

From: [adam klein](#)
To: -- City Clerk; -- City Council; mayor@cityofpetaluma.org
Subject: Overlay Comment
Date: Monday, March 17, 2025 11:14:17 AM

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Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

My family and I have lived on the west side of town near Petaluma High School for over 10 years. As Bay Area natives (I'm third generation, having grown up in San Jose), we've witnessed firsthand how unique communities can transform into generic landscapes, and more importantly, how the pursuit of revenue can sometimes override sound judgment.

In the March 14th Argus Courier, Council Member Cader Thompson explicitly stated that the primary motivation for the proposed zoning overlay is revenue generation. This confirms what has been suggested in previous City Council meetings and reveals what lies beneath the marketing narratives.

The underlying message appears to be:

"We need the money, and we'll try to mitigate any negative consequences."

History shows this approach rarely succeeds.

This proposal does not represent a proactive, vision-forward approach that considers multiple stakeholders or enhances what makes Petaluma special.

I strongly urge you to vote NO on the overlay.

Instead, I encourage you to work collaboratively with Petaluma residents and businesses to establish a new general plan—one that incorporates input from all stakeholders and preserves the rich, unique character of both our physical community and its residents.

Sincerely,

Adam Klein

From: [Anisa THOMSEN](#)
To: [-- City Clerk](#)
Subject: March 17: Hotel/Overlay
Date: Monday, March 17, 2025 12:05:56 PM

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I am against the hotel/overlay. The reasons have already been brought forth by countless other Petalumans. We can do better.

Anisa Thomsen

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [Ann Edminster](#)
To: [-- City Clerk](#)
Subject: Downtown overlap
Date: Monday, March 17, 2025 11:53:24 AM

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Mayor McDonnell and Council members Barnacle, Shribbs, Cader-Thompson, Quint, Lau, and DeCarli:

As a design professional and former planning commissioner with a deep interest and educational background in urban planning, I am writing to convey my strong support for the downtown overlay proposal. I believe the overlay represents an appropriate mechanism to expand the downtown's potential for profitable and appealing development that will both infuse the area with greater vitality and generate a much-needed revenue stream for City projects that will benefit all Petalumans.

That said, I also believe that the City needs to ensure that projects in the downtown area are well-designed -- beautiful, functional, resilient, and climate-responsive. I recommend that the City establish an Architectural Review Board comprised of architects and other qualified designers to uphold the design quality that should be a hallmark of our downtown area.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this matter,

Ann

[REDACTED]

From: [Brianna Wolf](#)
To: [-- City Council](#)
Cc: [-- City Clerk](#)
Subject: Support for hotel and downtown overlay
Date: Monday, March 17, 2025 9:56:04 AM

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Hello City Council,

I am a resident of the west side of Petaluma and enjoy easy access to our wonderful downtown. I would like to see our downtown strengthened by zoning that matches the economic reality of urban infill projects so we can attract high quality developers to fill empty lots.

Further, I think an additional hotel downtown is needed. There have been several times when Hotel Petaluma is full, or we have someone visiting with compromised mobility that can't use a cramped Petaluma Hotel room, and additional hotel capacity downtown has been really missing! Our guests have to drive to meet us from a further out hotel rather than by taking a lovely walk. What a miss!

Thank you for listening and hopefully supporting this tough decision.

Best,

Brianna Wolf

From: [Claudia Aron Ross](#)
To: [-- City Council](#); [-- City Clerk](#)
Subject: City Council Meeting 3/17/2026
Date: Monday, March 17, 2025 12:34:50 PM

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The city hired Strategic Economics to analyze the economic picture for downtown, including hotel, housing, and office development as a result of the overlay. I would ask that the numbers they provided, not the skewed numbers provided by the proposed Developer, EKN, be used when you reference the proposed Overlay.

The citizen of Petaluma are not pleased of constantly being ignored and lied to.

Claudia Aron Ross

From: [Claudia Vecchio](#)
To: [-- City Clerk](#)
Subject: Downtown Hotel Development Project
Date: Thursday, March 13, 2025 9:48:12 AM

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

Dear Petaluma City Council,

In our 2023 Destination Stewardship and Resiliency Master Plan, Sonoma County Tourism identified five key imperatives that through extensive research were shown to be those that would be most beneficial to the long-term success of the destination. These were selected not only to drive more visitation, but to create a destination that generates vital economic sustainability and one that residents are proud to call home.

One of these imperatives is “Enhance the Breadth of Products and Experiences.” To help ensure this imperative was addressed in the most effective way, the plan notes that “...as tourism continues to grow, ensuring the lodging properties developed and the experiences offered to travelers are equitable and in alignment with the brand is critical.” This is addressed specifically because Sonoma County’s brand has been negatively impacted by the continued building of lodging properties that do not share any of the brand values that make this County so special. Most of the properties recently constructed will look the same whether the location is Sonoma County or anywhere USA. They provide no sense of place, no unique artisanal offerings, no wine county vibe that helps travelers connect to the destination. At its core, this connection to a place is what all travelers are seeking.

When a project comes along that clearly reflects Sonoma County and its brand attributes, the potential for the long-term economic benefits is exciting on many levels. You have such a project now moving through the permitting process. The project’s commitment to creating a sense of place through incorporating regional makers, locally sourced products and other components that reflect the very best of Sonoma County will be incredibly beneficial for connecting to visitors. The revenue generated from this project through Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) and the ancillary business it will drive to downtown and area retailers will help shore up the city’s financial future. And, it will become a showcase for residents as they share the property’s offerings with friends and family.

We have watched the development process in Petaluma’s historic downtown core unfold and completely understand that change is challenging. But, we also know that working with a developer who wants to partner and invest in the community, and whose project will bring a vibrant, creative and very Sonoma County-centric space can be an important step toward long-term economic sustainability and community pride.

Thank you for your consideration,

Claudia



Claudia Vecchio

President/CEO

cvecchio@sonomacounty.com; Office: 707-522-5804

Sonoma County Tourism

Sonoma County's Official Destination Stewardship Organization

400 Aviation Blvd., Suite 500 Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Sonomacounty.com | [Sonoma County Pledge](#)

Dear Mayor McDonnell,
Vice Mayor Nau,
Council Member Cader Thompson,
Council Member Shribbs,
Council Member Quint,
Council Member DeCarli,
Council Member Barnacle,
and Peggy Flynn, City Manager

I feel it is important as we move forward on the Hotel project to express EKN's intention and commitment to Petaluma to address community concerns about the project with transparency and clarity. EKN continuously strives to create high-quality hospitality projects that enhance the communities in which we choose to be a part of. Our approach is rooted in thoughtful design, economic sustainability, and a deep respect for local history and character. We believe that development should serve as a bridge between tradition and progress, ensuring that the qualities that make a place special are preserved while allowing for responsible and vital growth that will add value. Our goal is not only to build a hotel but also to create a well-integrated component of the community that aligns with the city's and EKN standards of a sustainable and enduring asset.

EKN does not impose a project upon a community; rather, we believe in working alongside residents and local leaders to create something that is both beneficial and deeply rooted in the historical and cultural character. We are invested in the lasting success of our projects, ensuring they contribute positively to the community's economic and cultural fabric for generations. Continued participation in the growth of the community is essential to us because a thriving environment benefits everyone—we do not want to see a hotel exist in isolation or in an area that diminishes over time. That is why we actively engage in supporting local businesses and initiatives, fostering a sustainable ecosystem where both our project and the surrounding community can flourish together.

Over the past two years, we have worked diligently to ensure that this project is shaped not just by our vision but also by the participating voices of the Petaluma community. From the beginning, we prioritized open dialogue, engaging in numerous community meetings to listen, learn, and thoughtfully respond to local concerns. Many concerned community members provided a significant amount of input and contributed a substantial amount of time to provide comments. This process led to meaningful changes which we have implemented without resistance, despite the associated cost — adjustments that many developers may not have made but that we felt were essential to create a project truly belonging to Petaluma.

One of the most significant and challenging shifts was in response to community desire to change the hotel brand from Marriott to a local boutique brand. As a result, we selected Appellation, a locally driven operator that reflects the region's deep connection to food, wine, and craftsmanship. This was not just a branding decision but a commitment to ensure that the hotel brand and management embrace the DNA of Petaluma, celebrating its local flavors and character rather than imposing a generic, out-of-place identity.

Additionally, we completely reimaged the architectural design based on direct community feedback. The original concept faced significant objections, and rather than pushing forward, we took a step back, collaborated with local voices, and crafted a new design that aligned with Petaluma's historical charm and aesthetic. These decisions were among many that reflect our belief; development should be a collaborative effort—one that respects the past while thoughtfully shaping the future.

Through collaboration with our design and architecture team, alongside Petaluma's historic and cultural resources staff, we have undertaken extensive massing studies to ensure that the hotel's scale is both visually harmonious and contextually appropriate for the downtown core. Every aspect of the building's size and form has been carefully considered, balancing scientific analysis with aesthetic sensitivity. In response to community input and preserving the hotel's economic viability, we reduced the visual impact of the upper levels—scaling down and setting back the fifth floor. These thoughtful refinements reflect our commitment to creating a building that not only fits seamlessly within its surroundings but also enhances the architectural integrity of downtown Petaluma.

Many have asked "Why not build a smaller hotel?" The simple answer is that a high-quality hotel that truly complements Petaluma's character and economy with the kind of rooftop and lobby restaurant experience that reflects the City's culture, must have a minimum number of rooms to sustain the financial viability of a fitting project. A reduced scale would fundamentally change the nature of the project, resulting in a lower-tier, select-service hotel with limited amenities — something that has historically underperformed in this area and would not contribute meaningfully to the community's economic growth. You can imagine that without the rooftop and

exquisite culinary experiences, the project would lack the destination appeal necessary to draw visitors, generate tax revenue, and support local businesses. No one in the city, including members of the current opposition, would be happy with a downgraded select-service hotel that you find along remote highway routes that will undoubtedly sacrifice quality in exchange for lower costs and therefore higher profits.

Some have also asked, why this site? The answer is straightforward—The Hotel's location within downtown Petaluma is essential to achieving the dual goals of financial viability and becoming a valuable member of the community. A high-quality hotel must be well-integrated into the city's cultural and economic fabric, positioned where it can enhance the vibrancy of downtown rather than existing in isolation. This site provides precisely that opportunity, allowing the hotel to serve as a catalyst for increased tourism, local business engagement, and economic activity, benefiting both the hotel and the surrounding businesses. The proposed use of the site maximizes its value-add by transforming an underutilized space into a dynamic hospitality destination that strengthens the local economy, creates jobs, and generates significant tax revenue for the city. A location outside the downtown core would diminish these benefits, reducing the hotel's ability to contribute meaningfully to Petaluma's economy and cultural landscape. Simply put, the success of the project and the benefits it can provide the local businesses depends on being situated in the heart of the city, where guests can seamlessly explore, dine, and shop, ensuring that local businesses thrive alongside it.

It pains me to even imagine the alternative proposals that have been pitched for this site as a viable option instead of the beautiful hotel and incredible food experience we are proposing. While these proposals may be economically viable, and even potentially more profitable, they are not something that is in EKN's DNA.

Beyond our proposed hotel or a downgraded select-service hotel would be an affordable housing development, which, as I understand, under state and federal laws, would not face height and parking restrictions that have guided our design process. Other developers are lurking to capitalize on the opportunity EKN's failure would bring. Such projects, in the absence of our success, would significantly alter the fabric of downtown Petaluma without any of the economic benefits that a thoughtfully integrated hotel can provide. Unlike a hospitality-driven project that enhances tourism, dining, and retail activity, an affordable housing development would not generate the same level of visitor spending, transient occupancy tax, or job creation. Our proposal strikes the right balance—respecting the historic character of the area while delivering an elevated experience that strengthens the local economy, creates jobs, and enhances downtown Petaluma as a destination.

By bringing a high-quality hotel and epicurean experience to Petaluma, we create the opportunity for visitors to extend their stay, turning a short visit into a longer immersive experience thereby increasing revenues that are currently benefiting all your neighboring cities. Rather than simply coming for dinner or a drink and then leaving, guests will stay overnight, explore local shops, and enjoy all that downtown has to offer. This extends the economic benefit beyond the hotel itself—residents and visitors alike will dine at our restaurant, then stroll through the city, discovering local cafés, dessert spots, and boutiques, further supporting the vibrancy of the community. We are very sensitive to the fact that we do not want Petaluma to become another Healdsburg, but rather to achieve and sustain its own ultimate potential—one that embraces its unique charm, history, and character while fostering thoughtful, sustainable growth.

The continuous voices of the community are ringing in my head, expressing their concerns about Petaluma's local initiatives, schools, infrastructure projects and public services. I cannot fix all these issues, unless I am given the opportunity to bring in a significant amount of TOT tax that will be generated through the Appellation Petaluma Hotel.

I believe it is highly critical to communicate with the constituent members of the opposition that with the addition of a high-quality hotel, the city of Petaluma will directly benefit from a significant increase in Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) revenue. This addition will help support local businesses and initiatives, infrastructure projects, and public services that are vital for the growth and well-being of Petaluma and its downtown core. Furthermore, the tax revenue generated by this development will contribute to the city's general funds and will also directly support critical sectors, such as local schools and public safety.

Our vision for this hotel goes beyond providing accommodation; we aim to be an active, engaged member of the Petaluma community. We believe that continuous involvement contributes to both the hotel's atmosphere and the local culture. At EKN, our fabric is creating spaces that reflect the community's character. In Petaluma, Charlie Palmer will lead a professional team in creating an epicurean experience, while supporting local agriculture by sourcing food natively. EKN will utilize local artists to beautify our hotel, and host events that benefit not just guests, but also the residents. We look to local talent to create lively music events, classes, and celebrations, weaving a story that enhances Petaluma's unique culture through creativity and shared experiences.



In closing, I want to emphasize that we have proactively approached the opportunity to bring something good to Petaluma. We are continuing our work with contributing members of the community to further align architectural design elements to standards set by both the city, HCPC, and community comments. We seek a constructive conversation built on facts, evidence, and the collective desire to celebrate the future Petaluma deserves. I respectfully urge you to help provide leaders and members of the community with the information they need to make informed decisions, fostering a spirit of collaboration that will benefit the greater community as opposed to serving the special interests of a few. By working together, we can ensure that Petaluma continues to grow in a way that preserves its unique character while embracing the possibilities of tomorrow. We look forward to your continued support and guidance in this important endeavor.

Sincerely,
Ebbie K. Nakhjavani

Dear Mayor, Councilmembers, and City Staff,

I support the adoption of the Downtown Housing and Economic Opportunity Overlay. The zoning overlay gives Petalumans the freedom to consider more flexible development proposals while requiring public process and new design standards.

We are entering a period of significant economic uncertainty, and relying on local sources to generate public revenue is key. Federal funding is dramatically decreasing - how exactly that will affect us here is unclear, but what is clear is that it will reduce our funds. Encouraging the productive use of our vacant downtown parcels is one way to help.¹

Nobody in this overlay policy debate wants to “destroy our historic downtown.” This needs to be restated, because several loud overlay opponents keep spewing vitriol against neighbors online. “Thugs”, “outsiders”, “transplants”, “corrupt”, “thieves”, “hates Petaluma” are a few recent examples. Sadly, doxxing and stalking behavior is also increasing, including blasting out photos of supporters' cars and license plate numbers online, and creating stalker social media accounts. As reported in the Argus-Courier, it is no wonder businesses downtown “have remained publicly quiet on the issue out of fear of retribution” if they dare to say something supportive about the overlay.² Thankfully, constructive conversations related to downtown improvement are still happening all over Petaluma offline, where respectful exchanges of contrasting visions to help shape land use policy are occurring.³

The overlay focuses on significantly underutilized land downtown. For example, in subarea A of the overlay, 77% of the total area includes undeveloped parcels.⁴ Nobody I have spoken with wants these parcels to remain unused and increasingly blighted. The overlay encourages more creative applications that bring new business and opportunities to our historic downtown.

¹ California at Risk: Proposed Federal Funding Cuts Jeopardize Key Services.

<https://calbudgetcenter.org/resources/california-at-risk-proposed-federal-funding-cuts-jeopardize-key-services/>

² Petaluma's downtown 'overlay' is headed toward a major vote. Here's what might happen.

<https://www.petaluma360.com/article/news/petaluma-hotel-overlay-charlie-palmer/>

³ Petaluma General Plan, Get Involved: <https://www.planpetaluma.org/getinvolved> & Urban Chat Calendar:

<https://www.urbanchat.org/monthly-calendar>

⁴ March 17 2025. Staff Report:

<https://cityofpetaluma.primegov.com/api/compilemeetingattachmenthistory/historyattachment/?historyId=8f421f38-61f5-43f7-ad7d-657626fe3dae>

Over a quarter of Sonoma County households dole out more than half their income on housing. Since affordability and economic stability are linked, it makes good sense that the overlay includes “Housing and Economic Opportunity” in the title. 27.3% of Sonoma County households pay more than 50% of their income for housing - economic opportunities must be increased.⁵ Low-income entrepreneurs, especially women and minorities, lack access to capital, resources, and affordable spaces. High living costs also hinder worker retention. Supporting small businesses, micro-enterprises, and workforce training will increase economic resilience and job stability, improving affordability and financial independence.⁶

Exclusionary zoning increases the cost of living in Petaluma.⁷ Prices go up with numerous empty parcels, no new growth downtown for years on empty parcels, and increasing demand for new businesses and homes. Key examples of exclusionary zoning restrictions include prohibitions on multi-family dwellings, enforced minimum lot sizes, and overly restrictive minimum building heights.⁸ This pushes working families to live further away, adds to congestion on the roadways, and makes it quite difficult for the children of current residents to afford to live nearby.⁹

Younger adults cannot afford to live here. Founder and managing partner of Marin Sonoma Impact Ventures Zachary Kushel explains that in the North Bay, “we need to attract more 18 to 35-year-olds to this community ... And if we don't fix this challenge, that has great ramifications for things like workforce, our tax base, et cetera, pushing forward.”¹⁰ Communities grow stronger when multiple generations of families can find affordable homes near one another.

⁵ Petaluma Draft Consolidated Plan.

<https://cityofpetaluma.org/documents/draft-2025-2030-petaluma-consolidated-plan-3-6-25/>

⁶ 2025-2030 Proposed Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program Consolidated Plan City of Petaluma Staff Report:

<https://cityofpetaluma.primegov.com/api/compilemeetingattachmenhistory/historyattachment/?historyId=c0ee2d24-2e2a-48dc-aa08-a306d63355bb>

⁷ The Exclusionary Effect of Petaluma's Growth Controls.

<https://petalumahistorian.com/the-exclusionary-effect-of-petalumas-growth-controls/>

⁸ State of Housing in Sonoma County 2024

https://generationhousing.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/2024_SOH_SoCo_for-flipbook_100724.pdf

⁹ American Planning Association "Equity in Zoning Policy Guide"

<https://www.planning.org/publications/document/9264386/>

¹⁰ What's ahead for North Bay economy in 2025 and beyond.

<https://www.northbaybusinessjournal.com/article/article/sonoma-napa-marin-economy-2025/>

Independent economic analysis indicates the overlay would strengthen downtown. The Strategic Economic Memorandum is an independent analysis of the economic viability of the Overlay.¹¹ It indicates the:

“Downtown Overlay will provide greater long-term flexibility for housing developers and will increase the likelihood that a residential product would be built when development conditions improve.”

The memorandum also indicates that:

“additional lot coverage will enhance the financial performance of otherwise financially feasible multifamily residential development projects and potentially accelerate housing development.”

Petaluma is investing substantially in transportation and placemaking. The Strategic Economics Memorandum indicates that while 3, 5, and 8-story high-density residential “rarely pencil” in Petaluma, this will change if “transportation, placemaking, and private amenity improvements enhance the area’s desirability as a residential neighborhood” are implemented. Despite the criticism from anti-overlay advocates, recent investments in transportation and placemaking help reduce cost of living and increase economic activity, health and safety for all of us. We have a new micro-transit service¹², fare-free busses,¹³ a new train station,¹⁴ and a huge surge in roadway repairs and improvements that make room for more people to choose less expensive options to get around town, including bicycling and walking.¹⁵ Placemaking is in process at both train stations, and at the Fairgrounds.

The overlay is a small but positive step toward the productive use of our long vacant parcels, increased activation of our business district, and more affordable spaces for living and working in and near downtown. I want to live in an inclusive community that grows sustainably, and the zoning overlay is a positive step in that direction.

- Eric Leland, Petaluma CA

¹¹ Strategic Economics Memorandum: <https://storage.googleapis.com/proudcity/petalumaca/uploads/2023/06/Strategic-Economics-Memorandum-dated-November-7-2023.pdf>

¹² Petaluma Transit LumaGo: <https://transit.cityofpetaluma.net/lumago/>

¹³ Petaluma Transit Fare Free Busses: <https://transit.cityofpetaluma.net/fare-free/>

¹⁴ SMART unveils Petaluma North, the city’s 2nd train station. <https://www.petaluma360.com/article/news/smart-petaluma-north-train-station/>

¹⁵ Petaluma plans to invest \$59 million in its streets over the next 5 years. <https://www.petaluma360.com/article/news/petaluma-roads-pothole-fix/>

From: [Gary Deaver](#)
To: [-- City Clerk](#)
Subject: Downtown Overlay District and Appellation Hotel
Date: Friday, March 14, 2025 5:46:35 PM

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Thank you again Mayor and City Council Members for your leadership approving the Overlay District which paves the way for the proposed Appellation Hotel. The economic impact of the new hotel will be a boost for every business throughout Petaluma and will help the City support needed improvements in our infrastructure.

The vocal opposition is not the majority opinion. The quiet and informed support is overwhelming. Thank you for being leaders and volunteers. As a former elected official from a slightly larger city, I see Petaluma as well governed and positioned positively for gradual but sustained growth. The right balance in my view. This reflects positively regarding your leadership.

Warmest regards,
Gary Deaver





427 Mendocino Ave, Suite 100
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

(707) 900-4364
info@generationhousing.org

March 17, 2025

Petaluma City Council
11 English Street
Petaluma, CA 92952

RE: Item 9 - Downtown Housing & Economic Opportunity Overlay

Dear Mayor McDonnell, Vice Mayor Nau, Council Members, and City Staff,

Generation Housing urges the City Council to adopt the Downtown Housing & Economic Opportunity Overlay with its housing provisions intact, as it introduces key updates that expand housing opportunities while preserving Petaluma's historic character and commitment to sustainable, infill growth. These updates include:

- Increasing the allowable Floor Area Ratio (FAR) from 2.5 to 6.0, allowing more efficient use of land for housing and mixed-use development.
- Permitting greater building height flexibility, with a discretionary process to allow buildings up to 60 feet (or 75 feet if providing community benefits), making multi-story housing projects more viable.
- Allowing ground-floor residential units, removing unnecessary barriers and increasing housing opportunities and accessibility.
- Encouraging mixed-use and transit-oriented development by expanding opportunities for homes, businesses, and amenities in a walkable downtown core.

These updates are key to unlocking the potential of underutilized downtown parcels, advancing Petaluma's commitment to compact growth, and ensuring timely housing development without unnecessary delays. Given rising construction costs and limited available land, these changes increase feasibility for future developments, helping the city meet its housing goals.

Petaluma voters have reaffirmed their commitment to maintaining Urban Growth Boundaries, making it clear that the city must grow upward, not outward. The proposed overlay reflects that vision, providing a balanced approach that expands housing while ensuring thoughtful urban design and historic preservation.

We urge you to approve the overlay to expand diverse housing options in Downtown Petaluma while the City finalizes its General Plan update. Furthermore, we look forward to seeing these efforts incorporated into the General Plan to support a more inclusive and sustainable future for Petaluma.

In partnership,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie Bowen".

Stephanie Picard Bowen
Deputy Director, Generation Housing

From: [Jim Hudson](#)
To: [-- City Clerk](#)
Subject: overlay
Date: Monday, March 17, 2025 1:47:27 PM

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Members, I'm writing to support the overlay.

Jim Hudson

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Julia Cort](#)
To: [Kevin McDonnell](#); [Barnacle, Brian](#); [Alexander DeCarli](#); [Karen Nau](#); [John Shribbs](#); [Janice Cader-Thompson](#); [-- City Clerk](#)
Subject: Hotel and Overlay
Date: Monday, March 17, 2025 9:46:57 AM

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Hello Council members.

Please consider what the EKN developer requirements mean for downtown Petaluma and how the residents feel about this. The changes will be forever. Why can't they build a boutique hotel with 4 stories without the need to change the downtown zoning? Or another use that doesn't require us to change our town. Their architecture looks like Russian apartment building from the 1950s.

Why do you skirt public engagement and why don't you ask us what we think?

Citizens have done 2 polls about this issue and both results were not in favor of the new proposed zoning changes.

Thank you for listening.

Julia Cort



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Marilyn Jaffe [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 17, 2025 10:27 AM
To: Greg Powell <GPOWELL@cityofpetaluma.org>
Subject: Re: Downtown Housing & Economic Opportunity Overlay

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Please - NO Giant hotel and NO overlay. Like most citizens, I oppose these ugly, out-of-character changes to our historic downtown.

I can't make the meeting so please add my voice.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Jaffe

From: [Mary Davies](#)
To: [-- City Clerk](#)
Subject: Overlay
Date: Monday, March 17, 2025 1:51:05 PM

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Councilors, I'm writing to support the overlay, and to thank you for your far-sighted stewardship of our downtown.

We have too many vacant storefronts, and vacant lots. We can use the increased visitor numbers and tax revenue from a new downtown hotel.

Mary Davies
[REDACTED]



1341 N. McDowell Boulevard, Suite A • P.O. Box 2210 • Petaluma • CA 94953-2210
Fax: (707) 769-5282 • Phone: (707) 769-5280

March 12, 2025

Via email and US Mail

Petaluma City Council
15 English Street
Petaluma, CA 94952

Dear Petaluma City Council:

My firm represents four downtown buildings in our historic downtown area which we manage.

I am writing to encourage you to listen to the community by placing a Voter's Initiative on the ballot to limit the height of buildings being constructed to four stories and require new development to provide adequate parking for their projects.

The existing downtown businesses are dependent on street parking and the parking provided by the Keller St. Parking Garage, A Street Parking lot and the Theatre Square garage. The existing buildings, through bonds and special assessments, paid for this parking.

Our downtown businesses are dependent on Tourism and Crosstown business which is dependent upon the charm and vibrancy of our downtown. These customers are not looking for the San Francisco experience nor to replicate the ambiance of the Reno Casinos. Limiting the height of buildings to four stories will preserve the Petaluma Experience. Additionally, low-cost housing does not develop projects over four stories due to construction costs (steel vs. wood-frame construction).

Until the Voters of Petaluma are allowed to cast their ballot, I would respectfully request that the City Council vote no on any Ordinance that forwards the "Overlay District" which corrupts our Community.

Sincerely,
Nexus Realty Group, Inc.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bryant R. Moynihan", is written over the typed name.

Bryant R. Moynihan, President

From: [Caitlin Corley](#)
To: [-- City Clerk](#)
Subject: Fw: The Overlay (what else?)
Date: Monday, March 17, 2025 11:38:12 AM
Attachments: [emailsig_citylogo_d1\(2\)_2c9fbccd-8cdc-416e-b822-fdf4151fa8be.png](#)
[emailsig_climateready_d1\(2\)_bb0505f6-445e-416b-9afe-a8757766a766.png](#)
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[emailsig_insta_d1\(2\)_ba557d12-cb65-45c6-9b6c-a3e9d60a0a6e.png](#)

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Noel MacDonald [REDACTED]
Date: March 17, 2025 at 11:20:58 AM PDT
To: "Barnacle, Brian" <bbarnacle@cityofpetaluma.org>
Subject: The Overlay (what else?)

[REDACTED]

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

Mr. Barnacle, thank you for supporting the Downtown overlay.

As you know well from your district election this past fall, the loudest voices often don't represent the majority. Thank you for representing our views, and for fulfilling your campaign promise.

We don't support unrestricted growth, but we do recognize that Petaluma must continue to grow in order to remain a vibrant city, and a financially strong city. The overlay in general, and probably the proposed hotel specifically, are needed to keep us vibrant and strong. John McNear would have supported the overlay without question!

Like EIR reviews and historic preservation, parking and congestion are always rolled out as reasons to not build, well, anything at all. Living near the Mary Collins school we are fortunate to be able to walk to downtown more often than driving. But our experience driving is that if you are able to walk a maximum of five blocks, there is no parking problem. Please don't accept parking as a valid argument against the overlay and the hotel—and recognize the irony of fighting growth because we have to accommodate cars!

In the 11 years we've lived here, the SE corner of D and the Blvd has always been a vacant lot. As has the north side of Liberty S of Washington. Right now three of the four corners of Blvd/Washington (H of the A is still pretty vacant!). 4th & C. Keokuk & Washington. The dead banks. And the Blvd/B hotel lot. We need more successes such as Acme/Crooked Goat.

Sorry this is so long, mostly reminding you of what you already know. Thanks.

Noel & Ellen MacDonald



From: [REDACTED]
To: -- City Clerk
Subject: Tall hotels in historic downtowns
Date: Thursday, March 13, 2025 4:57:40 PM
Attachments: [Butte, Montana.png](#)
[Hotel Finlen, Butte.png](#)
[Hotel Finlen 2.png](#)
[Wilmington Marketplace.png](#)
[Hotel Settles, Big Spring, Texas.png](#)
[Helena, Montana 1.png](#)
[Helena, Montana 2.png](#)
[Napa, CA.png](#)
[Hotel Nevada, Ely 1.png](#)
[Hotel Nevada, Ely 2.png](#)
[Hotel Petaluma.png](#)
[Ruston, LA.png](#)
[Williamsport, PA 1.png](#)
[Williamsport, PA 2.png](#)
[Williamsport, PA 3.png](#)
[Andalusia, Alabama.png](#)
[Walla Walla, Washington.png](#)
[West Virginian Hotel 1.png](#)
[West Virginian Hotel 2.png](#)
[Tonopah, NV 1.png](#)
[Tonopah, NV 2.png](#)

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

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

(Overlay second reading)

A few of the "Don't Change Anything" folks in town assure us that 6 stories downtown will destroy Petaluma. Is that true?

Butte, Montana is a historic mining town with many smaller buildings. Do the 6 story and the 8 story buildings "destroy" the downtown or add to its character?

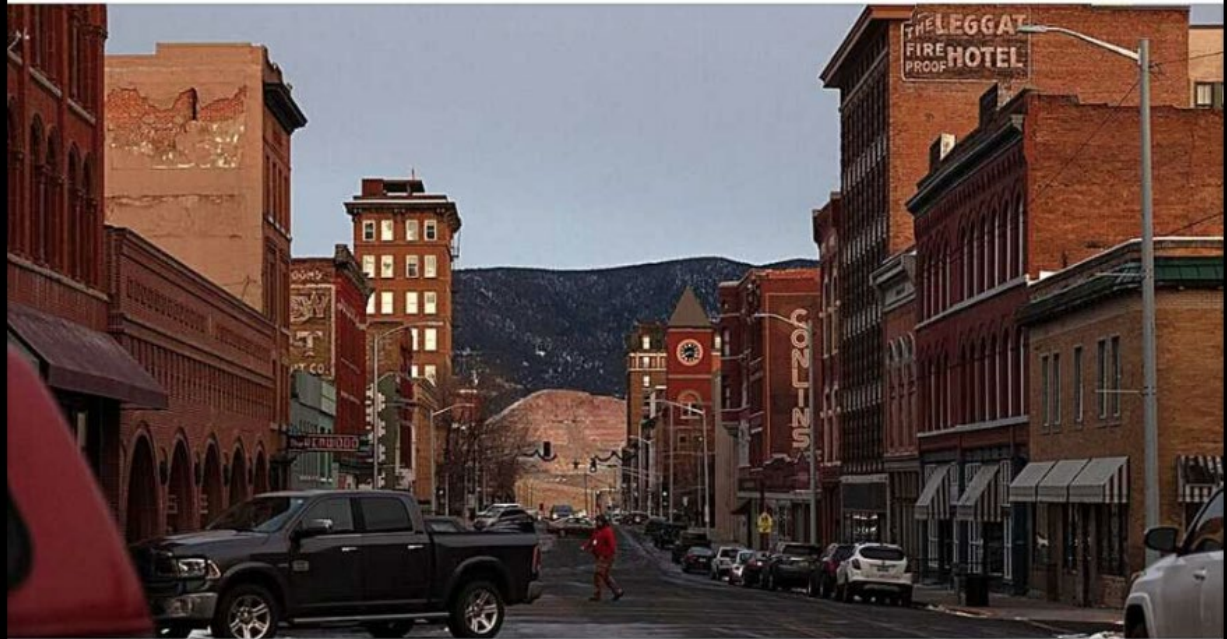


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There was a healthy dose of skepticism in Butte, Mont., when Hollywood pr... See more



www.nytimes.com

**An Old Mining Town in
Montana Finds New Gold in...**

[Learn more](#)

The Hotel Finlen in Butte is 10 stories. The population of Butte, Montana is 36,000.

Finlen Hotel and Motor Inn

★★★★ 100 E. Broadway, Butte, MT 59701 US



[See Map](#)

ReservationCounter.com: 833-372-8241



833-372-8241

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Historic Downtown Wilmington, North Carolina. That's 8 or 9 stories. Population = 123,000.



Historic Downtown Wilmington Marketplace

Hotel Settles, Big Spring, Texas; population 22,000.

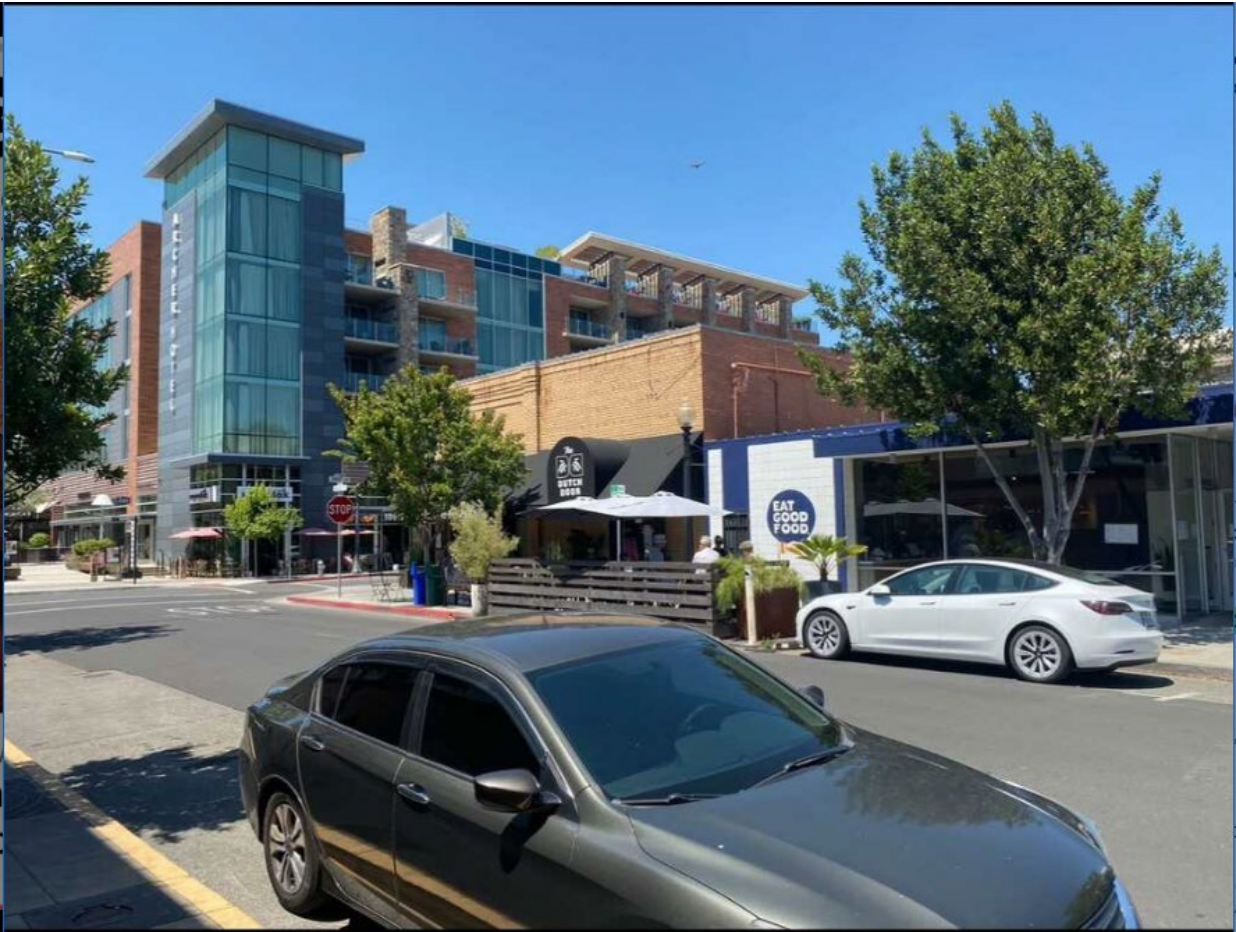


Helena, Montana population = 35,000.





Napa, California population = 77,500.



Hotel Nevada built in 1929 in Ely, Nevada population = 4,000.





Hotel Petaluma built in 1923 is five stories; population of Petaluma = 60,000.



Ruston, Louisiana population 23,000.



DOWNTOWN

Ruston's 25-block historic downtown is the local hub for all things food, art, and entertainment.

Hundred year old 11 story hotel in Williamsport, Pennsylvania; population = 27,500.





Aerial Shot of Downtown Buildings in Willia...

Andalusia, Alabama population 8,840.



Historic hotel in Walla Walla, Washington; population 33,500.



The West Virginian built in 1923 in Bluefield, West Virginia is twelve stories in a town with a population of 9,500.

West Virginian Hotel



West Virginian Hotel in 2016, now a retirement center



The Mizpah Hotel was built in Tonopah, Nevada in 1905; population 2,000.



See how all these overly large hotels destroy the architectural fabric of each of these small, historic downtowns? Yeah, me

neither.

Teddy Herzog