

From: [susan kirks](#)
To: [-- City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment - April 29 Workshop
Date: Monday, April 29, 2024 8:19:48 AM

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Slide 30 of presentation describes Habitat/Wildlife Corridors.

I am wondering how you intend to obtain this information for mapping. It appears the importance of wildlife corridors has been recognized, but your consultants incorrectly have claimed Petaluma is adjacent to the Sonoma Valley Wildlife Corridor. A more recent mapping seemed to note State information about habitat and wildlife corridors. But no relevant information was seen on the included map.

How will they obtain accurate and relevant information for Petaluma and how Petaluma's Natural Environment relates to Sonoma and Marin Counties and our Region?

Wildlife Corridor mapping has been in process by me within the auspices of the innovative and important conservation nonprofit, Paula Lane Action Network. In a 3-part series, Petaluma Valley is complete in rough form. There are 6 wildlife corridors in Petaluma Valley.

(Parts 2 and 3 of the series are the remainder of Sonoma County outside the small corridor in SE county of Sonoma Valley and Marin County corridors.)

Petaluma Valley connects to the larger Blue Ridge-Marin segment of macro mapping of Bay Area Critical Linkages, based on vegetation mapping and other criteria.

I am seeking grant funding for a static map and story map. Greeninfo Network is my technical partner.

Over 24 years, documenting habitat, natal territories of American Badger and terrestrial movement patterns of badgers, mountain lions and other mammals, combined with documented living and deceased species sightings, natural movement areas, or wildlife corridors have been revealed. This is really the only way wildlife corridors can be documented, by direct observations over a long period of time.

Of course, it is relevant to identify and comprehend the language of wildlife - how they live and move. Preserving wildlife corridors, which can connect to and through, but are separate from, riparian corridors, supports biodiversity, for species to move between and in habitat areas, reproduce and support strong genetics.

Habitat, Green and Open spaces must be conserved so species have somewhere to live, mate, reproduce and sustain. Habitat connectivity is about much more than planting pollinator gardens. One reason the community has prioritized our Natural Environment and Open and Green Spaces is an innate understanding and feeling about helping our birds, wildlife and ecosystems, and feeling well being when we are able to experience Nature.

Also related to wildlife corridors in our modern human-dominant world are wildlife crossings - how wildlife can cross over or under roads and highways. In Petaluma Valley, two areas of

Highway 101 north and south are identified as needing modification and additional signage to support safer wildlife crossing. Each of these crossings connects to two of the six wildlife corridors described above.

In your land use discussion, the area of Petaluma Boulevard North beyond Cal-West Rentals needs to remain rural with little to no new development - to protect the environment, habitat areas and a wildlife corridor that connects to West Petaluma. This is especially true for the West side of Petaluma Boulevard North. One area of Petaluma Boulevard North that could be redeveloped for affordable housing is the slaughterhouse property. Closing that business and redeveloping could add to the community, with careful landscaping and inclusion of open space.

I suppose your Council members can loudly announce in meetings how important wildlife corridors are - but you don't have the information in your own City and area, so such announcements are vacant, intellectual with no substance or connection. But it appears there's a belief if you announce this in a meeting, maybe someone will respond to you with the information.

You can try to obtain this information. Ask Sonoma Land Trust. Ask Pt. Blue. Ask the CA DFW. Ask your "environmental" groups, Daily Acts and ReLeaf. Surely, you can obtain the information from someone, anyone but Susan Kirks, conservation leader, and PLAN, the wildlife conservation nonprofit based in Petaluma with regional and statewide advocacy and work.

You will not find information about wildlife corridors in Petaluma from these sources because these sources do not have the information and have not done the work. Daily Acts jumped at the opportunity to get into the open space business in 2019, with no merit, "helping the City," and causing habitat destruction and loss of an important prey area with one of their sheet mulching-pollinator gardens. A natural movement trail for wildlife was obstructed by them and the wildlife then ate almost all of the plants that had been planted IN habitat with all of the sheet mulching and wood chips. And, by the way, I was accused by City of Petaluma staff of trespassing (onto the land my nonprofit had saved) and removing the plants. These two workdays of Daily Acts were scheduled and occurred during badger mating season, when habitat should not be encroached into in the first place and only individual or very small groups of quiet volunteers should be on-site, working within the Building Envelope. The very opposite of what was done. The Daily Acts group, supplemented by City staff to add to numbers and make the work group appear to have several volunteers, was constantly noisy and encroaching into habitat to do this inappropriate project.

But sure, ask Daily Acts or ask the re-formed "Cool Petaluma" for complete habitat and wildlife corridors information.

For some years, a focus on a property title transfer of the important conserved Paula Lane open space property away from the City of Petaluma has been underway. The Paula Lane open space property is located in one of Petaluma's wildlife corridors, documented many years ago before the importance of wildlife corridors began to even be realized. The special status wildlife, birds and habitat of the Paula Lane open space land have been severely harmed by the City's wrong decisions and actions. Documenting wildlife corridors in Petaluma Valley, Sonoma and Marin Counties has been ongoing, thanks to participation of the network and conservation of the Paula Lane open space land. Wildlife corridor documentation for Petaluma

Valley began on Paula Lane.

In providing this comment, I do not expect the consultants or City staff to reach out to obtain the wildlife corridor mapping information that is available and has been offered to the City, including descriptive information to the Planning Commission. I simply want to share for the benefit of the Petaluma community that the General Plan Update is very deficient in Natural Environment and Green and Open Space documentation - a priority our community identified early in the General Plan Update process as most important.

And early in the GPAC process, the two priorities through which all Elements were to be viewed and discussed were Environment and Equity. As the GP meetings have occurred, work groups formed, these two foci have just become lip service or not discussed at all.

Notably, the discussion of Equity has also been absent from GPAC meetings. A multicultural center was a priority of the Community Race Relations ad hoc committee. Where are proposed locations in the Update for this center?

Compared to the GP 2025 processes, this Update process has been very-few-areas- focused and more politically, not community, driven.

The purpose of my input is for the community's awareness and for our Natural Environment.

Susan Kirks
Petaluma.

From: [susan kirks](#)
To: -- City Clerk
Subject: For City Council
Date: Monday, April 29, 2024 9:30:49 PM

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

Please forward this to the City Council -- and to the GPAC consultants and City staff --

I am viewing the Workshop of April 29.

This is a response to John Shribbs' question of why isn't Petaluma Boulevard North up near Corona being considered for more development, especially the West side of the Boulevard.

This question and John's vocal advocacy reflect how unaware he is, and apparently you who remained silent are, about our Natural Environment.

Without question, that area except for the slaughterhouse property on the East side of the boulevard are essential for remaining rural with access by wildlife for habitat AND natural movement patterns.

John has absolutely no knowledge or experience in this area of Petaluma. There has already been too much take of and development of the Jessie Lane area, a very important connecting area to West Petaluma.

These questions were raised and addressed at GPAC, with an understanding of responses given by those of us with expertise in the Petaluma Boulevard North area. Why didn't the consultants share this with John Shribbs', going off on a tangent with an intellectual lecture and knowing nothing about the reality of the environment and importance of this area to our local wildlife, not to mention the rural character and quiet feel in the North Petaluma Boulevard area.

Seriously.

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Susan Kirks
Petaluma