

Memo

To: General Plan Update Steering Committee
From: Neal Toft, Planning & Building Director
Date: 10/10/2020
Re: Review of Administrative Draft of General Plan 2020-2040; General Plan Update Steering Committee Study Session on October 12, 2020.

The following is a summary of general work done in preparing final Administrative Draft General Plan based on review and direction by General Plan Update Steering Committee (GPUSC) in previous Workshops and Study Sessions. Staff is seeking final review and comment by the GPUSC to then proceed to public review and preparation of the Environmental Impact Report for public hearing. Staff is scheduled to present the document to the City Council on October 21st and provide an outline the public review process.

While all the chapters are generally listed in order, Chapter 3 (Land Use) is discussed last, due to the several additional amendments to that chapter and the introduction of the Land Use Diagram.

Chapter 1. Introduction

Updates to the Introduction Chapter were reviewed at the initial Kickoff meeting on February 27, 2018, at which time staff had included a variety of updates to reflect the ongoing review process and some structural changes to the format. The only updates since that time introduce the Sustainability Chapter and the further activities of the General Plan Steering Committee (GPUSC).

Chapter 2. Sustainability

This is an entirely new Chapter, added to address issues of climate change more comprehensively through clear policies and programs to reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions and encourage adaptation and sustainability. The concept of implementing a Sustainability Element was discussed during a GPUSC Study Session on "Optional Elements" on March 20, 2018. At the time, it was recognized that the State had issued mandates and guidance for communities to promote adaptation and resilience and to also reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) that contribute to global warming. While there are mandates related to land use planning, flooding, and emergency preparedness and response, many communities had been developing and implementing climate action plans, and in some cases sustainability plans that are inserted as part of General Plans. The GPUSC concurred that a Sustainability Chapter should be included, but directed that it is better to reference the Climate Action Plan (CAP) as a more flexible document to address the ever-evolving science and best practices for addressing climate change and sustainability.

The Chapter identifies the significance of the issues and the various ways that government policies and actions can address climate change and GHG reduction while directing the City to implement and regularly update the CAP. Staff fashioned the Draft Sustainability Element after similar General Plans chapters in Palo Alto and Fremont, and it is tailored for the community of Larkspur, the Larkspur Climate Action Plan, and the following policies and programs of the Draft General Plan.

Chapter 3. Community Character

This is another optional element, carried over from the 1990 General Plan, that addresses certain state mandates - in particular, the protection of tribal sites and resources. The Chapter is significant to Larkspur, in that the goals and polices that reinforce protection of the community's character through design review standards and historic preservation. Amendments to this chapter were reviewed by the GPUSC on September 18, 2018 and no significant changes has been added to this document since that time. The Chapter refers to *Appendix A- Description of Larkspur Neighborhoods*, which is discussed below.

Chapter 5. Circulation

The Circulation Element was discussed by the GPUSC during a workshop held on May 15, 2018 and in two recent Study Sessions on August 17 and 24, 2020. The Circulation Element expands upon the City's goals and policies to encourage greater multi-modal transportation options and facilities. The Element also requires the City to regularly update the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (BPMP) as the primary tool for implementing specific improvements, design features, and programs. Based upon direction from the GPUSC, staff has completed edits to the Chapter reflecting policies to reduce VMT and to set LOS standards for significant development projects to assure safe and functional intersections.

The Circulation Element contains a diagram of the existing Bikeways and the City's circulation system and classification of roadways.

Chapter. 6 Community Facilities and Services

This too, is an optional element, which was carried over from the 1990 General Plan. Revisions to this chapter, largely reflecting updates to certain City operations and facilities as well as the consolidation of the Twin Cities and San Anselmo Polices Departments, were reviewed by the GPUSC on June 19, 2018. Revisions since that time reflect the consolidation of the Larkspur and Corte Madera Fire Departments and changes to city operations to eliminate childcare services and combine the library and recreation functions under the umbrella Community Services Department (Due to Covid-19 emergency and budget constraints).

The Community Facilities Element contains a diagram of the Public Facilities in Larkspur and lists of Parks and Recreational Facilities, and Public Schools.

Chapter 7. Community Health & Safety

This element was reviewed by the GPUSC during a public workshop on April 3, 2020 and a subsequent Study Session on April 17, 2020. No significant revisions have occurred since that time, aside from updates to reflect the latest changes local and countywide organizational structure and

regulations to address wildfire hazards. The Community Health a& Safety Chapter includes diagrams demonstrating flood hazard areas, dam inundation areas, sea level rise scenarios, tsunami inundation areas, fire hazard areas, and wildland-urban interface (WUI) zones. Noise contours throughout the City will be assessed in conjunction with the preparation of the EIR preparation.

Chapter 8. Natural Environment and Resources

The GPUSC reviewed edits to this chapter on October 30, 2018. At that time, staff had prepared minor edits to better align with OPR's General Plan Guidelines, and included specific policies for tree mitigation, programmatic protection of special status species, and implementing a zoning category for open space lands. The framework of creek and water resource protection was discussed. Based upon the discussion and the GPUSC's direction, staff has included language to develop a Master Plan and management guidelines for: 1) Maintaining and enhancing all identified creeks within the city limits; 2) identifying flood control measures; 3) determining preferred stream bank and shoreline protection techniques; and 4) establishing a more precise and functional "creek setback" as appropriate.

Appendix A – Description of Neighborhoods

This appendix was reviewed by the GPUSC on September 18, 2018 in conjunction with the Study Session on the Community Character Element. The diagram and description of the neighborhoods has been updated by staff with the assistance of GPUSC member Catherine Way. The diagram and descriptions have been updated to include new neighborhoods in Larkspur Landing and Rose Garden along with a few minor amendments to the descriptions of the existing neighborhoods.

Chapter 3. Land Use

This Chapter was initially discussed during a GPUSC Study Session on March 6, 2018 and then later, to a degree, during the Economic Resiliency Study Session on July 25, 2018. Since that time, staff has prepared the Land Use Diagram and further edits to the Chapter, reflecting the direction of the GPUSC. While not entirely comprehensive of all edits, the most notable changes to the policies in the Chapter include:

1. Action Programs LU 1.1.c and 1.1.d seek to implement Open Space land use policies through applying Open Space Zoning District and Parkland Zoning District to the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map.
2. Action Program LU 3.1 seeks to amend the Zoning Ordinance to retain existing residential densities in multifamily neighborhoods and discourage reductions in units through redevelopment of existing multifamily sites.
3. Several policies and programs for Commercial areas seek to enhance economic vitality by providing more flexibility for new uses and unifying parking standards, while encouraging residential-serving commercial uses and residential (mixed) uses in commercial areas.

Miscellaneous amendments to Land Use Designations and Land Use Diagram Include:

1. Renamed "Restricted Commercial" designation to "Neighborhood Commercial" and re-designated west side of north Magnolia Avenue to Neighborhood Commercial (formerly

General Commercial) to achieve consistent zoning within the neighborhood and encouraging neighborhood serving uses.

2. Instituted new "Mixed Use I" designation, applicable to the 2000 Larkspur Landing Circle (RVSD) site. Mixed Use I would replace separate designations of "Low Density Residential", "Commercial", and "Public Facilities" on the site, to allow a more flexible approach to re-developing the site, while maintain the current PD entitlements. Staff has retained the "Open Space" designation on northwest portion of property, occupied by a stream and Oak woodland.
3. Combined "Public Facilities" and "Schools" into a single designation, "Schools and Public Facilities".
4. Redesignated 1-acre parcel AP 021-240-25 from "Low Density Residential" to "Open Space". The site is owned by the Marin County Open Space District, is largely within MCOSD lands, and has no developed access or utilities.
5. Redesignated several multi-use pathways (Old Railroad rights-of-ways) from Open Space to Parkland, to reflect their active use as pathways and greenways.
6. Redesignated a band of "Wetland" along the Larkspur Landing Frontage to "Parkland" to reflect the upland pathway and scenic amenities adjoining wetlands along the inlet.