

Responses to Council Questions and Comments

3/17/2025

Item #9: Adoption (second reading) of Ordinance No. 2900 N.C.S. Amending Chapter 2 of the Petaluma Implementing Zoning Ordinance (IZO) to add the Downtown Housing and Economic Opportunity Overlay to the list of Overlay Zones provided in Table 2-1 (Zones); Amending Chapter 4 of the IZO to add a Footnote to Tables 4.3 (Allowed Land Uses and Permit Requirements for Mixed Use Zones) and 4.10 (MU1 and MU2 Zone Development Standards) Referencing Section 5.070 of the IZO; and Amending Chapter 5 of the IZO to add Section 5.070 and establish the Downtown Housing and Economic Opportunity Overlay Zone and authorize a Zoning Map Amendment to zone applicable parcels

Or

If City Council elects to amend the Overlay, it is Recommended that the City Council Consider Repealing Resolution 2025-022 N.C.S. Concerning a General Plan Amendment to Increase the Allowable Floor Area Ratio (FAR) for Areas Designated Mixed Use (MU) and Located Within the Proposed Downtown Housing & Economic Opportunity Overlay from 2.5 to 6.0, Together with Making CEQA Findings of Fact, and Adopting a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Project, File No: PLPJ-2022-0015 & PLGP-2023-0001

And

Consider Reintroduction of an Amended Zoning Overlay Ordinance No. 2900 N.C.S., File No: PLPJ-2022 and PLZA -2023-0002

- **Question: The staff report mentions significant financial benefits of the hotel project. When are those benefits realized, specifically the estimated \$2.7 million of developer fees?**
 - **Response:** Development fees would be collected before the City issues a building permit.
- **Question: What is the expected schedule from groundbreaking to final approval? What/when is the expected impact to downtown during construction? Where will EKN be staging equipment and materials during construction?**
 - **Response:** Once planning entitlement approvals and a building permit is issued, the applicant expects to complete construction and open within 25 months during which time the adjacent areas would be most impacted with construction activity. City staff expects all planning approvals and building permit issuance will be completed this year.
The construction and staging of the Hotel was discussed in Master Response 10 in response to DEIR comments¹, stated below.

Prior to the issuance of any permit that is required to implement the approved project (such as a grading, utility, staging, or building permit), a Construction Management Plan (CMP) shall be prepared and presented to the City for review

¹ https://storage.googleapis.com/proudcity/petalumaca/2025/02/21220005-City-of-Petaluma-Final-EIR_1Title_TOC_Intro_MasterResponses.pdf

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concurrent with the review of any grading, utility, staging, or building permit. The CMP shall describe how construction impacts will be minimized, and how construction will be managed to comply with all construction-related Conditions of Approval (and mitigation measures if applicable). The City may modify the CMP or temporarily stop work for any violation of the CMP. The CMP shall provide project-specific information including descriptive procedures, approval documentation, and drawings or exhibits. The following measures or similar methods/measures will be required as part of the CMP condition of approval of the proposed Hotel to ensure enforceability and will be reviewed and verified by the City prior to the issuance of any permit that is required to implement the approved project:

Pedestrian and Traffic Control

- The B Street sidewalk would be temporarily closed to all pedestrian traffic from the Hotel site southern property line to the corner of B Street and Petaluma Boulevard, with a lease fee paid to the City of Petaluma. This area would serve as the construction staging zone.
- Street parking on B Street and Petaluma Boulevard would be closed to traffic at designated sections for the duration of construction, functioning as construction loading zones. These temporary closures would ensure safe and efficient movement of construction materials and equipment, with the lease fees paid to the City.
- A temporary sidewalk on Petaluma Boulevard would be constructed in the existing parking lane, covered as per Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements, to ensure pedestrian safety. This would extend from the Hotel site to the signalized intersection of B Street and Petaluma Boulevard.
- The middle-of-the-block B Street crosswalk would be eliminated to enhance traffic flow and ensure safety.
- Construction worker parking would be designated within close proximity to the site, keeping local streets free of construction vehicles and reducing disruption to local traffic.
- A nearby lot would be leased for material storage. This strategic off-site storage would prevent congestion caused by multiple deliveries arriving simultaneously at the Hotel site.

Construction Methods

Secant Deep Soil Mixed Shoring System

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- This method would be used to create a waterproof box around the excavation site, effectively trapping contaminated soil and preventing seepage into the surrounding groundwater.
- The system allows for the safe excavation and disposal of soil, which is transported to specialized facilities for hydrocarbon treatment.
- By avoiding traditional pile driving, this method reduces both noise pollution and ground vibrations, mitigating disruption to nearby residents and businesses.

Secant Deep Soil Mixed Shoring System Panelization Framing System

- Cold-forged steel framing panels would be prefabricated off-site, significantly accelerating the construction process and minimizing on-site noise and emissions.
- Using this method eliminates the need for large volumes of concrete and traditional posttension systems, which are typically noisy and polluting. This method shortens the construction timeline, reducing the overall impact on the surrounding community.

Efficient Use of Underground Parking Garage

- During construction, the future underground parking garage would be utilized for on-site material storage and limited parking, which would streamline construction traffic and reduce the need for additional off-site storage during construction phases.
- **Question: What is the City's guarantee that EKN finishes the hotel project? Does EKN make a deposit prior to construction?**
 - **Response:** A performance bond would be required for any construction activity and this would be submitted prior to construction for any required public improvements. The property owner would retain the planning approvals for several years so the most prudent way to ensure completion is to provide as much certainty in the permitting process as possible.
- **Question: Is limiting the overlay to area A the recommendation or just an option for discussion?**
 - **Response:** After hearing all public testimony and project information, City Council may choose the final form of the proposed Overlay. A smaller overlay for just Subarea A is a viable option that would still meet many of the project objectives for creating housing and economic opportunity.
- **Question: If area A only is approved, and developers propose 15% affordable housing in areas B and C, will there be step backs on stories 5 and 6? Could adjacent parcels be 6 stories with uses other than housing?**

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- Response: If only Subarea A is approved then the Overlay's setback and stepback requirements would only apply to Subarea A. To note, a housing development that is eligible for a state density bonus and that seeks regulatory relief from a development standard such as the building height of 45' on any parcel within ½-mile of our SMART train stations can currently be proposed without the benefit of the proposed overlay.