamic web-based map: <https://raimi.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=4db152b2ace94ea1857a33c0306494d8>. Most recently, Planning Commission reviewed this material on April 9, 2024.

As described briefly above, the Land Use Alternatives have been developed through an extensive process driven by the:

- Existing Conditions Reports, including physical and biological constraints to development such as wildlife habitat, farmland, and high and moderate fire hazard severity zones (available here: <https://www.planpetaluma.org/documents#ecr-final>)
- Final Visioning Products (Vision, Pillars, and Guiding Principles)
- Sustainable Design Assistance Team’s 2022 Report: Reimagining Petaluma
- Updated Sea Level Rise and Flood Maps
- City of Petaluma 2023-2031 Housing Element
- General Plan Advisory Committee

Below is a summary of major data points that informed the development of the Land Use Alternatives:

Housing Element: Housing Opportunity Sites, Demand, and Regional Housing Needs Assessment (2050) – The 2023-2031 Housing Element identifies sites where future housing is anticipated. These sites were part of the areas of discussion for the Land Use Alternatives. An important factor in developing the Housing Element and the Land Use Alternatives is the City’s responsibility and commitment to fulfilling the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). The RHNA is the number of additional housing units across all income levels needed for Petaluma to accommodate population growth as determined by the State of California Housing and Community Development Department. For the 6th cycle, Petaluma’s RHNA is 1,910 units, spread across the eight years in the housing cycle, these projections can be extrapolated to approximately 225 units per year.

Association of Bay Area Governments Population Projections (Plan Bay Area 2040, Plan Bay Area 2050) – The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) prepares population projections for the Bay Area region and sub-regions. Plan Bay Area 2050 can be found here (<https://mtc.ca.gov/planning/long-range-planning/plan-bay-area-2050>). This plan projects slightly fewer than 225 per year, while Plan Bay Area 2040 (<http://2040.planbayarea.org/>) projects approximately 200 units per year.

General Plan Housing Unit Capacity (Projected Build Out) – Given RHNA trends and ABAG population projections, the Land Use Alternatives are calibrated to accommodate the development of approximately 5,000 housing units across the General Plan planning horizon, assumed to be approximately 20 years. This equates to 250 units per year. Petaluma currently has approximately 2,000 housing units in the development pipeline; therefore, the Alternatives could identify development opportunities for 3,000 additional units. The total capacity will depend on the selections for each area of change. This consideration will be further analyzed as part of the process to identify a Preferred Alternative.

Flood Resilience – On January 8, 2024, the City Council received a presentation on the updated Flood and Sea Level Rise Modeling that was created as part of the General Plan Update process. In addition to identifying areas of the City that are subject to flooding now and in the future, as a result of sea level rise, several concepts were applied:

- Retain Existing Hazard-prone Open Space and Undeveloped Areas
- Keep parcels as Parks/Open Space where already designated
- Rezone entire or portions of undeveloped parcels along upstream River to Parks or Open Space
- Protect Neighborhoods/Mobile Homes
- Leave existing residential uses in place
- Protect Downtown
- Consider upzoning infill sites in Downtown, require building adaptation, consider paying for district flood improvements (levees, road raising, pumps, etc.)
- Invest in Downtown/Warehouse infrastructure
- Adopt Resilient Building Standards
- Major construction/renovations must follow new adaptation requirements for building-scale resilience (mostly raising BFE)
- Consider a regulatory approach for existing Non-Residential uses
- Do not allow mixed-use residential or intensification in severely flood-impacted areas with existing low-value commercial/industrial uses
- Leave low-intensity river-adjacent industrial as is
- consider land use policy realignment

Economic, Market, and Fiscal Context -The economic and market considerations for the Land Use alternatives leverage Petaluma’s strengths and opportunities with the market demand for housing, retail, industrial, office, and hotel space as shown in Table 2. Changes to land use types have fiscal impacts because business and development activity increase tax revenues that support City services. Fiscal impacts were considered in identifying land use alternatives.

Table 2: Market Demand by Land Use Type

Type	Demand Projection for 2050	
	Low Estimate	High Estimate
Housing*	5,570 units	6,460 units
Industrial	537,000 square feet	654,000 square feet
Office	299,000 square feet	349,000 square feet
Hotel	244 rooms	383 rooms
Retail	84,512 square feet	108,522 square feet

Source: Economic & Market Analysis prepared by Strategic Economics, November 3, 2021

* Note: While the Market Analysis has identified demand for over 5,000 new housing units, the Alternatives target approximately 3 – 4,000 new housing units due to 2,000+ already being in the City’s development pipeline

Transportation, VMT, and Carbon Neutrality Context - Petaluma residents drive more than the 9-County Bay Area average and must reduce transportation emissions to reach climate goals.

The City adopted a menu of VMT reduction strategies with a high, medium, or low effect of reducing VMT within the context of Petaluma. Two of the highest value strategies are land use measures that can be incorporated through the General Plan land use alternatives, including increasing the diversity and density of land uses.

Active Transportation/Accessibility Analysis – An analysis of the current accessibility of Petaluma’s transportation network to active transportation was conducted. The analysis shows areas with the best access for bicycles and pedestrians (e.g. around downtown) and the areas with the worst access (e.g. around North McDowell and Old Redwood Highway). The analysis looks at changes that would be driven by land use policies.

Proposed Areas of Change

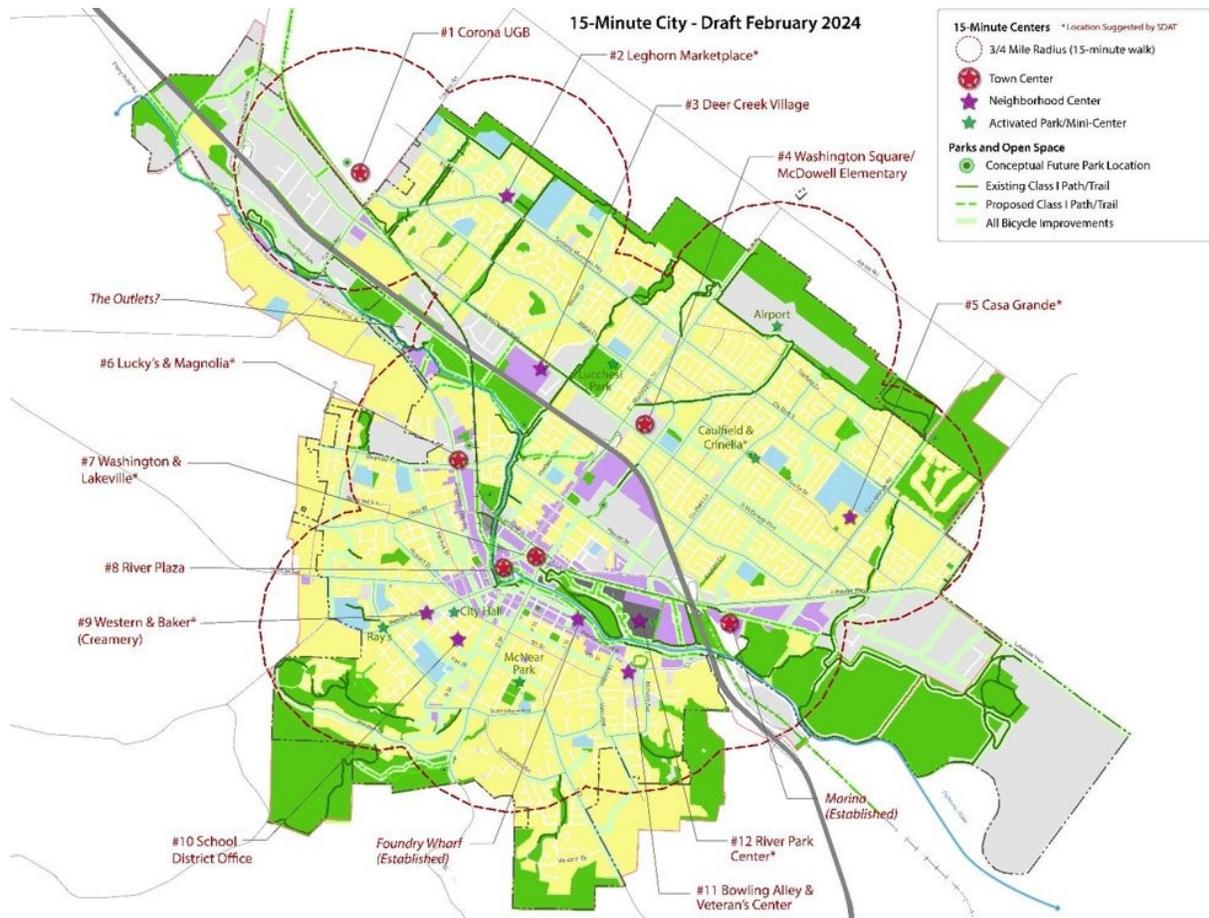
Based on the above considerations, input from the community and decision-makers during the visioning process, and input from the GPAC, the consultant team identified potential areas of change across the city. These areas of change include:

- **Upstream and Downstream River-Adjacent** – The land use alternatives explore the possibility of de-intensification of General Plan Land Use Designations (allowed uses and intensities) adjacent to the Petaluma River. Specifically, the alternatives consider de-intensifying Denman Flats to the Livestock Auction Yard (upstream) and South of East Lakeville Highway to west of Casa Grande Road (downstream).
- **Downtown/Core/Transit Oriented Development** – The land use alternatives explore the possible intensification and diversification of the historic Downtown, areas around the Downtown SMART Station, historic agricultural industrial areas, and River Park/former Scannell site.
- **Corridors** – The land use alternatives explore intensification of uses along Petaluma Blvd North, Petaluma Blvd South, and East Washington. This may include infill development on underutilized sites as well as enhancing character, safety, and activity along the corridors.
- **Potential Corona Station Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) Expansion** – In November 2024, Petaluma voters will decide whether or not to extend the timeline of the UGB, which is otherwise set to expire in December 31, 2025. The UGB has historically allowed the City Council to consider an expansion of the UGB adjacent to the Corona Road/Petaluma North SMART Station to accommodate Transit Oriented Development. Based on the outcome of this vote, the General Plan will provide guidance on potential uses and densities in this area.
- **15-Minute Neighborhood and Town Centers** - A 15-Minute City is a city of walkable neighborhoods in which residents can meet most of their essential needs – including accessing groceries, daily services, recreation, social gathering places, health care, and transit – within a 15-minute walk of their home. The areas of change would include

identifying and designating 15-minute centers, areas throughout the city that residents could easily walk to, and where providing goods and services would be economically feasible, in the categories as shown in Figure 1 below:

- Town Center: - Includes housing, office/employment, and services/amenities for the surrounding community (¾ mile+ catchment area) and is defined by the following features:
 - Horizontal mixed-use and moderate- to high-scale mixed-use
 - Major destination, near highest frequency transit
 - Larger scale: ~3-6 stories
- Neighborhood Center: Includes a gathering place, local services/amenities, and housing in limited quantities or as live/work to serve the immediate neighborhood (¾ mile catchment area) and is defined by the following features:
 - Live/work or flex employment strongly encouraged
 - Smaller scale: ~2-3 stories
- Activated Park/Mini-Center: add concessions and/or programming to activate key existing gathering places, civic spaces, and parks

Figure 3: 15-Minute Cities Map



Evolution of Single-Family Neighborhoods

As identified in the 2023-2031 Housing Element, Goal #1 is to provide a range of middle-density housing options in existing low density residential neighborhoods. In addition to considering land use changes in Areas of Change through the city, the General Plan update process will also consider the evolution of single-family neighborhoods. These neighborhoods can be seen in yellow in Figure 3. Rather than as a map-based Land Use Alternative, further detail will be presented as part of the Land Use Policy Framework to facilitate evolution of what is currently predominately low density single family neighborhoods.

Proposed policies will include considering promotion of Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) construction and other infill opportunities for these neighborhoods. Senate Bill 9 already requires cities to allow for division of applicable single family lots and construction of up to four units on through ministerial approval. Proposed policies will consider allowing additional design flexibility in response to SB-9 and Petaluma's vision for the future. Additionally, proposed policies will look at allowing greater flexibility for non-residential uses that support daily life in residential neighborhoods, home occupations, and potentially redefining live/work and work/live units.

Current Status and Next Steps

The discussion of Land Use Alternatives is just beginning and is being presented to City Council to solicit early input to inform the process and confirm readiness to begin the process of reviewing these materials with the community to solicit public input. A similar presentation was made at the April 9th Planning Commission meeting at which time the Commission indicate general support with the key areas of change and focus of the land use alternative discussion. Further input was as follows:

Question 1: Do you support the approach to resilience? Yes, but be clear Petaluma will always remain a 'river town'

Question 2: Do you support the citywide approach? Yes, but explain other River-focused strategies and make sure enough capacity for growth is created ("no net loss")

Question 3: Have we identified the right areas to discuss with the public? Yes, but...

- *Corridors, Corona, & other areas need holistic approach*
- *Not sure community should be asked about land use change in the Historic Agricultural Services District*
- *Consider ways to best communicate options for land use change and help people visualize them*

Question 4: Have we identified the right 15-minute centers? Yes, but...

- *Provide more detail about 15-minute centers*
- *These area needs are different on the east and west*
- *Concerned that not all neighborhoods have access (north, east, Arroyo)*
- *Expectations for the non-residential growth should be realistic*
- *Each center needs holistic approach, including change and/or flexibility in land use*

With input provided by the City Council, the general plan team will develop public engagement materials focused on the Land Use Alternatives. The General Plan team anticipates that materials generated for public engagement will include a Briefing Book that will be available for review in August 2024. The subsequent outreach strategies and meeting dates are currently being refined by

the City. After public review and discussion, the Planning Commission will review and consider a preferred land use alternative for recommendation to the City Council. The item will be brought before the City Council for approval of the preferred land use alternative.

Once the preferred land use alternative is identified, the consultant team will release the official Notice of Preparation for the General Plan Environmental Impact Report. This will initiate the environmental process.

Figure 4: Development of the Preferred Land Use Alternative



GPAC Feedback

The General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) discussed Land Use Alternatives at their January 18, 2024, and February 15, 2024, meetings. The GPAC’s feedback is outlined in Slides 90, 91, and 92 is the powerpoint at Attachment 2. Additionally, the GPAC agreed that the City should invite specific public feedback on the following topics:

- Intensifying the Lucky’s site and the low-intensity mixed use areas on Petaluma Blvd
- The future of East Washington Corridor
- Potential evolution of Washington Square (the shopping center at the corner of McDowell Blvd. and Washington St.)
- Changing the General Plan Land Use Designation of River Park/former Scannell properties.

[Full summaries of these meetings are available here.](#)

Council Considerations

The purpose of this item is to familiarize the City Council with the process that has been used to develop the Land Use Alternatives and to ensure that the City Council has the opportunity to provide initial feedback on the process. Council feedback is requested in response to the following questions:

- *Does the City Council support the broad **citywide concept** of de-intensifying certain river-adjacent areas while intensifying some combination of the core, corridors, and/or centers?*
- ***Are these the right areas** to bring to the public to consider potential land use designation changes? Are any missing?*

City Council will have the opportunity to review the Land Use Alternatives in further detail and provide input on which should go into the Preferred Alternative following the larger public review process.

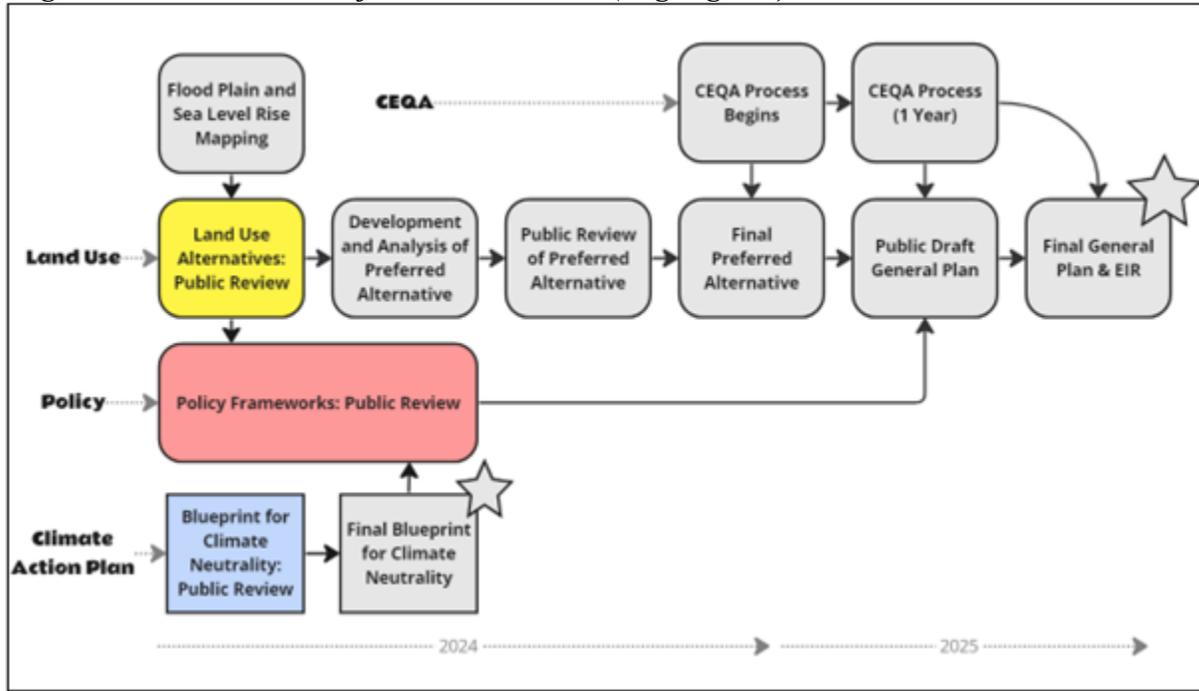
GENERAL PLAN NEXT STEPS

The next steps for the General Plan process are to facilitate the holistic review of the Policy Frameworks, to prepare the Land Use Alternatives and associated Briefing Book for discussion and review, and to work towards a final draft Blueprint for Carbon Neutrality.

The Public Draft Blueprint for Carbon Neutrality will be reviewed by City Council on April 29, 2024, alongside the Land Use materials being presented to City Council in this meeting. The Planning Team will then produce a Final Draft Blueprint for Carbon Neutrality for review, which will include review by the City Council.

Based upon the City Council's policy direction on Land Use Alternatives, the consultant team will develop a Briefing Book to provide data on the impacts of each of the alternatives under discussion. This will be shared with the community and decision makers to inform their feedback on land use preferences. Both the Land Use Alternatives and Policy Frameworks will return to City Council for input and recommendations following community and CCB review of the Spring 2024 drafts. This process will lead to the development of a Preferred Alternative, which will then be refined and become the Land Use Map in the General Plan.

Figure 5: Current Phase of the General Plan (Highlighted)



PUBLIC OUTREACH

The General Plan Update process is documented via the City of Petaluma General Plan website: <https://www.planpetaluma.org/>. It contains all information available on the General Plan Update process, including any documents that have been complete and many meeting recordings. General Plan Advisory Committee meetings are publicized, and the public is invited to attend and provide feedback via public comment at these and other public meetings.

The consultant team is preparing to launch a significant public engagement effort that will invite the public to provide feedback on the 14 policy frameworks and the Land Use Alternatives. The public will have the option to attend one of the city’s Committee, Commissions and Board meetings, utilize the online portal for feedback, and/or participate in the community workshop on Saturday, May 11, 2024.

The development of the Carbon Neutrality Blueprint is the outcome of collaborative endeavors involving Petaluma community members, the Climate Action Commission and other Committees and Commissions, City staff, and consultants. Aligned with the Climate Emergency Framework, the Blueprint is designed to advance implementation of the Framework. The Climate Action Commission, through extensive community engagement, played a pivotal role in drafting the Climate Emergency Framework, and this valuable input has significantly shaped the Blueprint. Additionally, ad hoc committees of the Climate Action Commission were solicited to review and offer feedback on early draft sections relevant to their respective focuses. Approximately a thousand comments have been received on the Blueprint to date.

Next steps in the review and outreach prior to adoption include consideration of the final draft of the Blueprint by the Climate Action Commission and Planning Commission, tentatively targeted for late spring/early summer. The City Council will subsequently consider the Blueprint for adoption.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

There are no action items before the City Council, therefore this item is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act. Following review of the draft policy frameworks and development of the draft Land Use Framework, the General Plan Update project will begin preparation of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project. When the General Plan is brought forward for adoption in late 2025 it will include a programmatic EIR for certification.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS

This item is part of the General Plan Update process under contract with Raimi + Associates and has budget previously allocated to the project.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Blueprint Powerpoint Presentation
2. Frameworks and Land Use Alternatives Powerpoint Presentation
3. CAC recommended updates to Cornerstone Actions in the Blueprint
4. Draft Blueprint for Carbon Neutrality available at:
https://storage.googleapis.com/proudcity/petalumaca/uploads/2023/10/PGPU_PubDraft_2023_0929.pdf
5. Draft Policy Frameworks available at: <https://www.planpetaluma.org/policy-frameworks#:~:text=These%20policies%2C%20pulled%20together%20into,business%20development%2C%20and%20historic%20preservation.>