



## General Plan Update Review Committee

Thursday, December 1, 2011, 3:30 p.m.

Visalia Convention Center  
San Joaquin B/C  
303 E. Acequia Avenue

**DRAFT**

### Meeting Minutes from Thursday, December 1, 2011

Meeting commenced at 3:35pm.

Committee Members Present: Larry Segrue (Co-Chair), Bob Brown, Brian Blain, Carla Calhoun, Craig Van Horn, Darlene Mata, Dena Cochran, Dirk Holkeboer, Eric Middlestead, Glenn Morris, Jim Robinson, Richard Garcia (Alternate), Steven Cullen, Steven Nelsen, Tyson Carroll, Vincent Salinas, William Martin (alternate)

Committee Members Absent: Bob Link (Co-Chair), Brad Maaske, Carl Anderson, Carlos Medina, Clarise Dilbeck, Javier Leon, Ken Kugler, Michael Kreps, Mike Knopf

Support Staff Present: Brandon Smith, Brian Winter, Chris Young, Doug Damko, Josh McDonnell, Kim Loeb, Mario Cifuentez, Michael Olmos, Nancy Loliva, Paul Scheibel, Ricardo Noguera, Vince Elizondo, Consultant Michael Dyett

Public members in attendance: Bob Keenan, Mary Beatie, Georgina Valencia, Susan Simon, Greg Collins

1. Welcome & Introductions:

Co-Chairperson Larry Segrue opened the meeting. General Plan Update Review Committee (GPURC) members and support staff were introduced.

2. Public Comment:

No persons spoke at Public Comment.

3. Accept Minutes from November 17, 2011 Meeting:

A motion and a second were made to approve the minutes as prepared by staff. The vote passed.

Before commencing the formal agenda items, Josh McDonnell gave some background and the perspective on expectations related to the General Plan policy formulation. The GPURC had previously spent time in March, April, and July reviewing the current General Plan policies, out of which came direction from the Committee to revisit a number of the policies in more detail upon the formulation of a Preliminary Preferred Plan. The policy review session which commenced on November 17<sup>th</sup> was the first of a series of reviews intended to discuss revised and new policies in support of the Preferred Plan. It is anticipated in this phase that Committee members would take this discussion & materials to their respective groups and return with further comments. The comments will result in more comprehensive documents, anticipated for release in January and February 2012.

Mr. McDonnell recommended that if time permits, the third and fourth discussion meetings be combined into a single meeting on December 15<sup>th</sup>. After this, the Committee would reconvene in January to complete the policy formulation process.

4. Presentation on the Visalia Airport Master Plan:

Mario Cifuentez, Airport Manager for the City, gave a presentation using PowerPoint slides on Airport Land Use Planning, in response to questions that arose during the Land Use Policies review pertaining to the Visalia Municipal Airport.

Mr. Cifuentez discussed airport land use compatibility, as well as airport land use commissions and their interaction with local planning agencies. The Visalia Airport Master Plan was adopted in 2004. This plan included a land use compatibility map and matrix, however at the time steps were not taken to amend the zoning in accordance with the map. The General Plan Update will establish airport zoning in accordance with direction given by the Committee and current airport land use planning guidelines to ensure for compatible land uses in the vicinity of the Airport.

Jim Robinson asked if the City's Airport Master Plan, used as a reference in the Preferred Plan, might conflict with the County's forthcoming Airport Land Use Plan. Mario Cifuentez stated that the City continues to engage with the County on planning inside the safety zones. Jim Robinson asked if there was an opportunity to allow higher density in these zones. Josh McDonnell stated that City's Preferred Plan is not being drafted based on the County's Airport Land Use Plan. Michael Dyett added that policies and design concepts will be utilized to minimize any conflicts.

William Martin asked about the current feeling of the Airport Land Use Committee on commercial development inside safety zones. Mario Cifuentez stated the Committee no longer exists, and that recent developments in or near the safety zones have been more openly considered.

Steven Cullen asked about future integration of the airport with the High Speed Rail project. Mario Cifuentez stated that this is unlikely, given the preferred rail alignment and station being closer to Hanford.

Bob Brown noted that sensitive land uses can't be removed once placed near the airport, and suggested the use of agriculture easement placement for new development.

5. Begin the Review the Existing and Proposed General Plan Policies for the Conservation, Recreation, Open Space and Parks, and Historic Preservation Elements:

Josh McDonnell introduced the agenda item and the support staff present to help answer questions: Vince Elizondo, Parks & Recreation Director; Kim Loeb, Natural Resource Conservation Manager; Michael Olmos, Assistant City Manager.

Michael Dyett led a discussion on reviewing the General Plan policies for the Conservation, Recreation, Open Space and Parks, Historic Preservation Elements, based on the recommendations in the Policy Framework Paper distributed to the Committee. Policies and related discussion are grouped into topics indicated by underline, with key points noted in bullets.

Water Conservation

- Improve upon the City's Water Conservation Program
- Put into place a water-efficient landscaping ordinance

Tyson Carroll noted that there is no discussion about the limitation of turf which has a significant water demand. Michael concurred that turf limits should be added. Kim Loeb noted that the State Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELo) was adopted and has strict requirements, and that the City is enforcing these requirements.

#### Stormwater Management

- Require new developments to incorporate detention basins into project designs

Tyson Carroll asked why not make dual-use storm drain basins mandatory. Multiple uses, including recreational uses in appropriate locations, should be considered. Michael Dyett replied that further analysis will look into establishing dual uses, wherever possible.

#### Waterways

- Protect, restore, and enhance continuous corridors

Carla Calhoun asked for a more descriptive requirement for development to not have its back to the waterway. Michael Dyett suggested the use of double-fronting properties.

Glenn Morris noted that some lots will have side-on frontage by default.

Jim Robinson had concerns about the residential context of the policy and how it would play out into development.

Bob Brown noted that the focus is on the four major rivers and creeks.

- Improvement of the waterway corridor

Josh McDonnell noted that the subject of water conservation will continue to be an overarching issue that will be addressed in future discussion.

Brian Blain expressed some concern about the perceived afterthought of waterways used for water conveyance.

Richard Garcia noted of a third function of waterways being flood control, and that the City should look at whether the waterways are prepared for heavy flooding occurrences.

Brian Blain asked if CO-P-35, pertaining to a 25' riparian setback, applies to areas being farmed. Michael Dyett noted that is not the intent of the policy.

#### Parks and Open Space

- Update will establish a new standard of 5.0 acres of neighborhood and community parks per 1,000 residents going forward

Vince Elizondo gave an overview of current park acreages:

250 developed acres of parks, or 2.2 acres/1,000 residents;

413 acres with undeveloped open space/future park areas, or 3.5 acres/1,000 residents;

521 acres with developed waterways, or 4.2 acres/1,000 residents;

708 acres with County parks, or 5.5 acres/1,000 residents.

Darlene Mata noted that the park acreage ratio includes undeveloped City-owned acreage.

Vince Elizondo affirmed this and gave the Blain property in East Visalia as an example, which was purchased using park development fees.

Carla Calhoun noted that schools are not always open to the general public. Michael Dyett confirmed that the schools aren't included in the figures. Glenn Morris noted that some new schools do have an open component for shared parks, and that future schools should emulate this.

Jim Robinson suggested a new policy that promotes shared facilities between the school and the City.

Michael Dyett noted that golf courses aren't counted toward the ratio.

Carla Calhoun asked how the ratio compares to other Valley cities of similar size. Michael Dyett stated that the 5.0 acres per 1,000 persons has been used in numerous other General Plans.

- Pocket parks or mini-parks would not count toward the ratio.

Some Committee members disagreed with this policy. Michael Dyett suggested that if the pocket park provided usable recreational amenities to the public or if it was a minimum size, it could be included.

Tyson Carroll expressed concern over Policy CO-P-45 if dedicated park lands are located in infeasible or remote areas. Michael Dyett agreed and offered to specify criteria for parkland acceptance in greater detail.

Steve Nelsen suggested removing the partnership with Tulare County aspect of CO-P-50.

Glenn Morris asked for clarification on CO-O-5 as it pertains to agricultural production.

Michael Dyett recommended creating a new policy which addresses this.

Co-Chair Larry Segrue paused the discussion for a short break.

Councilmember Greg Collins addressed the Committee about keeping open space between communities, and posed the question if Visalia wants to keep its identity by preserving open space / agriculture production around the community.

Michael Dyett resumed the General Plan policy discussion.

#### Recreation and Arts Programs

- Have community centers as focal points in each City quadrant
- Having a Recreation and Arts Master Plan outside the context of the General Plan

Glenn Morris asked about the need for a second golf course as indicated in CO-P-76.

Michael Dyett noted that this policy was included in error and that only one public golf course is necessary at this time.

Glenn Morris cautioned that a new performing arts center mentioned in CO-P-94 shouldn't neglect existing facilities such as the Fox and Williams theaters.

#### Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gases

- Implement use of Best Management Practices to reduce air pollutant emissions

Kim Loeb noted that the best thing the City can do is to work to reduce vehicle miles traveled.

#### Biological Resources

- Update the Zoning Ordinance to implement an "Open Space/Conservation" designation

Tyson Carroll recommended using the California Invasive Plant Council as a guideline in implementing CO-P-130.

Tyson Carroll asked about having language which requires native and non-invasive plants in conservation areas.

Josh McDonnell addressed considering the appropriate use of the words "require", "recommend", and "encourage" in the development of the General Plan.

#### Cultural Resources

- Establish requirements to avoid potential impacts to sites suspected of being archaeologically, paleontologically, or historically significant or of concern

Jim Robinson asked for clarification on the necessity of pre-construction surveys with development, and suggested that compliance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines be required.

#### Bikeways and Trails

- Develop bikeways consistent with the Visalia Bikeway Plan and Transportation Element
- Develop a community-wide trail system consistent with the Waterways and Trails Master Plan

Bob Brown asked for the concept of connectivity to be strengthened.

#### Historic Preservation

- Expand the Planned Office Conversion zone to facilitate office uses where a functional connection can be made between Downtown and neighborhoods

Michael Dyett noted and Steven Cullen affirmed that the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee will be looking further at the policy changes and will discuss these changes with the GPURC in January.

#### Next Steps

Michael Dyett stated that the peak-hour transportation model will be updated to reflect the Committee's comments. The Transportation, Public Facilities, and Noise policies will be reviewed at the next meeting.

#### 7. Further Comments / Discussion from Committee Members

Larry Segrue asked for the Committee's input regarding potential conflicts with the next scheduled meeting date. It was concluded that the next meeting would take place on Thursday, December 15, from 3:30pm to 6:30pm.

#### 8. Adjourn.

Motion to adjourn to December 15<sup>th</sup> at 3:30pm, made and seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.