

# Land Use Policy Framework

Working Group Feedback – September 19, 2024

(Mary, Ali, Sharon)

# Overarching feedback

1. The Land Use Policy Framework is very well done!
2. The visual presentation of land use alternatives could be improved.  
(We have ideas!)

# How our feedback is organized

1. Buildings by height and use. **Imagery** to help us dream big!
2. **Areas of change** (not including 15-minute centers), preferences and rationale detailed
3. **15-minute city** areas of change
4. **Feedback** on specific policy/action proposals (*presentation to GPAC time permitting*)

# Let's dream big!

Examples of different building types by height and use



The Heart of Town is a River





The Heart of Town is worth protecting. We must Create Access and answer growth demand in the Heart with a wide buffer from the shore, taller buildings, high quality site design and climate resilient architecture.





## It is not wrong to DREAM BIG!

Because grow we must,  
We must grow up and  
Not out. We ask for ingenuity,  
Quality of life spaces, Access  
To open spaces, ease of  
Day to day needs, reducing the  
Reliance on cars for every  
Trip.

The following images are  
Examples of buildings that  
Are fitting to our unique  
Environment. They do not  
copy the past, but learn from  
It and look to future –  
and do better.







3 Story Apartment Buildings





3 Story – Apartment Buildings





4 story - Apartment Buildings



4 Story - Town House, Loft with Apartments above





5 Story - Apartment Buildings or Mixed Use





6 story – Apartment Buildings or Mixed Use

# Areas of Change

(Excluding 15-Minute Centers)



# Upstream & Downstream River-Adjacent Areas: Reduce Allowed Intensity

**WG Feedback:** De-intensify uses to the maximum possible. Revert to open space. Allow maker/microbusiness only to the extent that the land is already developed.

**Include this area in a *River (Area) Master Plan*.**

*Base – No Change*

*Mixed Use 1, Community  
Commercial, Medium-Density  
Residential*



**Alternative 1:  
South Side  
De-intensification**



**De-intensify mixed-use parcels  
on the south side to  
Maker/Microbusiness**



**Alternative 2:  
Comprehensive  
De-intensification**



**De-intensify mixed-use parcels to  
Maker/Microbusiness and de-intensify  
north side parcels to Parks, Open  
Space**



**Current uses/intensities:**

- MU1 (3 stories)
- Medium Density Resi
- Community Commercial

**Alt 2 uses/intensities:**

- Parks
- Open space
- Maker/micro-business

*Pages labeled 38-40 in Framework*

# Downstream River-Adjacent

**WG Feedback:** De-intensify uses to the maximum possible. Revert to open space. Allow maker/microbusiness only to the extent that the land is already developed.

Include this area in a *River (Area) Master Plan*.

*Base – No Change*

*Mixed Use 1, Neighborhood  
Commercial*



**Alternative 1:**  
**De-intensification**

De-intensify to Maker/Microbusiness



**Current uses/intensities:**

- MU1 (3 stories)
- Neighborhood commercial

**Alt 1 uses/intensities:**

- Maker/micro-business

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# Downtown

**WG Feedback:** Modified Alternative #2. Intensify uses to Urban Core Mixed Use / T6, except in areas abutting single-family homes (boxed highlight) to Urban/Town Center Mixed Use / T5.

Base – No Change

## Alternative 1: Proposed Overlay



Intensify to allow 6 stories (T6) within the proposed overlay only



## Alternative 2: Expanded Overlay Boundaries



Allow 6 stories (T6) within the proposed overlay plus additional opportunity sites of A Street Lot, Beauty Bar, Shell Station



## Current uses/intensities:

- MU2 (4 stories)
- Public

## Mod Alt 2 uses/intensities:

- T5 (min 2 stories, max 4, 6 story exception)
- T6 (min 4 stories, max 6)

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# Central SMART Station Location

**WG Feedback:** Support Station Mixed Use / T8 (new) at the station feathering to lower heights at the river. Density minimums are needed to avoid building something that wastes valuable station adjacent space.

(Green boxed area is greenfield. Balance is River Plaza.)

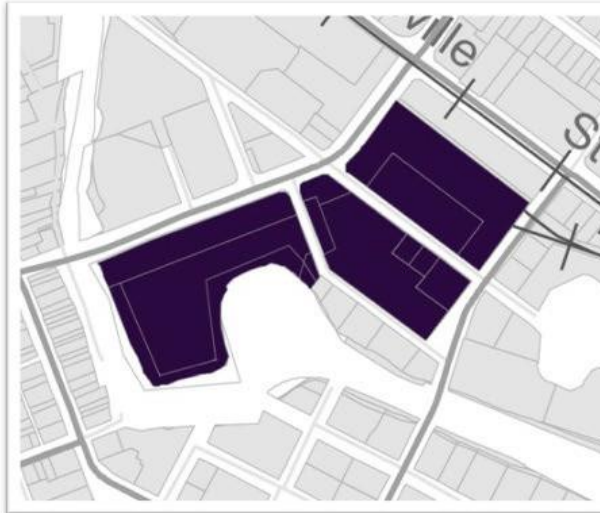
*Base – No Change*

*Urban/Town Center Mixed Use (4 stories) and Urban Core Mixed Use (6 stories)*



**Alternative 1: Increased Infill Intensity**

**Intensify to allow up to 8 stories of mixed use (T8)**



**Current uses/intensities:**

- T5 (4 stories)
- T6 (6 stories)

**Mod Alt 2 uses/intensities:**

- T8 (min 4 stories, max 8 stories; min 55 du/acre, max 120 du/acre)

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# River Park

**WG Feedback:** Maximize equity access to the River with dense housing and some public parking. Modified Alt 2: Downtown Mixed Use / MU2 (4 stories), Urban Corridor Mixed Use / T5.5 (5 stories). Intensify use with Oyster Cove as starting point., feathering up from Oyster Cove (from 3 stories to 4 stories) and up to 5 stories back from the River.

## Alternative 1: Missing Middle Focus

Mix of 2- and 3-story townhouses and lowrise apartments



## Alternative 2: Focus on Activity Center

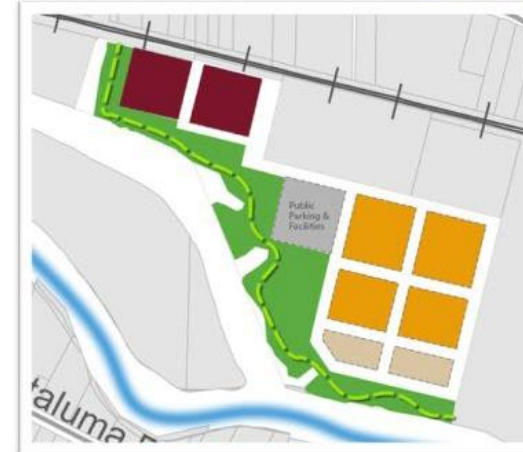


Focus around a four- and five-story mixed-use neighborhood center



## Alternative 3: Balance of Residential & Non-Residential

Clustered 3-story Medium-Density Residential, with Flex/Maker by Hopper



## **Current uses/intensities:**

- Diverse Low Residential
- Medium Residential

## **Mod Alt 2 uses/intensities:**

- MU2 (4 stories)
- T5.5 (new, 5 stories)

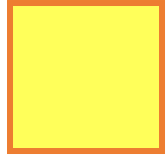
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# River Park

## Mod Alt 2 uses/intensities:

- MU2 (4 stories)



- T5.5 (new, 5 stories)



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## Alternative 2:

### Focus on Activity Center



Focus around a four- and five-story mixed-use neighborhood center

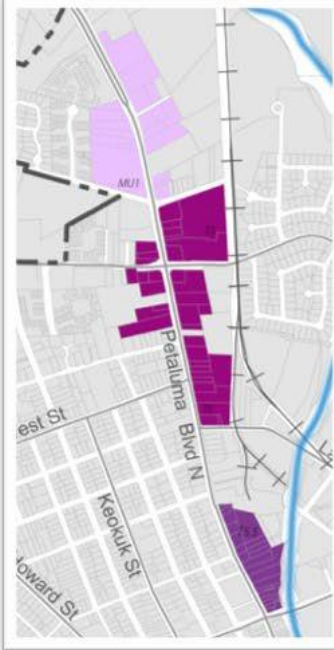


# Petaluma Blvd No

**WG Feedback:** Modified Alt 2, reduce the area abutting Washington to Urban Corridor Mixed Use / T5.5 to minimize sight line disruptions to the River.

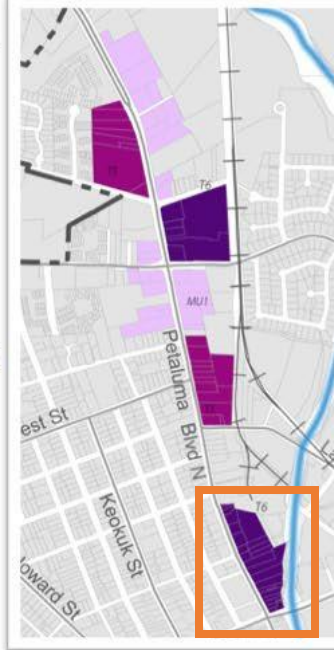
## Alternative 1: Light Feathering

5-story mixed use from East Washington to Oak (T5.5); 4-story mixed use from Lakeville to Magnolia (T5); 2/3-story mixed use beyond (MU1)



## Alternative 2: Two Centers

6-story mixed use from East Wash to Oak (T6), a mix of 3- and 4-story from Lakeville to Marina Unlimited (MU1, T5), 6-story mixed use at Luckys



## Alternative 3: Consistent Height

5-story mixed use with 4-story frontage entire corridor length (T5.5)



## **Current**

### **uses/intensities:**

- MU1 (3 stories)
- MU2 (4 stories)
- T5 (2/4 stories, 6\*)
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Industrial

## **Mod Alt 2**

### **uses/intensities:**

- MU1 (3 stories)
- MU2 (4 stories)
- T5 (2/4 stories, 6\*)
- T5.5 (new, 3/5 stories, PB 4)
- T6 (4/6 stories)

*Pages labeled 47-48 in Framework*



# Petaluma Blvd So

**WG Feedback:** Modified Alt 1, with parcels between E and D on the east side of PBS also MU2 with stepback from 4 to 3 stories on the Blvd to ensure new buildings don't overpower Theatre Square.



Base – No Change

## Alternative 1: Consistent Stepback

4-story mixed use (MU2) with 3-story frontage on both sides of Petaluma Blvd. South



## Alternative 2: Consistent Midrise

4-story mixed use (MU2) on both sides of Petaluma Blvd. South (no stepbacks)



## Alternative 3: Feathering Away from the River

4-story mixed use on east side; 2-story mixed use on the west side of Petaluma Blvd. South



## Current uses/intensities:

- MU1 (3 stories)
- MU2 (4 stories)
- T5 (2/4 stories, 6\*)

## Mod Alt 1 uses/intensities:

- MU2 (4 stories)
- T5 (2/4 stories, 6\*)

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# East Washington

**WG Feedback:** Alt 2, intensification feeds trains and enhanced transit hubs, but intensity may need to be bumped up as we approach the freeway (not pictured here, see notes).

## Base: No Change

Mixed Use 1 (2 and 3-story)



## Alternative 1: Slight Intensification



Intensify to 5-story from Lakeville to Wilson (1 block at T5.5), then down to 4-story mixed use (MU2)



## Alternative 2: Major Intensification



Intensify to 6-story from Lakeville to Wilson (T6), down to 5-story mixed use up to Vallejo (T5.5), then down to 4-story (MU2)



## Current uses/intensities:

- MU1 (3 stories)

## Mod Alt 2 uses/intensities:

- MU2 (4 stories)
- T5.5 (new, 3/5 stories)
- T6 (6 stories)

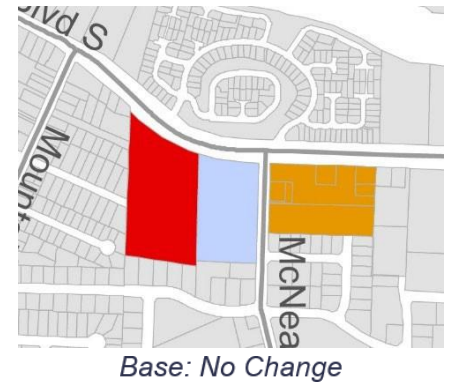
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# 15-Minute Centers

# Potential 15-Minute Activity Center: Bowling Alley & Veteran's Center

**WG Feedback:** Alt 2, intensify to Urban Center Mixed Use / T5, four stories, 3 fronting PBS. Better matches the McNear neighborhood on the east side of PBS, if 3 stories fronting PBS. West side of PBS climbs up the hill, so 3 to 4 and up will not be jarring. There are limited transit options from this location. On the other hand, this would be an ideal location to build smaller units for commuters, close to 101.



## Alternative 1: Small Neighborhood Center



Diversify to mixed use (Bowling and Veteran's only)



## Alternative 2: Medium Neighborhood Center



Intensify and diversify to allow 4-story mixed use (T5)



## Alternative 3: Large Neighborhood Center



Intensify and diversify further to allow 5-story mixed use (all)



## Current uses/intensities:

- Neighborhood commercial
- Median Resi
- Public

## Mod Alt 2 uses/intensities:

- T5 (2/4 stories, 6\*)



# Potential 15-Minute Activity Center: Western & Baker

**WG Feedback:** Alt 2, with Creamery as “height hub”, turn this area into a thriving activity center.

*Base: No Change*



**Alternative 1: Small  
Neighborhood Center**



Allow 2/3-story mixed use (MU1)



**Alternative 2: Medium  
Neighborhood Center**



Allow 4-story mixed use (MU2)



**Current  
uses/intensities:**

- Industrial

**Alt 2  
uses/intensities:**

- MU2 (4 stories)

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Framework*

# Potential 15-Minute Activity Center: Casa Grande Center

**WG Feedback:** Modified Alt 3, replace the Medium Density Residential (up to 3 stories) with High Density Residential (up to 4 stories).

## Alternative 1: Live/Work

Allow and incentivize mostly  
2 and 3-story live/work  
development (MU1)



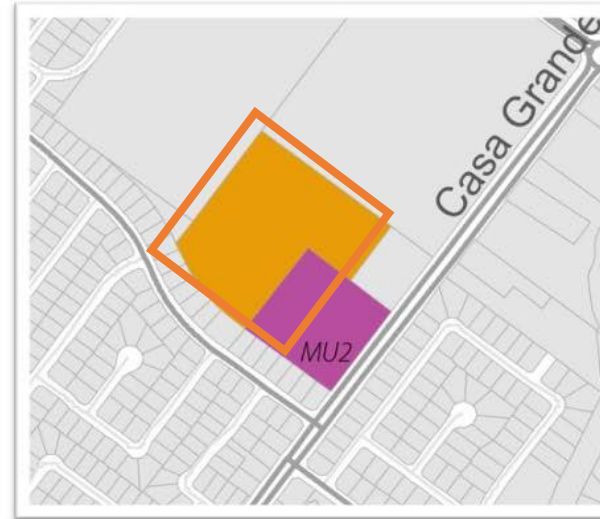
## Alternative 2: Dense Neighborhood

Intensify to High-Density  
Residential, 5 stories and 45  
units/acre (R5)



## Alternative 3: Medium Neighborhood Center

Intensify street-adjacent  
portion to 4-story mixed  
use (MU2)



## Current uses/intensities:

- MU1 (3 stories)

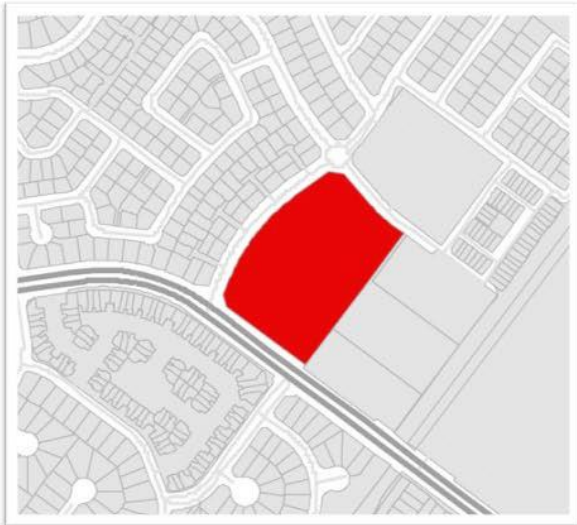
## Alt 2 uses/intensities:

- MU2 (4 stories)
- High Density Resi (4 stories)

# Potential 15-Minute Activity Center: Leghorn Marketplace

**WG Feedback:** Support intensifying to 4 story, Urban Center Mixed Use / T5 to support small workforce housing and bring in the density needed to support businesses in the area.

*Base: No Change  
Neighborhood Commercial*



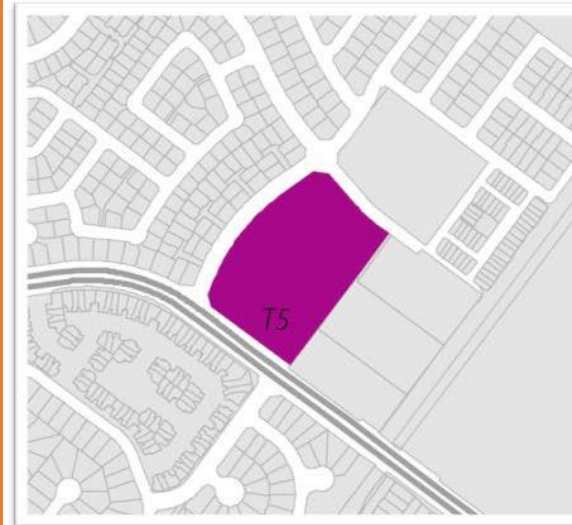
**Alternative 1: Small  
Neighborhood Center**

Allow and incentivize mostly  
live/work development (2 and  
3-story) (MU1)



**Alternative 2: Large  
Neighborhood Center**

Intensify to 4-story mixed use  
(T5)



**Current  
uses/intensities:**

- Neighborhood commercial

**Alt 2 uses/intensities:**

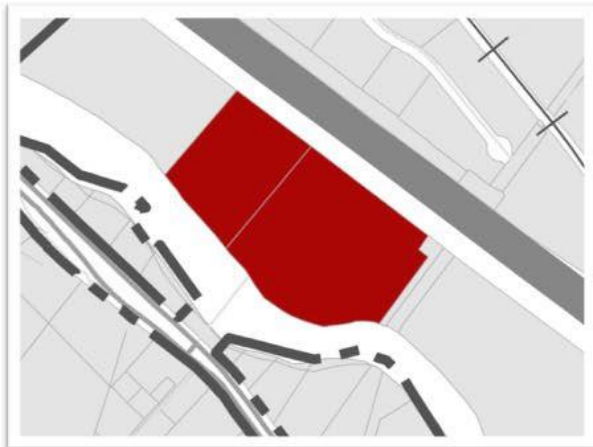
- T5 (2/4 stories, 6\*)



# Potential 15-Minute Activity Center: The Outlets

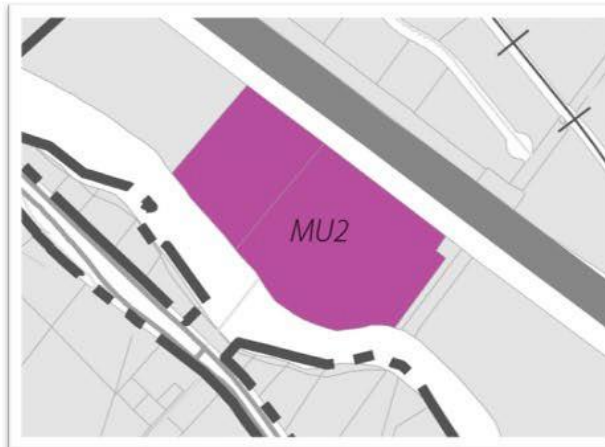
**WG Feedback:** Support Alt 2 because of flooding in this area. We don't support residential uses, we don't want residents to be cut off when the parking lot is inundated (for example).

*Base – No Change  
Community Commercial*



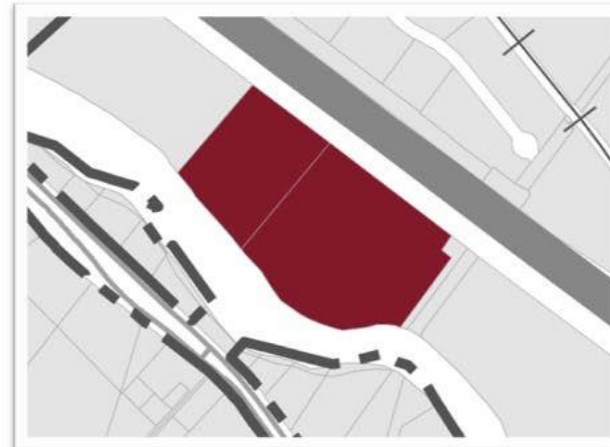
**Alternative 1: Medium  
Neighborhood Center**

Diversify to 4-story mixed use  
to add residential uses  
(MU2)



**Alternative 2: Civic/Arts  
Center**

Change to Maker and  
intentionally foster a civic &  
local arts hub



**Current  
uses/intensities:**

- Community commercial

**Alt 2 uses/intensities:**

- Maker / microbusinesses

# Potential 15-Minute Activity Center: Washington Square and Plaza Center

**WG Feedback:** Alt 2 preferred with significant caveats. See notes.

*Base – No Change  
Community Commercial*



## Alternative 1: Low-Intensity Neighborhood Centers

Allow 3-story standalone  
residential and vertical  
mixed use (MU1)



## Alternative 2: Major Town Center

Allow 5-story mixed use  
with 4-story transition  
(T5.5) at Wash Square



**Current  
uses/intensities:**

- Community commercial

**Alt 2 uses/intensities:**

- MU2 (4 stories)
- T5.5 (3/5 stories)

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# 15-Minute Centers

**General feedback on 15-Minute City:** We want to ensure that we enable the organic evolution of our neighborhoods. If we are too prescriptive we won't end up where we want to be.

## **Activated Parks/Mini-Centers**

**WG Feedback:** Not prioritized or noted as areas of change. Why not? *The parks are areas we control today.* They can be demonstration pilots for ideas we want to test and replicate. The spaces we already own seem like the logical places to start our change efforts



## 15-Minute Centers

*100% support for this direction!*

With respect to **Town Centers** – appreciate intensifying uses, but...

**WG Feedback:** Town Center designation is a bit of a misnomer/red herring. Serving the entire city (“park once”) and becoming a 15-minute activity center seems at cross-purposes. If the destination is focused on serving the entire City, does anything change? Seems miles of asphalt are still required. This seems more like a “we did it!” 15-minute center idea.

# 15-Minute Centers

## *Town Centers continued*

**Action LU-6.2.1:** To promote the necessary pedestrian activity and vibrancy, establish development standards in the Municipal Code or **all master plans, new developments, and major tenant improvements** in Town or Neighborhood Centers that include:

- Clustering commercial uses in active nodes fronted by pedestrian facilities, with housing included where possible.
- A checklist of amenities such as wayfinding, street furniture, crosswalks, complete sidewalks (especially for existing mall retrofits), street lighting, street trees (along all street frontages), and gathering areas (including minimum square feet for public/common open space).
- Objective design standards for ground-floor façades of mixed-use projects to create active frontages (minimum transparency, minimum ground floor height, building entrance frequency, minimum depth).
- Site design standards such as uniform setbacks along street frontages, rear or side parking, relocation of curb cuts and/or driveways to side streets, and a minimum of 10-20 feet between buildings and curbs to allow for active sidewalk uses.

**WG Feedback:** How do we expect this to play out with existing Town Centers? Is this realistic? It seems we are asking that landowners change and providing only sticks to support the changes. How can we make it attractive for landowners to make these changes?

Specific Goal/Policy/Action  
Inputs



# General Land Use Policy/Action Feedback

**Action LU-7.2.1:** Establish a permitting process in the Municipal Code to facilitate new single-family residential infill development projects under certain conditions:

- Allow second story on an existing home for lots under 4,800 sq ft.
- Size: Develop FAR standards that scale based on the zone and the number of units, **such that projects with more units are allowed to build larger units**, and that establish lower maximum FARs for lower-density single-family residential designations (R1 and R2) to promote context-sensitive neighborhood infill.

WG Feedback: Unclear if the section in red skews to larger units?

# Land Use Policy/Action Feedback (2)

## **Policy LU-8.1: Integrate commercial uses into neighborhoods**

WG Feedback: Do not limit activities to corner lots. Misses the opportunities to engage willing entrepreneurs mid-block.

# Land Use Policy/Action Feedback (3)

**Policy LU-11.1:** Enhance city entry points.

**Action LU-11.1.1:** Designate the following areas as entry gateways into Petaluma and create distinctive design features at these points...

**WG Feedback:** Love this idea. Another opportunity for community engagement and assistance in planning. Perhaps grants?

A vacancy tax, concerted effort to clean up blight would help this. Add ordinance that sets a standard for maintaining entry points and some radius around those entry points.

**Action LU-11.2.1:** Prepare and implement corridor plans for major corridors that include...

**WG Feedback:** Recommend we staff a position to do this. Has so many ancillary benefits to the economic sustainability of Petaluma.



# Land Use Policy/Action Feedback (4)

**Policy LU-13.1:** Advance sustainable design and development.

**WG Feedback:** It is essential that we take TIME out of the entitlement and permitting processes with standards that enable some certainty for developers. Otherwise we end up burning up their cash and never getting what we need...or anything at all.

# Land uses along the Petaluma River

**Action LU-5.2.3:** Update development and design standards in the Municipal Code to ensure that River-adjacent developments, **to the extent feasible**:

- Incorporate the River as a major design focal point
- Orient buildings and activities toward the River.
- Provide River access
- Establish linear open space corridors with maximum public accessibility, visibility, and stewardship opportunities along single-loaded streets and designated River public access points.

“To the extent feasible”, seems like a get out of jail free card. Can we explore incentives to facilitate the desired design outcomes? Can we use special assessment districts, grants, to build out some of the infrastructure, partner with developers to make this happen? We have desire for a river pathway in our current GP, but this hasn’t happened. Let’s figure out why not and remove barriers.

**Strongly recommend supporting development of a River (Area) Master Plan to facilitate the discussions and make the city eligible for competitive grants.**

# Land uses along the Petaluma River

**Action LU-5.3.1:** Update development and design standards in the Municipal Code to:

- Incorporate the River as a major design focal point
- Orient buildings and activities toward the River.
- Provide River access
- Establish linear open space corridors with maximum public accessibility, visibility, and stewardship opportunities along single-loaded streets and designated River public access points.

Again, this is a lot to put on developers. Can we apply for grants that achieve some of this infrastructure to make it more attractive for developers to build? Imagine a River Park meets The Barlow style development master plan for the river corridor. (Just an example.)



# Reduce costs of infill development

**Action LU-3.1.1:** Reduce the costs of infill development by, for example:

- Remediating contaminated sites
- Revising the Municipal Code to reduce or eliminate minimum parking requirements or to establish maximum parking allowances
- Establishing district and shared parking agreements
- Reducing impact fees for higher density infill projects as justified by existing infrastructure.

WG supports all of these, but recognizes these alone may not be enough to reduce the cost of infill development. We need to also look at our entitlement and design review processes and as much as possible take time and expense out of the system. To the extent that these are impacted by the GP, let's add language to address.

# Transfer of Development Rights Program

**Action LU-3.1.2:** Establish a citywide transfer of development rights program to encourage greater densities in the city core, near transit and services.

WG feedback: Please provide examples of what this might look like.

# Increase minimum densities

**Action LU-3.2.1:** Consistent with Program 4 in the adopted Housing Element, update the Municipal Code to increase minimum densities for new residential development in multi-family and mixed-use zones and, if appropriate, develop target densities.

WG feedback: “If appropriate” red flag language. Be specific.

- Establish building intensity (floor area ratio) standards for residential development in the Diverse Low (R3) and Medium Density (R4) Residential zones.

WG supports establishing FAR standards for residential development.



# Land use designations / density language

## *Action LU-3.2.1 continued*

- Increase the maximum density permitted in high-density zones (R3, R4, R5). - Yes
- Prohibit new single-family detached housing in high-density zones (R3, R4, R5). - Yes
- Require development at a mid-point or higher of the density range in the Medium- (R4) and High- Density (R5) Residential zones.

Unclear on meaning of “Require development at a mid-point or higher of the density range in the Medium- (R4) and High- Density (R5) Residential zones.” Doesn’t this effectively prohibit building at the lower density? If so, why not specify a higher minimum density?

# Land use designations / density language

*Action LU-3.2.1 continued*

- To facilitate affordable housing, permit higher densities than allowed under base zoning for projects with microunits or in novel configurations, such as shared or cooperative housing.

Why can't we extend this to market rate housing? In general, need to put policies in place to encourage building smaller units for rent and for sale.

# Flexible building options

**Action LU-3.4.1:** Update the Municipal Code to support flexible development practices, potentially including:

- Updated standards for ground floor space in mixed-used zones to allow flexibility to respond to market conditions over time by, for example, permitting flex and maker space, office floorplates that can later be converted to residential, co-working space, and either residential or commercial/employment uses.

Consider setting minimum of space dedicated to non-residential uses and a period of non-residential units before it can be converted to residential.

Consider updating code to impose a vacancy tax on these properties that are built as mixed-use but are never rented. We don't want to encourage a "half build" and then conversion at a later date.