

**From:** [Joey Balistreri](#)  
**To:** [Kevin McDonnell](#); [Karen Nau](#); [Quint, Frank](#); [Janice Cader-Thompson](#); [DeCarli, Alex](#); [Barnacle, Brian](#); [John Shribbs](#)  
**Cc:** [Irv Piotrkowski](#); -- [City Clerk](#); [Brian Oh](#); [Andrew Trippel](#)  
**Subject:** Ltr. to City Council Re: General Plan Mtg. 3/3/25  
**Date:** Thursday, February 20, 2025 10:06:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [Ltr. to City Council 2.20.25.pdf](#)

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Dear Mayor McDonnell, Vice Mayor Nau & Council Members,

Please see attached Mr. Piotrkowski's letter of this date. Please confirm receipt of this email and its attachment. Thank you.

Very truly yours,

Joey Balistreri (she/her)

**Legal Assistant to Irv Piotrkowski**

Law Offices of Irv Piotrkowski

35 Fifth Street

Petaluma CA 94952

707.778.1551 (p) ext. 107

707.778.7573 (f)

[joey@ipirolaw.com](mailto:joey@ipirolaw.com)

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LAW OFFICES OF  
**IRV PIOTRKOWSKI**  
35 FIFTH STREET  
P. O. BOX 2624  
PETALUMA, CALIFORNIA 94953  
TELEPHONE: (707) 778-1551  
FACSIMILE: (707) 778-7573  
IRV@IPIOLAW.COM

February 20, 2025

Mayor Kevin McDonnell  
[kmcdonnell@cityofpetaluma.org](mailto:kmcdonnell@cityofpetaluma.org)

Vice Mayor Karen Nau  
[knau@cityofpetaluma.org](mailto:knau@cityofpetaluma.org)

Council Member Frank Quint  
[fquint@cityofpetaluma.org](mailto:fquint@cityofpetaluma.org)

Council Member Janice Cader Thompson  
[lcaderthompson@cityofpetaluma.org](mailto:lcaderthompson@cityofpetaluma.org)

Council Member Alex DeCarli  
[adecarli@cityofpetaluma.org](mailto:adecarli@cityofpetaluma.org)

Council Member Brian Barnacle  
[bbarnacle@cityofpetaluma.org](mailto:bbarnacle@cityofpetaluma.org)

Council Member John Shribbs  
[jshribbs@cityofpetaluma.org](mailto:jshribbs@cityofpetaluma.org)

***Via email transmission only***

Dear Mayor McDonnell, Vice Mayor Nau & Council Members:

This letter follows up conversations that I have initiated with Brian Oh and Andrew Trippel regarding a rezoning of property owned by my client, Hunt & Behrens (H&B) at 30 Lakeville Street. H&B has been making animal feed at this location for over 80 years. There are currently three owners for the business, all of whom are in their 70's and looking to retire over the next few years.

The challenges of operating the business of H&B have mounted over the years. The ability to continue to operate a feed mill on the scale that H&B operates is increasingly difficult. We therefore request that the updated general plan permit a zoning designation that would allow the current operation of the feed mill but also permit a future mixed residential and commercial use of the property. We do not want to see a large vacant property near the heart of Petaluma in the event that it becomes unfeasible to continue to operate a feed mill at this location.

I am also attorney for Nathan Apple who owns and operates Wizard of Metals at 92 Lakeville Street which property is located across the river from H&B. Nathan requests that his property be included in any rezoning which would permit the continued use of the current business but also permit a future commercial and residential mixed use of the property at 92 Lakeville Street.

Please make these requests a part of the record of the general plan update process. I am unable to personally attend the meeting on March 3<sup>rd</sup> and therefore have made the above request in writing. If you have questions or concerns regarding these requests, please contact me at your convenience.

Thank you for your attention to the foregoing.

Very truly yours,

LAW OFFICES OF IRV PIOTRKOWSKI



Irv Piotrkowski

IP:jb

cc: Caitlin Cory  
Petaluma City Clerk  
[cityclerk@cityofpetaluma.org](mailto:cityclerk@cityofpetaluma.org)

Brian Oh  
Director of Community Development  
[boh@cityofpetaluma.org](mailto:boh@cityofpetaluma.org)

Andrew Trippel  
Planning Manager  
[atrippel@cityofpetaluma.org](mailto:atrippel@cityofpetaluma.org)

**From:** [Ali Gaylord](#)  
**To:** [-- City Clerk](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Washington Square and Plaza North and South Land Use Designation  
**Date:** Sunday, March 2, 2025 3:07:31 PM  
**Attachments:** [image1.png](#)

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Resending the below as the email address listed to email public comment in the Community Update email was undeliverable. Thanks.

Ali Gaylord

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Ali Gaylord [REDACTED]  
**Date:** March 1, 2025 at 14:33:44 PST  
**To:** [clerk@cityofpetaluma.org](mailto:clerk@cityofpetaluma.org)  
**Cc:** Kevin McDonnell <[kmcdonnell@cityofpetaluma.org](mailto:kmcdonnell@cityofpetaluma.org)>, [jshribbs@cityofpetaluma.org](mailto:jshribbs@cityofpetaluma.org), [fquint@cityofpetaluma.org](mailto:fquint@cityofpetaluma.org), [jcaderthompson@petaluma.org](mailto:jcaderthompson@petaluma.org), Brian Oh <[boh@cityofpetaluma.org](mailto:boh@cityofpetaluma.org)>, Heather Gurewitz <[hgurewitz@cityofpetaluma.org](mailto:hgurewitz@cityofpetaluma.org)>, Heather Hines <[hhines@cityofpetaluma.org](mailto:hhines@cityofpetaluma.org)>  
**Subject:** **Washington Square and Plaza North and South Land Use Designation**

Dear City Council and Petaluma City Staff,

As an East Side Petaluma resident and member of the General Plan Advisory Committee for the past four years, I believe the Mixed Use designation for the Plaza South and Washington Square is the correct land use designation for these sites. **However, Stepdown Mixed Use unnecessarily constrains the properties and should be revised to remove the Stepdown requirement on Plaza South and Washington Square Plaza.**

The Mixed Use designations reflect the appropriate response to the drivers of change including developing more housing on underutilized land, facilitating the redevelopment of older shopping centers, revitalizing commercial corridors to enhance their character, safety and activity, and maximizing efficient use of existing infrastructure to support future development. The Mixed Use designation reflects the mix of uses currently present in the area, such as multifamily apartments, grocery, commercial businesses, and limited single family homes.

However, the Stepdown Mixed Use designation (SD-MU) is not the correct version of a Mixed Use land use designation for these two sites and **risks severely limiting the economic feasibility of redevelopment should it be adopted.** The reason noted for the Stepdown Mixed Use in the Briefing Book is in deference to proximity of lower density single family housing in the area, which appears consistent if only looking at the map without real life context. In person, on the ground, it's clear that the only single family housing that is actually nearby is either across E. Washington behind a sound wall from Washington Plaza, or a limited amount of single family across McDowell from both Plazas. The single family subdivision east of Washington Plaza is already buffered by two mixed use zones, a creek and existing three-story multifamily apartment buildings. The risk of requiring Stepdown Mixed Use and **limiting the viability of future development will either completely stifle new development or will require a lengthy GP amendment process in the future which developers will decline to pursue.**

It is important to get this land use designation correct and take the next 25 years of development patterns and needs into consideration. The intersection of E. Washington and McDowell has huge potential to be an exciting and beautiful gateway to Petaluma with the appropriate land uses in alignment with the land use driver "improve city entryways". In looking at the area, it's evident that there were some efforts long ago to achieve this gateway effect with the four corner pergolas, but without a critical mass of density encouraging ground floor uses and pedestrian activity, it remains a wasted opportunity.

I request City Council direct staff to **change the recommended land use designation on Plaza South and Washington Plaza to allow 4 stories with 45' height across the entirety of these two sites without requiring a Stepdown.**

Respectfully,  
Ali Gaylord



**From:** [Diane Dragone](#)  
**To:** [-- City Council](#)  
**Subject:** Inclusion in City Plan  
**Date:** Sunday, March 2, 2025 4:28:29 PM  
**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)

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---Warning: Use caution before clicking any attachments. THIS EMAIL IS FROM OUTSIDE OUR EMAIL SYSTEM.---

Dear city of Petaluma,

Let me introduce myself to you, my name is Diane Dragone, and I am the Executive Director of Cinnabar Theater.

I am writing because I am a stakeholder with the Factory Outlets, and I have read the General Plan and I see that the Factory Outlets is included in it.

I am the largest tenant in the Mall (Cinnabar Theater) and I would like to have a say in the plan as it goes forward. I want to be assured that there isn't anything in the plan that will preclude the use of the Mall an Arts and Culture District or Hub.

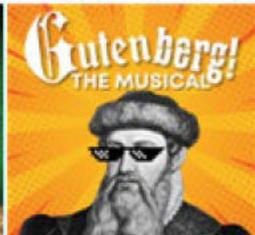
I appreciate your attention to this.

Sincerely,  
Diane Dragone

Diane Dragone  
Executive Director  
Cinnabar Theater  
707-981 7646 Office  
415-517 7307 Cell

*\*Please note, I sometimes work at irregular times, so if this email arrives in your inbox, unless otherwise noted, I don't expect you to read, take action, or reply to it outside of your working hours.*

**Cinnabar** THEATER **2024/2025 SEASON**





427 Mendocino Ave, Suite 100  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

(707) 900-4364  
info@generationhousing.org

March 3rd, 2025

Petaluma City Council  
11 English Street  
Petaluma, CA 94952

**Re: Item 4: Workshop on the Draft Land Use Policy Framework**

Dear Mayor McDonnell, Vice Mayor Nau, Councilmembers, and Staff,

As the City considers updates to the General Plan, we appreciate the comprehensive approach being taken to shape Petaluma's future. We recognize the importance of balancing housing, transportation, sustainability, and economic development, and we support policies that promote more housing opportunities, encourage infill development, and improve walkability and transit accessibility.

We respectfully urge the City Council to prioritize and adopt the following policies and zoning designations that align with these goals:

**Supporting 15-Minute Neighborhoods & Transit-Oriented Development**

- **Blueprint Action TLUC-1:** Expands housing capacity in transit-oriented areas by increasing heights and densities.
- **Policy LU-6:** Establishes complete neighborhoods that mix housing, jobs, and amenities.
- **Policy LU-11:** Encourages walkable, pedestrian-friendly development along key corridors.
- **Urban Corridor Mixed Use (UC-MU):** Allows **30-75 du/acre, up to 5 stories**, ensuring compact, transit-oriented development.
- **Station Mixed Use (ST-MU):** Allows for higher density development supporting high-density development.

**Expanding Housing Density to Meet Demand**

- **Updated Residential Densities:**
  - **Medium Density Residential (MDR):** Increase density to 8.1-18.
  - **High Density Residential (HDR):** Increase density to 18.1-30.
  - **Station Mixed Use (ST-MU):** Increase density to 30+ du/acre and 5+ stories.
- **Policy LU-3.2:** Encourages development within **existing density limits** to maximize land efficiency.





427 Mendocino Ave, Suite 100  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

(707) 900-4364  
info@generationhousing.org

- **Housing Element Program 4:** Raises minimum densities in multifamily and mixed-use zones to ensure housing production keeps pace with demand.
- **SB 10 Provisions:** Allows up to **10 units per parcel by-right** in transit-rich or infill areas.

### **Strengthening Infill Development & Mixed-Use Flexibility**

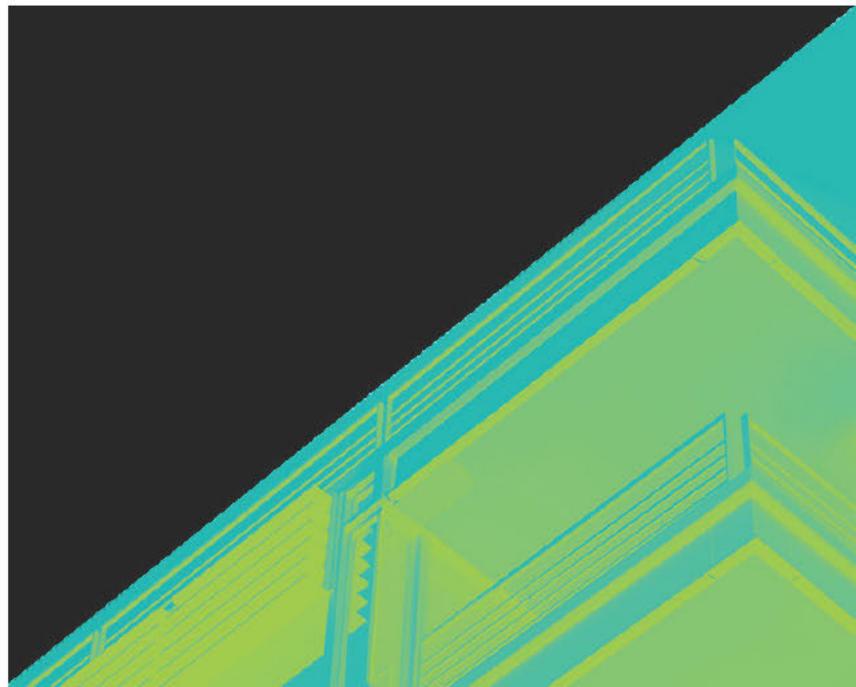
- **Policy LU-3:** Supports incremental infill, including **plex housing, ADUs, and redevelopment of underutilized parcels.**
- **Urban Core Mixed Use (CORE-MU):** Allows **50-95 du/acre, up to 6 stories,** encouraging dense, mixed-use infill.
- **Mini-Center Mixed Use (MC-MU):** Allows **12-30 du/acre, up to 3 stories,** enabling small-scale neighborhood infill.

These policies will help expand housing opportunities, support smart growth, and create vibrant, walkable communities while ensuring Petaluma grows in a sustainable way. We encourage the City Council to prioritize these provisions in the final General Plan update to promote housing affordability and sustainable development.

In partnership,  
Stephanie Picard Bowen

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie Bower". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Deputy Director, Generation Housing



**From:** [Nickola Frye](#)  
**To:** -- City Clerk  
**Subject:** Land Use comments, City Council Meeting - March 3 - thanks for sending it on.  
**Date:** Sunday, March 2, 2025 3:43:18 PM

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To: Petaluma City Council, Mayor, City Manager, and City Staff

My name is Nickola Frye. I am the Chair of the Senior Advisory Committee, a Planning Commissioner, and a Board Member of Rebuilding Together.

I have attended most of the GPAC meetings these last eighteen months, and I have volunteered to be part of the public information events regarding land use, and other aspects for the proposed General Plan. I am also a staunch supporter of creating housing for Petaluma, and believe it is by far our number one issue.

While all of this is true, I have serious concerns regarding the Land Use Policy Framework. It seems to me that many aspects of this framework are exceedingly beneficial to developers, allowing them to create 5, 6, 7, and possibly 8 story structures for housing. This process of building taller and taller, while cramming excessive "housing" units into a building disregards the actual needs of humans.

Our current building ordinances have resulted, over the last five or more years, in the construction of large buildings that are devoid of any semblance of architecture, are overly expensive to purchase or rent, and lack any sense of proportions that they are designed for people.

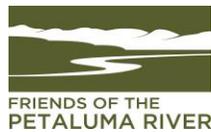
Many towns, cities, and counties are revising and revisiting their land use policies to better incentivise a different utilization for land. Some of the newer change happening statewide are:

- Simplifying the housing permitting and development process, over the counter permits
- Allowing for development using prefab housing construction
- Prioritizing affordable housing development on public land, by utilizing land trusts
- Creating financial and development incentives that promote the creation of affordable housing, like tax benefits and no fee permits
- Eliminating exclusionary zoning codes that restrict multi-family use
- Legalizing multiple accessory dwelling units (ADUs) units per lot
- Removing minimum lot-size requirement ordinances
- Revising minimum building size and floor area ratio requirements
- Eliminating parking requirements for new residential construction projects
- Revising building codes that restrict low-cost rental housing development

While I recognize that Petaluma is working toward many of these changes, I believe that the Land Use Framework does not do enough to define and incentivise these so that developers will recognize the benefits of moving forward to creating housing that meets the needs of real humans, like seniors who wish to downsize, and couples and families that wish to get into the housing market.

We need to move away from land use policies that encourage tall multi-story development and into land use policies that encourage housing developments designed for real people.

Thank you.



March 3, 2025

Petaluma City Council  
11 English Street  
Petaluma, CA 94952

RE: Land Use Designation Changes

Dear Members of the City Council:

This letter is submitted by the Friend's of the Petaluma River (FOPR), in response to the proposed updates to existing Land Use Designations as part of the General Plan Update. In particular, Friends would like to comment on the area called the Upstream River-Adjacent and Outlet sections of the plan which lists two alternatives for future de-intensification of the area. Our organization is writing to strongly recommend that the Council move to de-intensify the entire area for future use as a park and open space to benefit community recreation and transportation as well as mitigate flooding risks.

FOPR was founded in 2005 to “promote appreciation of the Petaluma River and protect the vitality of its natural resources.” Accordingly, our work has centered around four goals: Access, Celebration, Conservation and Education. It is with these goals in mind that we reach out to the Council. Today our community has an unprecedented opportunity to shape the future of Petaluma for the better. An open space park or ‘Greenway’ in this area will realize many aspects of the City’s River Access and Enhancement Plan – open space, habitat/riparian preservation, trails, parks, and recreational amenities, while also providing much-needed flood retention and protection to existing neighborhoods.

In 2011 the City of Petaluma embarked on an update to the 1998 Petaluma River Access and Enhancement Plan. The Plan begins with this statement: *Petaluma is a river town. The Petaluma River is its life.* The Plan, it notes, *will be used by policy-makers, property owners, and interested citizens to guide the metamorphosis of the river into the central feature of Petaluma.* The Plan then outlines several “principal components,” that are directly aligned with FOPR’s commitment to preservation and access to the River, and the recommendations of the General Plan Advisory Committee that include:

- Restoration and preservation of the natural resources,
- A pedestrian walkway and bike trail for the entire length of the river within the city limits, and
- Protection of water quality and flood mitigation
- 

As FOPR continues to help foster a community commitment to the River, our organization is eager to work with the City of Petaluma to realize our common goals and to ensure the wellbeing of the River for generations to come. In closing FOPR would like to ask that the City ensure that flooding, community access, and the protection of River habitat are of the utmost importance when designating land uses for the Upstream River-Adjacent and Outlet segments.

Sincerely,  
Friends of the Petaluma River

Dear Mayor, Councilmembers & City Staff,

Thank you for preparing the land use designation information, including the well-organized land use designation Briefing Book.

**The Outlets (Page 17 of the Briefing Book): I strongly recommend option #2 to establish an arts center.**

If we can capitalize on a reuse strategy for this large array of retail buildings while being mindful of portions of this property subject to flooding, this would be a very efficient path forward and open up a lot of new opportunities for arts and small business innovation. I recommend the city consider leaning in further by designating this area an Arts District and ensure that the land use designation for maker/microbusiness land use designation incorporates the needs of visual and performing artists, along with micro services such as food trucks, tasting rooms, etc. Seeing a tree and sculpture-lined path heading to this district along the river would be fantastic, too.

**Downtown (Page 28 of the Briefing Book): I agree with the GPAC recommendation for a modified version of Alternative #2.**

This option stays more in line with the public's desire for moderate transformation in this area while encouraging more productive use of select parcels that most need attention. The expanded overlay area is strategic to places where we should promote productive use while leaving large portions of our historic downtown out of the boundaries. This would be a strong play to encourage more business and generate revenues we could use to help maintain and improve our historic buildings so that they remain in terrific shape for years to come.

**East Washington (Page 69 of the Briefing Book) - possible error.**

The Alternative #2 GPAC recommendation indicates Alternative #3 exists, but it is not shown in this Briefing Book. Is Alternative #3 an omission, or was citing that option a mistake and never existed?

Thank you,

Eric Leland  
Petaluma CA

March 3, 2025

Dear Petaluma City Council,

On behalf of the Petaluma River Park Foundation, I offer these comments for the City Council Meeting on Monday, March 3, 2025, on Agenda Item 4: Presentation and Discussion of Areas of Change, Land Use Designations, and Land Use Alternatives.

The Foundation was pleased to read the staff report prepared for this meeting and to see how the River Park development is incorporated into the broader strategy for the transformation of this critical area of our city. Overall, the proposed Land Use changes align with the goals of the River Park Foundation to realize a new central park and adjacent community.

Given that the development process is not complete, we request a couple of adjustments to the proposed Land Use designation changes to ensure that maximum creativity can be applied to the final development scheme.

- **The proposed Maker/Microbusiness designation for the western portion of the site will prove limiting for the development of affordable housing on the site.** Many **affordable housing funding mechanisms**, including tax credits through the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (CTCAC), prioritize funding for projects within a half-mile of transit. The western portion of the site is just within that half-mile boundary, and would be a priority area for developers pursuing affordable housing funding. Designating this portion of the site as Maker/Microbusiness would limit the overall potential of the site to acquire affordable housing funding.
- **We support the recommendation that Stepdown Mixed Use allows Live/Work. We suggest that this accommodation will enable the maker and microbusiness uses.**
- The staff report notes: “The GPAC recommended a fusion of Alternative 2 and Alternative 3 to allow up to four stories of mixed use closer to the Petaluma River and stepping up to five stories as development is set back from the River.” **We concur with the GPAC’s recommendation that the site can accommodate higher density stepped back from the River.**
  - The Stepdown Mixed Use (SD-MU) designation outlined in Attachment 1 - Land Use Designation Chart caps max height at four stories and 50 feet. **We suggest that the site could accommodate 5-6 stories further away from the River**, maximizing economies of construction types, including all wood framing and wood framing over concrete podium. This additional height could include provisions for preserving key view sheds of the nearby mountains.

- Further, we suggest that the northern edge of the site abutting City-owned property should not be required to step down to three stories as currently drawn.
- See attached for our recommendation regarding the stepdown requirement.
- In our experience, maximum building flexibility at the ground floor promotes a vibrant public realm and ensures that a variety of uses – including nonprofit programs, community uses, and live/work – can continue to activate the ground floor as the economics of those spaces change.

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss the proposed changes in further detail. Thank you for considering the Foundation's perspective and for the continued partnership of the City's leadership and staff.

Sincerely,



Seair Lorentz

Executive Director

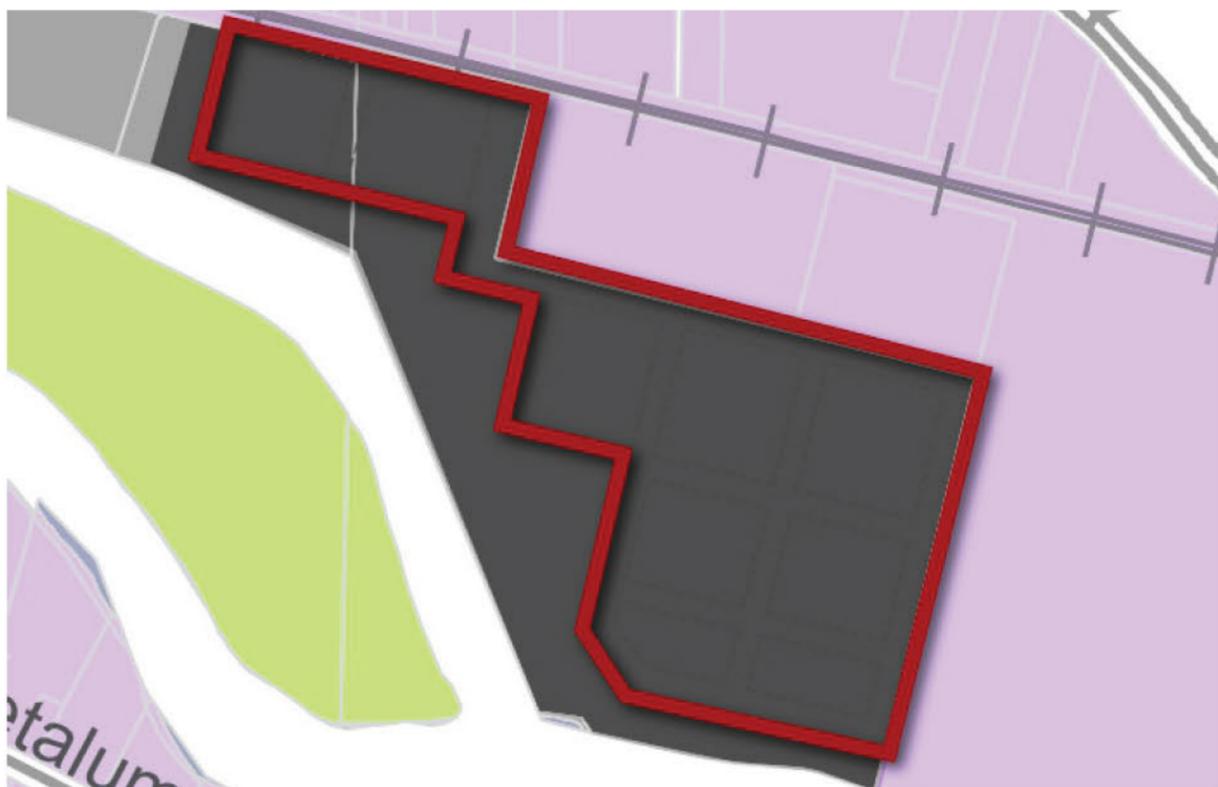
Petaluma River Park Foundation

# **RIVER PARK**

## Existing Conditions



## Existing General Plan



## Current Designations



River-dependent industrial and processing uses up to 6 stories (River-Dependent Industrial)

## Drivers of Change

- > Implement the policies of the River Access and Enhancement Plan
- > Protect open space
- > Enhance public access to/ across the river corridor
- > Prioritize infill development and develop underutilized land
- > Provide more housing near downtown and the SMART Station
- > Create complete neighborhoods in which residents can meet their daily needs
- > Provide a mix of housing choices

# RIVER PARK: LAND USE ALTERNATIVES IN THE LAND USE POLICY FRAMEWORK

The alternatives offer different mixes of allowed uses and heights on the vacant land formerly occupied by the pre-cast concrete plant and now owned by the River Park Foundation.

## ALTERNATIVE 1: Missing Middle Focus



Allow a mix of 2- and 3-story townhouses and low rise apartments



**RMD** Residential development up to 3 stories (Medium Density Residential)

**RDIV** Residential development up to 2 stories (Diverse Low Density Residential)

- Allowed Uses: Small-scale multifamily and attached single-family housing
- Allowed Heights: Up to 3 stories
- Allowed Housing Units: Approximately 400 additional units

## ALTERNATIVE 2: Focus on Activity Center



Focus around an up to four- and five-story mixed-use neighborhood center



**MU2** Vertical mixed use up to 4 stories (MU2: Downtown Mixed Use)

**T5.5** Vertical mixed use up to 5 stories (T5.5: Urban Corridor Mixed Use)

- Allowed Uses: Housing, retail, service, and/or offices
- Allowed Heights: Up to 5 stories
- Allowed Housing Units: Approximately 550 additional units

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



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



**RDIV** Residential development up to 2 stories (Diverse Low Density Residential)

**M/M** Flexible maker/business space up to 4 stories (Maker/Microbusiness)

**RMD** Residential development up to 3 stories (Medium Density Residential)

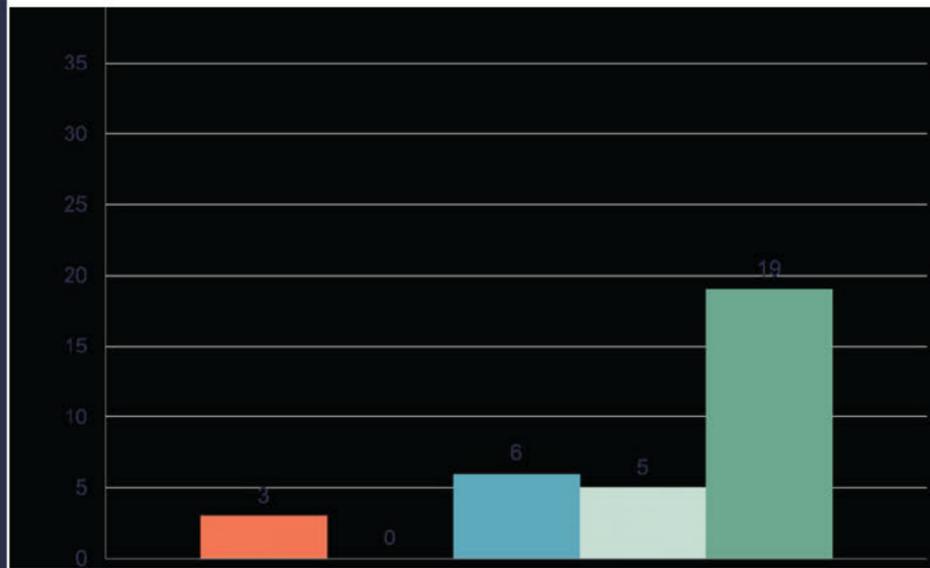
- Allowed Uses: Attached single-family housing, small-scale multifamily, and “maker space”
- Allowed Heights: Up to 4 stories
- Allowed Housing Units: Approximately 350 additional units

# RIVER PARK: COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

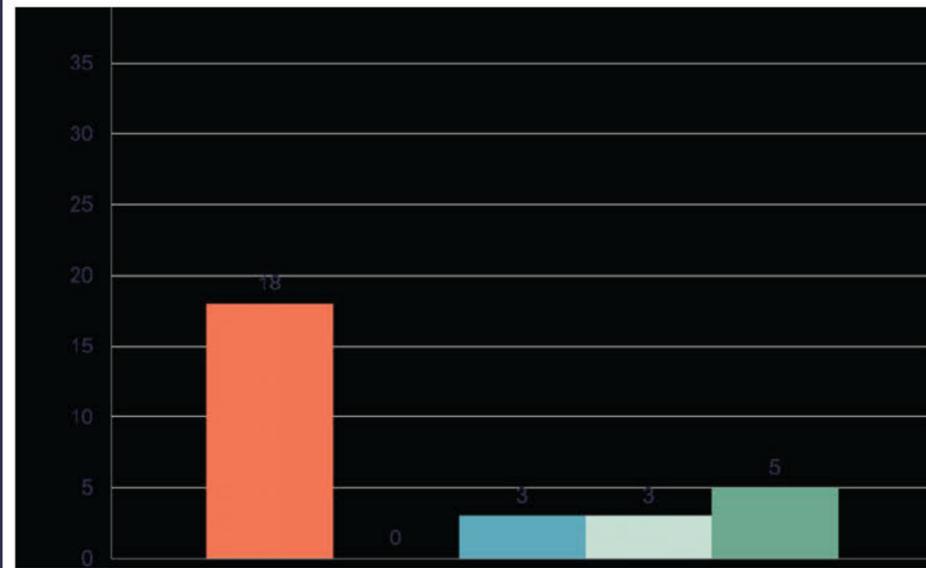
## ALT. FEEDBACK LEGEND

● Strongly Oppose ● Oppose Neutral ● Neutral ● Neutral/Support ● Strongly Support

### ALTERNATIVE 1: Missing Middle Focus

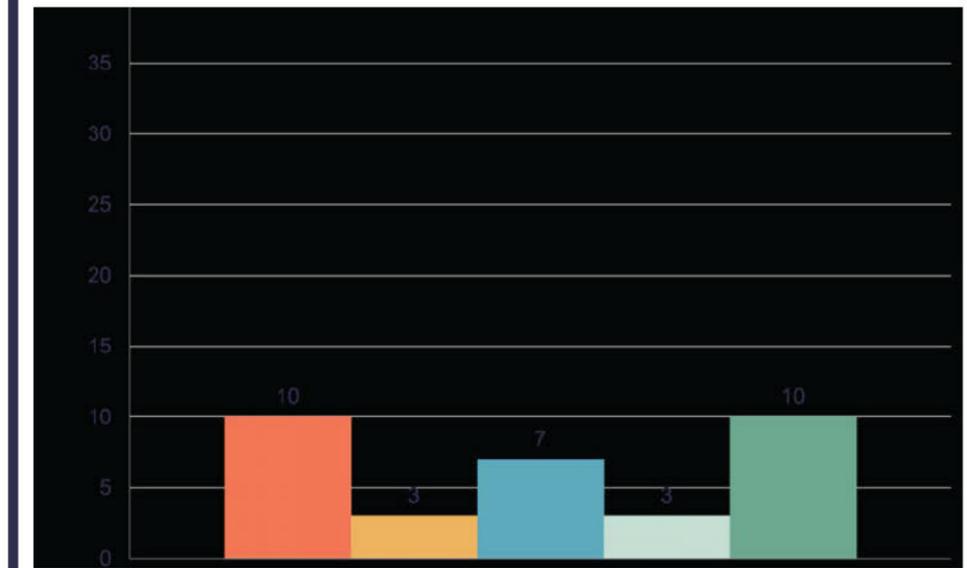


### ALTERNATIVE 2: Focus on Activity Center

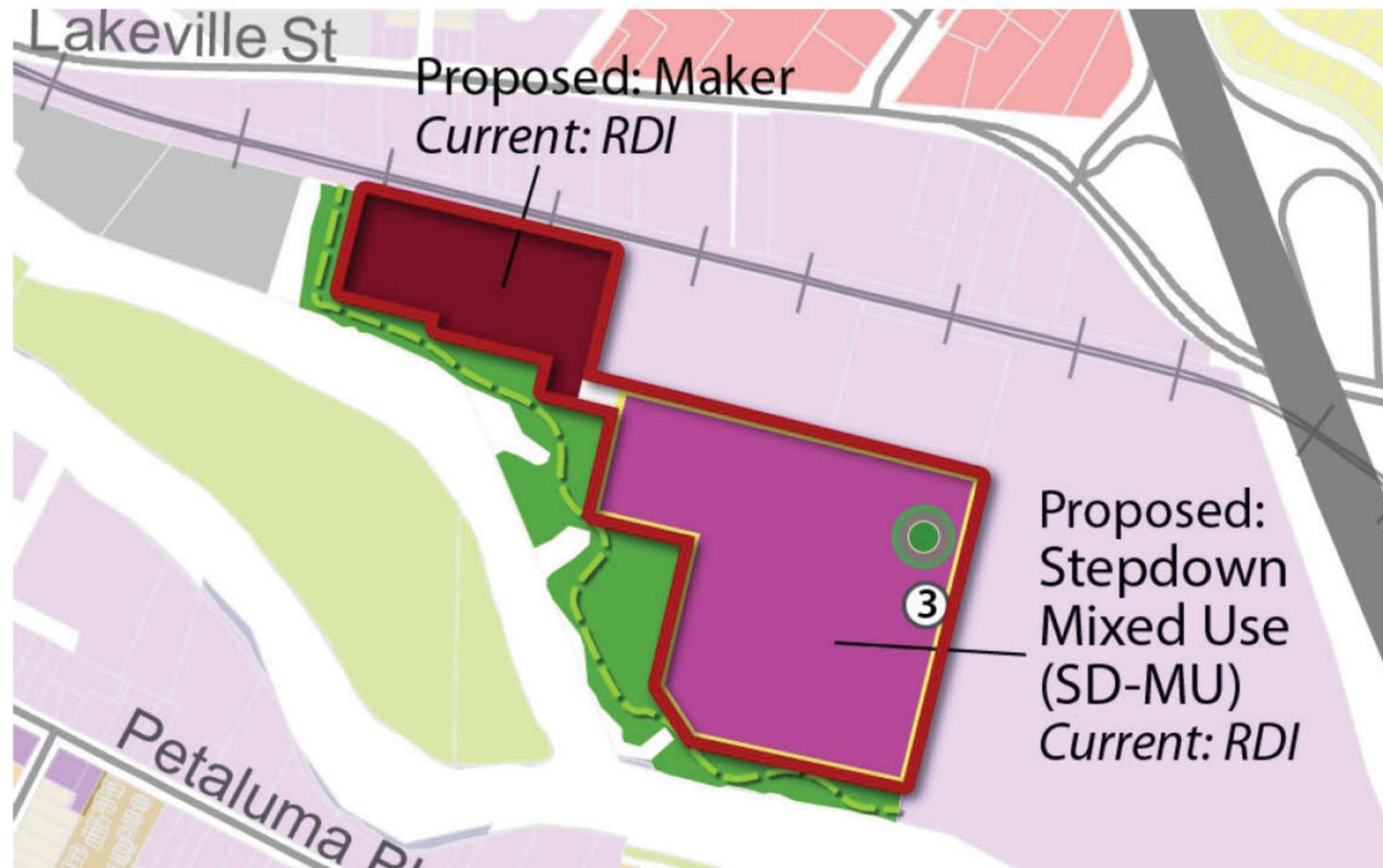


**GPAC Recommendation:** A fusion of Alternatives 2 and 3 that would allow up to four stories of mixed-use development closer to the River and up to five stories further away.

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



## Alternative 2 & 3 Combination



### Drivers

Implement the policies of the River Access and Enhancement Plan

Protect open space

Enhance public access to/across the river corridor

Prioritize infill development and develop underutilized land

Provide more housing near downtown and the SMART Station

Create complete neighborhoods where residents can meet their daily needs

Provide a mix of housing choices

### RATIONALE

- > Allow a diverse mix of housing and employment uses
- > Lower heights/intensities near river to respond to river-adjacent open space & habitat context



Name	Height	Density	Allowed Uses
 Stepdown Mixed Use (SD-MU)	4 stories, 50' <i>Stepdown to 3 stories, 35' along rear/sides where indicated on map</i>	20-45 units/Acre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standalone Commercial</li> <li>• Standalone Residential</li> <li>• Vertical Mixed Use</li> <li>• Horizontal Mixed Use</li> </ul>
 Maker/ Microbusiness (M/M)	4 stories, 60'	3.0 FAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retail &amp; Services</li> <li>• Office</li> <li>• R&amp;D</li> <li>• Food &amp; Beverage (small)</li> <li>• Light Industrial/ Manufacturing/PDR</li> <li>• Warehousing/Storage</li> <li>• Hotels</li> </ul>

### Related Land Use Framework Strategies

- > Preserve open space along the Petaluma River and enhance riparian areas (Goals LU-2 and LU-5)
- > Establish an accessible “green ribbon” along the Petaluma River (Goal LU-5)
- > Enhance the resilience of development near the Petaluma River (Goal LU-5)
- > Prioritize infill, mixed use, and transit-oriented development that is supported by necessary infrastructure (Goals LU-3 and LU-4)
- > Establish activity centers where residents can meet daily needs within a 15-minute walk (Goal LU-6)
- > Maintain core components of the city’s identify (Goal LU-10)

### Other Related Policy Framework Strategies

- > Update the Petaluma River Access and Enhancement Plan to guide riverfront uses, public spaces, recreational programming, and nearby development
- > Develop an interconnected public space network
- > Support the creation of “maker” spaces and business incubator spaces
- > Maintain an inventory of land available for industrial and flex space

## Examples of Allowed Development

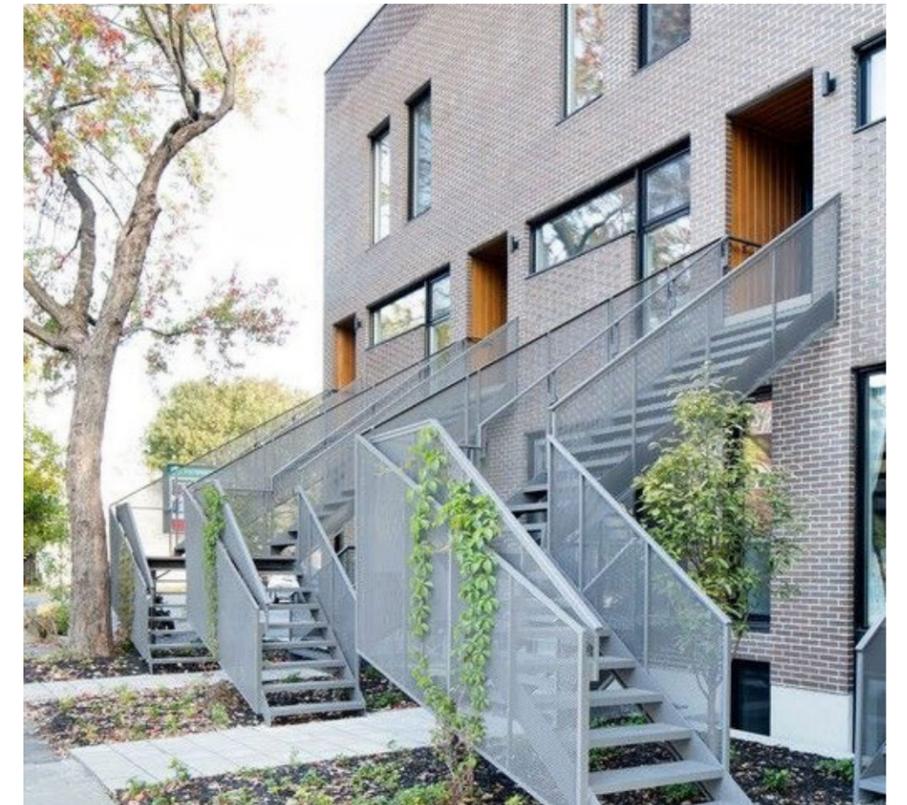
1 to 4-story maker / artisan & craft-making / commercial / light industrial



4-story mixed use (residential over active use) with 3-story stepdown



3-story townhouses



**From:** [Susan K](#)  
**To:** [-- City Clerk](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item 4 - City Council meeting 03/03/2025  
**Date:** Monday, March 3, 2025 3:31:27 PM

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For the Mayor and members of the City Council,

I'd like to note a few references to the Natural Environment in the Land Use Review documents you will be reviewing this evening.

Attachment 1 - Lane Use Designation Chart

Public Designations

Open Space (OSP), described as  
"unimproved sites devoted to the preservation of natural and cultural resources, outdoor recreation, or public health and safety."

Attachment 2: "Briefing Book"

Preserve and Protect...surrounding open space and riparian open space to support ecological function.

Evolve

(all housing related)

Enhance

(all about transportation and a reference to "complete neighborhoods"

Preserve Petaluma's unique identity...and surrounding open spaces.

Expand open space.

Create complete neighborhoods...

Reduce Future Development

...increase open space and river access upstream...

Comment: Early in the GPAC meetings process. Environment and Equity were determined to be the two most important topics through which all other discussions would occur. Clearly, that has not occurred. The inability to view GPAC meetings held at Lucchesi Community Center, which are not broadcast live or recorded for later viewing, has been a challenge for many of us in the community unable to attend the evening meeting in person. A reconvened Work Group on the Environment and Open Space, led by GPAC member Bill Rinehart, was disrupted by criticisms and a demand the discussion move to parks.

The references to open space in the document(s) before you are general references without much meaning. "Preserve and protect surrounding open space and riparian open space to preserve ecological function" is a statement written by a planner. This is like word salad. What does this even mean? Riparian corridors would be an appropriate reference to preserve either side of a creek, stream or the river. Surrounding open space is too general at this point and does not document nor clarify the habitat types on LAND in Petaluma, not just surrounding open spaces, nor how species reside on, migrate to, and terrestrially move through and over land. This should have all been identified and documented by now. The species lists are available for some areas of Petaluma. The West Petaluma area has been completely ignored. The most important open space acquisition and conservation of the last 20 years, Paula Lane, is in ruins because of the uninformed and poor judgment of the City of Petaluma Management and staff. Barbed wire fencing, an atrocious and inappropriate installation, with a wish by City staff to place domestic animals on-site to graze is also contraindicated, explained to the Open Space District staff, with strong objections to the City's ignorance about why the Paula Lane land was acquired and conserved and the absolutely critical importance of conservation and honoring Conservation Easement terms. Petaluma has several land areas that are open grassland and do not need tree planting. The special status mammal for whom the Paula Lane OPEN SPACE land was acquired and conserved, with protected habitat, now destroyed and in ruins, also with carefully planted and nurtured HABITAT enhancements on the habitat edge over 7+ years hacked down or ripped out, no longer has safe habitat. The main foraging and hunting area for the American Badger and raptors was violently destroyed, and a large brown roadway that destroyed the open space aesthetic as well, installed by City contractors. Everything is wrong about the City's decisions and actions on this property. It IS open space, with a possibility of 5 acres of expansion, not even explored or considered in the new General Plan update.

In addition, the wildlife corridor mapping project, sponsored by PLAN, which I am completed, has the Petaluma Valley portion complete. Your General Plan Administrator who was MIA and appears to have departed M Group, so there no longer is a General Plan Administrator, never engaged to learn about the important Natural Environment part of the General Plan Update - wildlife corridors, different from riparian corridors, for terrestrial wildlife movement east, west, south and north, so you do not have this information. Your consultants have only claimed Petaluma is adjacent to the Sonoma Valley Wildlife Corridor, which is false. The Sonoma Valley Wildlife Corridor is a small wildlife movement area in southeast Sonoma County that extends north to the Mayacamas Mountains. Petaluma Valley has six documented wildlife corridors and IS the connector to many areas of Sonoma County and also to Marin County, and a connection to the Blue Ridge/Marin coast larger Critical Linkages movement area of the group Together Bay Area.

The consultants and the M Group, with Brian Oh of Community Development, are bringing a land use designations workshop to the City Council this evening, with the GPAC apparent work, which excludes the most important, baseline segment that should have been studied, understood, and the basis for all residential and

commercial development considerations. Also, any so-called open space considerations. The Petaluma River is not the only natural resource in Petaluma. Surrounding land with a variety of habitat types as well as species, our non-human relatives, who rely on land in Petaluma for survival and migratory activities, should have been the underlying whole document upon which any development considerations would be occurring.

Green space would have been a better definition for open space. Green space/natural area as well.

When planners compose documents where the Natural Environment was earlier decided to be the most important element of a General Plan update, along with Equity, and this does not occur, then we see the documents before you this evening. Some applicants to GPAC, including myself, were not appointed. My environmental experience in Petaluma, Sonoma County and the Bay Area is in-depth and could have been relevant and likely helpful for a GPAC membership. Some of us in the community who've tried to provide input have not had that input respected or even followed up for additional input.

Thus, information that is very important for the future of our Petaluma Natural Environment exists that has not been included in the information brought to the City Council this evening, and as far along as this process is supposed to be now, that is a true misfortune, especially for our habitat types in Petaluma and the species who were here long before humans as well as those who continue to try and survive here.

I think it should be understandable why some experienced individuals may be close to disgusted at this point by the fanfare of how great the GPAC is and how much the community has engaged, and how great the consultants and M Group are, now that a General Plan Administrator appears to have departed. I don't recall that the Department of "Open Government" made that information public. Where is the General Plan Administrator?

The process of "kind of" including Natural Environment and hearing the M Group consultants utter the word "habitat" are both disturbing and superficial.

The City Council majority has made appointments to replace GPAC members who left, and those members also do not have environmental experience. I appreciate Bill Rinehart tried in his capacity as a GPAC member to revisit and re-explore the Work Group on Environment and Open Space, originally a hodge-podge of multiple pages of information that had no cohesion and was also incomplete from the earlier iteration of the Work Group.

I do not see that the greater community - including the LAND and habitat areas in Petaluma that are not "upstream" or "downstream" of the Petaluma River, have been served or adequately assessed and considered, at all.

Also, the "upstream" proposals for development designations north of Petaluma Boulevard North and Payran Street should be minimal to nonexistent, including the

west side of Petaluma Boulevard North. This transition to rural life is important to preserve and not exploit further with development. The Outlets would best be decreased in size and removed to some extent, with green space and restoration a priority in that area.

This City Council majority does not have the type of environmental experience that has been needed to give guidance and direction on Natural Environment, Green Space, and Open Space.

Susan Kirks

**From:** [Robin Riley](#)  
**To:** -- City Clerk  
**Subject:** Public Comment - City Council  
**Date:** Monday, March 3, 2025 10:21:38 AM

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Hello City Council, City Staff,

I'm writing in regards to agenda item #4 on the 2025-03-03 agenda – with great excitement.

As a member of the General Plan Advisory Committee, I've seen first hand the great lengths that staff, committee members, and members of the public have gone to in order to produce these frameworks. I'm particularly proud of the work that's been done over the last several years, at multiple stages, to solicit input from a broad cross-section of the community, including many who are frequently underrepresented in processes like these, so that we can be confident that the General Plan frameworks represent the collective perspective of a diversity of participants.

Of note, many of the communities reached in this process frequently don't have the luxury of spending weekday evenings showing up at city meetings, whether due to child care or elder care responsibilities, having to work multiple jobs, or having disabilities. I want us to keep that in mind as the General Plan update process continues to unfold.

I'll be tuned in to tonight's meeting and I look forward to hearing City Council's feedback on the Land Use Policy Framework!

Warmly,  
Robin

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