

GPSC Meeting #5

City Council Chambers
Woodland, CA
Tuesday, June 9, 2015

Attendance

STEERING COMMITTEE

- Al Eby
- Kathy Trott
- Kay Hohenwerter
- Christine Casey
- Don Sharp
- Lisa Baker
- Evelia Genera
- John Murphy (representing the PC in the absence of Chris Holt)

PUBLIC

Approximately 15 members of the public attended the meeting.

Agenda

- Welcome and Introduction
- Update on the General Plan Process and Progress
- Presentation of Draft Refined Preferred Plan
- Steering Committee Policy Discussion
 - Infill Development
 - Triggers and Timing – Spring Lake Specific Plan to SP-1/MPRA
 - Triggers and Timing – SP-1/MPRA to Next Specific Plan Area
 - Gateway Development
 - Connection of Residential Growth to Job Growth
 - Balance of Flexibility and Orderly Growth
- Next Steps and Wrap-Up

Questions Following the Presentation

- Can you elaborate on what is happening with bike lanes and/or trails?
 - Answer: This is something that can be accomplished at a SP level once it is determined where the next phases of growth will be. GP will set out targets of what kinds of bike facilities should be provided/included
- Evelia – Is it possible to build in the industrial area without a flood solution? If so, is this because no residential is allowed?
 - Answer: The industrial area is on a more shallow floodplain than some other areas in the city (such as SP-2). As a result, it is possible to develop on some parcels if certain mitigations are made
- Evelia - Is there a parallel plan for our existing neighborhoods that ensures that they do not deteriorate while so much investment is being put into the new Specific Plan areas?
 - Answer: This is a high priority for a lot of people. Maintaining and improving existing development is just as important as developing new growth areas. The City will do as much as it can to generate revenue and provide improvements for all areas, but funding is finite. Assessment districts may be needed to ease the cost burden on the General Fund.
 - Also, most areas have an LLD to fund these costs. A citywide LLD would be great, but the voters have to support it. Without that, these costs are competing for general fund dollars against police and fire. So it is true, the LLD areas actually have a higher level of service.
- David Storer - Processing Specific Plans is not mutually exclusive. They can be done independently of one another, rather than relying on triggers.

Policy Discussion

POLICY SPECTRUM

During the meeting's discussion period, GPSC members were given worksheets that asked them to identify where they fall on the "policy spectrum" for six specific policy topics. The spectrum ranged from advisory policies on the left (1) to mandatory requirements on the right (7). Table 1 details the average and range of voting results for each policy topic. Notes from the discussion and worksheets follow.

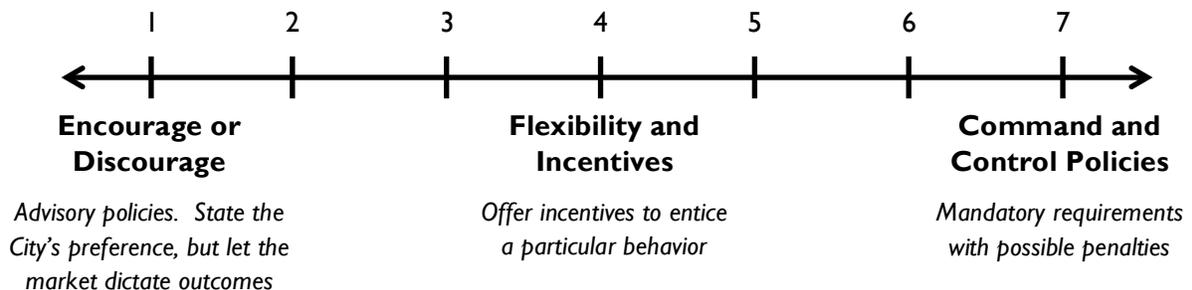


Table I: Steering Committee Spectrum Voting Results

<i>Policy Topic</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Range</i>
Infill Development	5.19	4 – 6.5
Triggers and Timing – SLSP to SP-I/MPRA	4.81	2 – 7
Triggers and Timing – SP-I/MPRA to Next SP	5.13	1 - 7
Gateway Development	4.32	2 - 6
Connection of Residential Growth to Job Growth	3.75	1.5 - 5
Balance of Flexibility and Orderly Growth	3.57	2 - 5

INFILL DEVELOPMENT

Discussion Notes

- Christine - Infill along East Street is fairly industrial. How will you make sure that industrial uses don't work their way into adjacent residential neighborhoods? This should be prevented.
 - Answer: The Corridor Mixed Use designation allows existing industrial uses, but then encourages more commercial or office uses.
- Christine – There should be mechanisms or policies that ensure that single-family housing is not torn down or converted to high-density housing/offices.
- Al – What impact does the General Plan Update have on the Downtown Specific Plan? Would the GP supersede that? I'm concerned that if the GP overrides the Downtown SP, we'll lose the efforts of everyone who contributed to that plan.
 - Answer: The Downtown Mixed Use designation was carefully applied to match the boundaries of the Downtown SP. But if there are parts of the Downtown SP that are inconsistent with the GP, amendments will have to be made. We should highlight specific policies we like from the Downtown Specific Plan (and any other existing planning documents) to ensure that consistent language is used in the GP.
- Lisa – It is important to think about where infill housing will be located. If we want a vibrant Downtown, shoppers need to live close by.
- Kathy – Urban form is really important. The urban core is critical because that is where density needs to be. Rather than seeing a cross, I'd rather see concentric rings of infill centered on the Downtown area.
- Kathy - The City should provide some examples of good infill development. Allow more creativity; encourage mixed-use projects. The City's burdensome restrictions disproportionately affect small downtown properties.
- Kathy – The City should lift restrictions to make infill development easier to do.
- Evelia – We need to research and remove obstacles to infill growth. The City could offer greater flexibility.

- Kathy – Woodland could do a better job of supporting live/work. The City needs to evaluate challenges faced by incoming businesses and existing residents. Services are needed to support those who work from home. (For example, now that Office Depot and Staples are closed, one needs to go to the Kinko's in Davis for a large print job.) Additionally, there need to be fewer restrictions (such as flexible parking requirements) to allow people to work out of their homes.
- Kathy – People need to be able to get in and out of the Downtown core in more ways. Route buses to expose more of downtown to riders.

Additional Policy Suggestions/Comments from Worksheets

- The Downtown SP expands the commercial/office area south of Lincoln, and the City should encourage business uses east of 3rd Street in the area south to Cross Street.
- Prevent infill that is not consistent with current neighborhoods (e.g. tacky apartments in historic neighborhoods)
- Reduce fees for infill development
 - Provide incentives for infill, but infill should be tightly regulated
 - For residential and commercial
- FAR bonus for infill development
 - Additional FAR reductions above minimum for affordable units; FAR incentives for market rate
- Reduce affordability requirements for infill development
 - Reduce or raise (?) affordability requirements for parcels of less than 1 acre
- Possibly impose fees or assessments on greenfield development to support infill
- Maintain historic neighborhoods
 - In historic core, reduce fees for renovations or new development that is historically accurate
- Meet the needs of independent business owners in Downtown
- We need to pay for infrastructure to support infill
- Bike paths and bus routes are the key to development
- Flexibility with parking
- Control hours of operation of businesses that serve alcohol or have live music near residential properties.
- Incentivize mixed use development
- Make East Street and Main Street welcoming, clean, and visually appealing
- Allow increased density for residential in the commercial areas or near commercial areas
- Incentivize development on underutilized parcels

- Match zoning to flexible development
- Modernize the infrastructure (sewer, internet access, etc.) to encourage infill development
- Address flood control
- Need strong policies backed up by streamlined staff requirements and financial incentives (or relaxed standards) to make infill happen
- Would like to see City as an active force in helping businesses that are not suitable to corridors move to industrial part of town to create new opportunities
- Do not tie infill to targets or other peripheral development. The two types of development are not likely to be accomplished by the same developer.

TRIGGERS AND TIMING – SLSP TO SP-I/MPRA

Discussion

- Al – Triggers should not be tied to percentages. What is to prevent a developer from slowing down development as a trigger is approached?
- Lisa – Flexibility is key, because you can't predict what the economy will do.
- John – What is the timeline to negotiate annexation/tax-sharing with the community?
 - Answer: It would take place at the same time as the planning process.
- Kathy – We have an obligation to Spring Lake, but we have to get the development going at a pace that we are confident that it will finish before we move on to plan/develop other Specific Plan areas.
 - Lisa – That's important because Spring Lake residents are waiting on amenities that they have been paying for, but haven't received. What can developers get financing for? There are rules for lending on bare land. The City should not front improvements. The bonds did not get paid off because development stopped.
 - Al - Just because something is there (Spring Lake) doesn't mean we should focus all of our energy in that direction. There is such a disconnect from the westside to the eastside, and this town never used to be divided. (Others agree). We shouldn't be so focused on SL, because there are people who have been here for years who need their streets and neighborhoods maintained. The northwest area is an example.
 - Don – Yes, the downturn hurt a lot of people, especially low-income areas.

Additional Policy Suggestions/Comments from Worksheets

- Create a definite timetable for Spring Lake
 - Provide a time trigger such as “7 years and/or 70% Spring Lake buildout before MPRA can start developing”
 - Restrict development of MPRA until either 3 years or 80% buildout of Spring Lake, or allow MPRA to move forward if South Gateway project is ready

- Do not buildout SP-1/MPRA for 3-4 years and not until the north and south gateways are developed
- Full buildout of Spring Lake before other areas are developed to prevent leap frog, scattered development
- Allow new growth to be market driven, occurring anywhere at anytime
- Once tax sharing and annexation have taken place, no phasing and triggers are necessary. Spring Lake is building out quickly now and the MPRA will follow logically.
- Focus on bike paths and bus routes for people to get to jobs, etc.
- Unique projects should be considered in the MPRA (elderly community)

TRIGGERS AND TIMING – SP-1/MPRA TO NEXT SPECIFIC PLAN AREA

Discussion

- Don – Will Woodland be looking to develop to other SP areas? If we develop SL and SP-1, that’s roughly 7,000 units. We would have hit the residential target already.
 - Answer: We might decide to develop only certain portions of SP-1 before moving on to other SP areas. It’s also possible that we won’t require full buildout of Spring Lake or SP-1/MPRA before moving on to the next.
- Kathy – We need to pace the anticipated growth to last for the entire planning period.
- Kathy – Going with the idea of concentric development centered around the Downtown core, SP-2 doesn’t make sense, as it provides housing for Sacramento and Davis, adding no value to our city.
 - Lisa – And the infrastructure would be stretched, and police and fire requirements would increase.
 - Al – Don’t exclude the 900 acres, because the City owns the land. It needs to be considered as a funding source because it might be our only one.
 - Lisa – At the community workshop, people thought SP-2 was encroaching on the barrier between Woodland and Sacramento. The City’s ownership of the 900 acres was the only positive that people saw.
- Kay – I think triggers and timing have to remain flexible. You never know what the City will acquire funding for (flood solution, etc). If those opportunities come, the General Plan should be flexible enough that the City can go after them.
- John – The flood issue is too big for this GP Update. If the City got approval and funding for a flood solution today, it would still be at least 10 years until it was actually built. That could trigger a new GP. Write the policy to be flexible: “If the flood solution is achieved, then grow (this way). If not, then grow (that way).” That said, the City will pursue a solution regardless.
- Lisa – SP-3 is more likely to develop because that commercial corridor could be desirable. It also has freeway access and ag land. Maybe you find a fix for just that specific area.

Additional Policy Suggestions/Comments from Worksheets

- SP-2 should be looked at as important to the flood/rail relocation solutions. Look to capitalize on this area in 15 years.
 - The flood solution must not leave out the 900 acres
 - No SP-2 – Owning the 900 acres should not override good planning
 - No SP-2 buildout percentage unless it is a mechanism to move forward with flood solution
 - Non-residential development in SP-2 could be okay, following MPRA
- Allow preparation of Specific Plan for SP-3 before MPRA buildout targets are reached. Some SP-3 and MPRA can be simultaneously paced.
 - Allow preparation of Specific Plan for SP-3 after two thirds of MPRA is built out and flood solution is identified. Restrict residential construction until 80% buildout of MPRA and flood solution is prepared.
 - Flood solution must be funded and being implemented before development can start in SP-3
- Do not restrict development to only one Specific Plan at a time
- Do not allow growth beyond the 4000 units that will result from full buildout of Spring Lake. If such development does occur, it should be concentrated in one Specific Plan area.
 - Limit buildout after completion of Spring Lake until flood control solution and both gateways are developed. Then move to building out SP-1/MPRA along with infill development.
- Allow flexibility for commercial possibilities
- Flood solution! We owe our long time residents flood protection before we have so many new residents that older neighborhoods and residents are ignored.

GATEWAY DEVELOPMENT

- Lisa – Everyone wants an Ag Innovation hub. Has the City thought about this? Would there be pre-entitlement preference for this type of development?
 - Answer: The City is definitely thinking about opportunities of this kind. There is more than one opportunity for an innovation park. It might be beneficial to locate it close to Davis, however other locations could work too. The sooner this could be developed, the better.
 - Lisa – Woodland is primed to capture the seed market. Has the City thought about this at all?
 - We haven't gotten to this level yet. Seed Tech is a strong suit here, and I'd be surprised if it's not part of an Ag Tech innovation hub.
- Don – Instead of allowing lots of uses, the City needs to be clear on what they want at the gateways.

- Kay – Allow for some flexibility.
- Kay - Recreation uses (baseball, soccer, swimming, skateboard park etc.) could be a good fit for the gateway areas. They are easily accessible from the freeway, which would be good for holding tournaments. Flooding would be less of an issue, as the fields could also operate as temporary flood drainage locations.
- Kathy - North Gateway needs to funnel people to Downtown. The South Gateway doesn't concern me as much.
 - Lisa – This would be done through wayfinding, color coding – How would this be done in the GP?
 - Answer: Gateway overlay zoning design guidelines could be strengthened. Woodland is also incorporating a new Community Design Element into the GP. Gateways could be addressed here.
 - Lisa – This should connect to the city's branding strategy.

Additional Policy Suggestions/Comments from Worksheets

- Allow a broad mix of uses (within reason) in the gateway areas to encourage a mix of development
- Signage should promote Historic Downtown, stores, restaurants, etc.
- Bike paths connecting all the N/S/E/W of Woodland
- Offer flexibility in gateway development, but there should still be a Specific Plan for that development
- The South Gateway should definitely target Ag Tech/business park type uses. This could pair with motels/hotels. Wine, olive oil, and/or food should be a focus.
- Identify the best alternative and either incentivize or pre-entitle preferred sites
- FAR bonus for Ag Innovation hub
- First handle flood control. Then complete Spring Lake. Then continue to encourage infill while developing the gateways. These will attract new residents and businesses into Woodland. After that, buildout SP-1/MPRA.
- In favor of southern gateway only as a business hub. North gateway is a gateway to nowhere
- Don't want to see fast food, service stations, or other freeway services in the gateways. These types of development are not conducive to bringing folks into town, but rather benefit people driving by.

CONNECTION OF RESIDENTIAL GROWTH TO JOB GROWTH

- Evelia – Yuba City residents are driving into Sacramento on the 70/99 corridor. If there is too much residential development without enough jobs, the freeways will be clogged with people commuting in and out. There are people who live in Woodland who commute to San Francisco or Oakland. We don't want to fall into a bind where we're building homes, but people have to drive so far to get to jobs.

- Kathy – There already are a lot of people commuting back and forth. The buses are every hour.
- Lisa – AB 32 counts VMT, so that matters.
- Kathy – One way to shorten commuting distances is to make use of Woodland’s proximity to UC Davis. UCD has committed to growing to 40,000 students, and Davis can’t provide all of the housing.
- Evelia – Do businesses consider housing development when deciding where to locate?
 - Answer: Yes, but keep in mind that housing affordability and job location should match. Companies are looking for labor force match ups.
- Kathy – Improving the schools will attract more people living here. Highlight that Woodland has “honest diversity” demographically. It reflects the future of California and the world.

Additional Policy Suggestions/Comments from Worksheets

- Tax incentives
- Reduce fees for mixed-use/commercial use
- Not necessary to have tight linkage between jobs and housing. Regional job development is more likely to provide a substantial part of the employment opportunities for our residents. Improved mass transportation is critical.
 - Don’t tie residential growth to jobs – supply/demand will drive the market
 - Linkage of housing to jobs is unclear. I believe that housing will occur. However job growth and business growth will need to be encouraged thorough policy.
- The City should have a robust economic development budget to draw job generating businesses to areas already zoned for industrial and commercial uses
- SP-2 area (900 acres) should be planed as future job generating area
- Do not mix jobs to a great extent into the MPRA. Use gateway areas as job generating locations.
- Offer incentives to developers who help provide job training and/or educational opportunities
- City should specifically target UC Davis-related activities.

BALANCE OF FLEXIBILITY AND ORDERLY GROWTH

Policy Suggestions/Comments from Worksheets

- Tax incentives
- First, encourage orderly growth. Second, discourage leap frog growth
- Use tiered EIRs
- De-annex land in SP-2 (and more) and let the County protect farmland. They are good at it. Or use SP-2 as a mitigation area.

- Flexibility is key. None of us can predict the future. Allow new ideas to thrive within the GP. The priorities of the local, state and federal government changes, funding changes and we need to be able to take advantage of that
- Orderly growth is important, especially in regards to reducing infrastructure costs.
- Growth within the specific plans should be flexible
- Growth proceeding to a new area should be more controlled. Special projects that don't fit into a current specific plan should be considered in other areas.
- Growth must not be dependent on the City expending money and floating large bond debt to get development going. Development costs must be born by developers.