

General Plan Sonoma: Community Engagement Plan and General Plan 2020 Audit

Board of Supervisors

October 15, 2024



Background

- ❑ General Plan 2020: Community blueprint since 2008
- ❑ Update needed to reflect changes in State law, best practices, and community values
- ❑ December 2023: Board approved work plan and scope for the General Plan Update



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Background

- General Plan Sonoma Community Vision Phase includes:
 - ▣ General Plan 2020 audit
 - ▣ Community Engagement Plan and implementation
 - ▣ General Plan Scope Report to guide policy development
- What has been done to date?
 - ▣ Website: <https://permitsonoma.org/generalplan>



Community Vision Phase Schedule

2024

2025

Jun

Jul

Aug

Sep

Oct

Nov

Dec

Jan

Feb

Mar

Apr

May

Jun

Jul

Aug

Phase 1

Kick Off



General Plan Audit and Draft Community Engagement Plan



Centralized and Virtual Workshops, Online Surveys, Workshops in Local Communities, Focus Groups Meetings with Underserved Communities, and Informal Engagement



General Plan Scope Report



Community/ Municipal Advisory Council Meetings and Community-Wide Survey



Finalize Community Engagement Plan and Focus Topics for Outreach

Board of Supervisors Meeting:
October 15, 2024



Planning Agency Meeting

Board of Supervisors Meetings:





Draft Community Engagement Plan

Community Visioning and Engagement Plan Goals

- Focus on community visioning around key issues (broad focus topics)
- Inform next steps for the Policy Development phase (starting August 2025)
- Raise awareness of General Plan Sonoma and the importance of Public input.
- Engage a diverse and representative community
- Provide accessible and varied engagement opportunities
- Remove barriers to engagement participation.
- Promote transparency and accountability through language translation and interpretation.
- Track and report progress.
- Build public trust and ownership in the process.

Community Engagement Plan Contents

- Engagement goals
- Community engagement approach
- Focus topics for discussion
- Target audiences
- Addressing barriers to engagement
- Community partners
- Engagement activities
- Getting the word out
- Potential engagement locations and events
- Schedule for engagement activities
- Roles and responsibilities
- Tracking and measuring success
- Reporting back

Preliminary Focus Topics for Discussion

- Growth management and development
- Accessibility and circulation
- Agriculture and food
- Culture, history, and community
- Ecology, sustainability, and climate
- Economy and tourism
- Resource protection
- Open space and scenic qualities
- Utilities

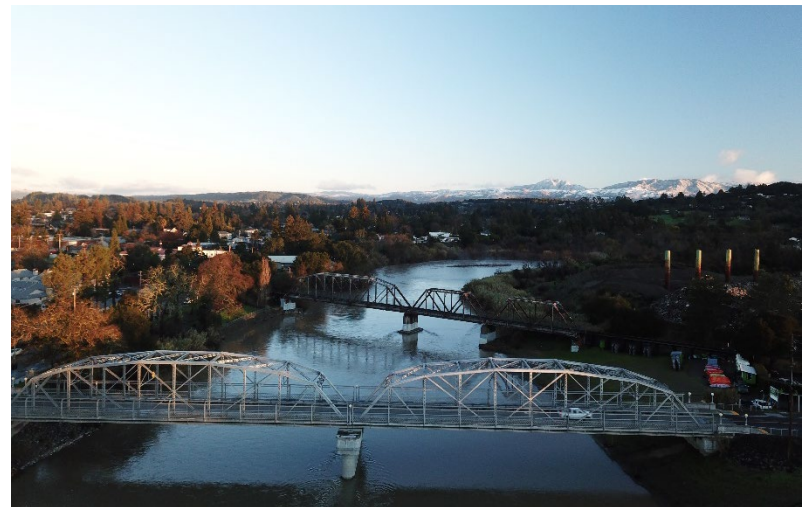


Photo credit: Adrian Tamblin

Board Discussion

- Provide feedback on preliminary focus topics in Draft Community Engagement Plan



Photo credit: Adrian Tamblin

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Draft General Plan Audit

Draft General Plan 2020 Audit

- Audit of all elements except the Public Safety Element and Housing Element
- Preliminary review and recommendations related to:
 - ▣ Streamline policy structure and content and remove redundancies.
 - ▣ Revise or relocate site-specific policies and detailed standards.
 - ▣ Remove policies and implementation programs that are complete or no longer relevant; ensure remaining actions are feasible.
 - ▣ Add new or revise existing policy guidance to comply with current State law

Next Steps

Draft Community Engagement

1. Refine list of engagement focus topics
2. Present to County Planning Agency
3. Publish Final Community Engagement Plan
4. Implement Community Engagement Plan

Draft General Plan 2020 Audit

1. Revise General Plan 2020 Audit
2. Post on website

General Plan Scope Report Completion

Anticipated Summer 2025

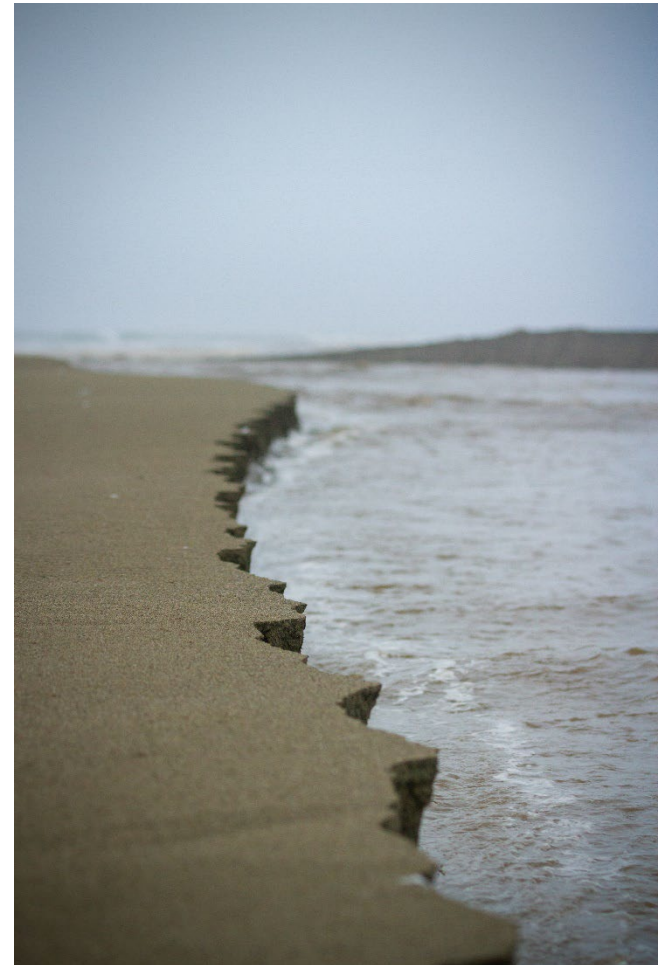


Photo credit: Adrian Tamblin

Questions?



General Plan 2020 Elements

- Land Use
- Circulation & Transit
- Open Space & Resource Conservation
- Noise
- Public Safety
- Housing
- Agricultural Resources
- Air Transportation
- Water Resources
- Public Facilities & Services



Community Engagement Approach

- Coordination with the Outreach Program Manager
- Alignment with the County's Office of Equity Plans
- Consistent branding and clear messaging
- Transparency and responsiveness
- Collaboration on focus topics for discussion
- Partnering with Community-Based Organizations
- Engagement with stakeholders and target audiences
- Staff training

Target Audiences

- Latine/a/o population
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander population
- Black population
- Native American population
- LGBTQIA2S+ members
- Renters
- Low-income residents
- Non-English speakers
- Farmworkers
- People with a lived experience of homelessness
- Youth
- Veterans
- People With Developmental Disabilities
- Rural Community Members

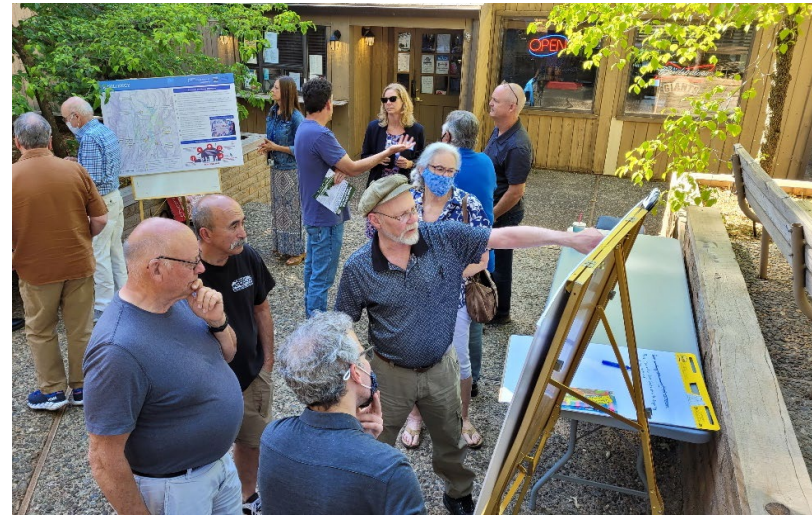
Addressing Barriers to Engagement

- Language
- Location accessibility and transportation needs
- Technological and digital accessibility
- Timing of events
- Childcare
- Lack of trust in governance



Community Partners

- Community leaders to serve as community ambassadors, especially for target audiences
 - ▣ Social justice organizations
 - ▣ Public health organizations
 - ▣ Faith-based organizations
 - ▣ Community services organizations



Engagement Activities

- Centralized and virtual workshops on broad topics
- Online surveys on broad topics
- Workshops in local communities
- Focus group meetings with underserved communities
- Community events (e.g., pop-ups, presentations to community organizations, neighborhood chats)
- Community/Municipal Advisory Council Meetings
- Tribal consultation
- Community-wide survey (email, text, telephone)

Getting the Word Out

- General Plan Sonoma webpage
- Newsletters
- Social media
- Engagement toolkits
 - ▣ Planning 101 Toolkit
 - ▣ Strategic Plan and Visioning Toolkit
 - ▣ Community Ambassadors Toolkit



Potential Engagement Locations/Events

- In-person workshops
 - ▣ Public libraries
 - ▣ Schools
 - ▣ Community centers
 - ▣ Other community spaces
- Pop-up events
 - ▣ Farmer's markets
 - ▣ Fairs
 - ▣ Community celebration events



Schedule

Activity	Number of Meetings	Estimate Timeframe
Centralized and Virtual Workshops	4 in-person 2 virtual	Jan – March 2025
Online Surveys on Broad Topics	N/A	Jan – March 2025
Workshops in Local Communities	8 in-person 2 virtual	March – May 2025
Focus Group Meetings with Underserved Communities	5 focus groups	March – May 2025
Community Events	8 pop-up events	March – May 2025
Advisory Committee Meetings	9 meetings	March – May 2025
Tribal Consultation	TBD	Ongoing through Phase 1
Community-Wide Survey	N/A	May 2025

Consistency Reviews

- Considered General Plan 2020 consistency with:
 - ▣ Area and Specific Plans
 - ▣ Design Guidelines
 - ▣ Local Coastal Plan
 - ▣ Housing Element
- Internal and external consistency
 - ▣ Required by State law
 - ▣ Ensure clear and coordinated approach to land use and development



Photo credit: Adrian Tamblin

Tracking and Measuring Success

- Participant surveys
 - Voluntary demographic data
 - How participants heard about the event/promotion strategies
- Monitor and adjust engagement as necessary
- Document results in engagement dashboards and report out to community

