



**City of Petaluma, California**  
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1  
2 **Planning Commission Minutes**  
3 **November 26, 2002 – 7:00 PM**

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5 Commissioners: *Present:* Asselmeier, \*Barrett, Dargie, Glass, McAllister, von Raesfeld  
6 *Absent:* O'Brien

7 \* Chair

8  
9 Staff: Mike Moore, Community Development Director  
10 George White, Planning Manager  
11 Pamela Tuft, AICP, Director of General Plan Administration  
12 Scott Duiven, Associate Planner  
13 Shelly Kappel, Administrative Secretary  
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15  
16 **ROLL CALL:**

17 **PUBLIC COMMENT:** Geoff Cartwright, 56 Rocca Drive: voiced concerns about  
18 flooding and local traffic congestion in Petaluma if a 12-screen movie theater would be  
19 built at the Petaluma Village Premium Outlet. Need to revitalize downtown, not building  
20 a whole new town somewhere north of Petaluma in the floodplain.

21 **COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:** The first public hearing on the Petaluma Village  
22 Market Place is scheduled for December 10, 2002, which is the next Planning  
23 Commission meeting. Congratulations to Mayor elect Commissioner David Glass. Future  
24 public meetings on the ECOC: Site Plan and Architectural Review Committee on  
25 December 12, 2002, at 3:00 PM in City Hall Council Chambers; Public Forum Workshop  
26 at Community Center on January 11, 2003, from 9:00 AM to 12 Noon; and Senior Forum  
27 Workshop at Community Center on January 17, 2003, from 9:00 AM to 12 Noon.

28 **LEGAL RECOURSE STATEMENT:** Was noted on the agenda.  
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31 Time public hearing began: 7:05 PM  
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33

1 **COMMISSION BUSINESS:**

2  
3 **I. DISCUSSION OF PETALUMA GENERAL PLAN 2004-2025.**  
4 **Existing Conditions, Opportunities and Challenges Report**

5  
6 Pamela Tuft gave overview of progress-to-date on General Plan and gave  
7 presentation on major components of Existing Conditions, Opportunities and  
8 Challenges Report (ECOC).

9  
10 All comments and questions will be gathered from the public meetings. An  
11 Addendum to the ECOC will be completed that compiles, by chapter, all of the  
12 comments, questions and answers from the public review process.

13  
14 **Public Comment Open**

15  
16 Geoff Cartwright, 56 Rocca Drive: Glad the election is over and we can get on  
17 with the business of the City. We need to continue with the process of the General  
18 Plan.

19  
20 **Public Comment Closed**

21  
22 Chair Barrett: We were asked to comment on Chapters 4, 5, 7, & 11, but not  
23 restricted to those chapters if we had other comments on remaining chapters.

24  
25 **CHAPTER 4 LAND USE & BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

26  
27 Chair Barrett: ECOC document is extraordinary and very helpful. Is unclear about  
28 private recreation—is that included as open space or is open space only publicly  
29 owned open space that all the City can use?

30  
31 Pamela Tuft: We will correct the graphs to show the distinction between private  
32 and public open space. Private recreation is where you have to pay to utilize the  
33 facilities, like the driving range out on Stony Point, KOA, etc.

34  
35 Chair Barrett: Golf Courses?

36  
37 Pamela Tuft: That is a component of the open space inventory; however, Parks &  
38 Recreation Commission commented that should be discussed further or broken  
39 out because Rooster Run is on City land so it is a public Golf Course. We are  
40 working with Parks and Recreation Commission regarding the analysis of  
41 recreational assets.

1           Chair Barrett: Is concerned Rooster Run being on City land, the City has some  
2 say as to the future development of that land. The driving range, being a private  
3 open space, could close the gate tomorrow, put up something if they could meet  
4 the flood control needs and it would no longer be open space. Is unclear about  
5 how much of that open space is really going to be open space for this lifetime of  
6 the General Plan. Would like to see separation between public and private and  
7 anything that has restrictions on it.

8  
9           Chair Barrett: Are theaters, karate, dance, or yoga studios, churches, gyms, etc.,  
10 considered open space or recreation spaces or are they categorized as businesses?

11  
12           Scott Duiven: These are categorized as commercial uses.

13  
14           Chair Barrett: Your comment that we have 986 acres of vacant land--does that  
15 include the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) expansion area?

16  
17           Scott Duiven: No. All of the data for the vacant lands is, for the most part,  
18 collected out to the UGB and does not include the possible expansion areas.

19  
20           Chair Barrett: Is the acreage of vacant land, right now, within the City limits?

21  
22           Scott Duiven: Within the UGB.

23  
24           Chair Barrett: Why is the Wastewater Treatment Plant listed as being both in the  
25 Central Petaluma Specific Plan (CPSP) and the Lakeville subareas?

26  
27           Pamela Tuft: The existing treatment plant on Hopper Street is in the CPSP  
28 subarea but the ponds are in the Lakeville subarea. The new sewer plant will be  
29 located out at the ponds.

30  
31           Commissioner von Raesfeld: Typo on maps in Chapter 7 (Transportation) -  
32 Magnolis should be Magnolia. Maps are wonderful resource. Figure 4-16, Vacant  
33 and Underutilized Land and as it relates to Figure 5-3, has an underutilized site  
34 category—what was the thinking or ideology? For example, the Kenilworth Jr.  
35 High School site does not show up on either of them—this should be listed as an  
36 underutilized property.

37  
38           Pamela Tuft: In creating this document we had to take a snap shot of existing land  
39 use (June 2001). We had to stop the never-ending process of updating it one more  
40 time. Right now Kenilworth is a Junior High.

41  
42           Commissioner von Raesfeld: My point is that there should be a very simple  
43 discussion on the theory behind the term. On the 5.3 Map, there are some little  
44 sites called underutilized sites in the middle of residential neighborhood, which  
45 may be, in fact, that, but it would be helpful to know the definition before you  
46 start looking at them.

1 Scott Duiven: Regarding your previous comment, to provide clarification, for  
2 Kenilworth, as well as the Fairgrounds; those were taken into consideration but  
3 were listed as institutional lands and for the analysis that was done for those  
4 particular exhibits. They looked at the four primary land-use categories that are  
5 out there right now that can be quantified: commercial, industrial, mixed use and  
6 residential but institutional lands will be addressed.

7  
8 Commissioner von Raesfeld: It was underutilized by those four categories?  
9

10 Scott Duiven: Yes, in terms of those small sites. Vacant land was looked at as  
11 lands that basically have little-to-nothing on them; underutilized lands were lands  
12 that may have some improvements on them, but have room for additional  
13 development potential.

14  
15 Commissioner von Raesfeld: The power of the maps will be incredible through  
16 the process, but things like vacant, underutilized, potential need a rule that defines  
17 what these terms are.

18  
19 Commissioner Glass: I think this is a good document. It challenges perspective.  
20 The challenge of this will be to control the growth to .7% compounded out to  
21 2025. It is a realistic number because if that assumption turns out to be the 2.7%  
22 historical average then there are other challenges that may not be in this  
23 document. We need to understand the constraints going forward. It will be a  
24 challenge to achieve that .7%. If you just look back on a historical basis, and I did  
25 not see this in the document anywhere, it seems like it is based on past experience  
26 from Marin County and demographics and the aging of Sonoma County and we  
27 may not see that. We might be setting up a situation that is going to be unique  
28 onto Petaluma, because part of Telecom Valley is attracting a workforce of young  
29 people, so we may be attracting people that will bring families and explode that  
30 .7% growth rates. The .7% is a very low figure compared to the 2.7% and may not  
31 be achieved, and if so, what then?—should be identified as a challenge.

32  
33 Commissioner McAllister: Was focusing on issue of density and the  
34 redevelopment opportunities, which I assume is somewhat coincidental with the  
35 underutilized land. When looking at underutilized sites, are you looking at  
36 building re-use when these opportunities exist? We have relatively new buildings  
37 vacant and they should be re-used and not dumped—this is a sustainability issue.  
38 Can we make an inventory of opportunities? Might be a constraint for developers.  
39 Can we provide an incentive for re-use of existing buildings or a program  
40 implemented as part of the General Plan and applies in the land use category for  
41 both density and redevelopment issues?  
42

43 Commissioner Dargie: In the Petaluma Boulevard North subarea, there is not a lot  
44 of discussion over how there is not a lot of infrastructure there. Presumes that  
45 whatever planning will go on the City will take over, as appropriate, for whatever  
46 projects are associated with it. Is there a need for more understanding of how  
47 infrastructure is part of that process and not constructed project-by-project?

1 Commissioner Asselmeier: Related to the UGB issues, as I understand it, are we  
2 going to have some new opportunities to potentially act on those areas? Can you  
3 give a clearer idea of what the issues might be and what we should be thinking  
4 about as Planning Commissioners, in terms of how we might be acting or the City  
5 staff will be looking at those areas and looking for our input? What opportunities  
6 does this Planning Commission have for acting on those UGB areas? Will we  
7 have the opportunity to potentially designate how those areas would be used,  
8 knowing that the UGB, one of the deadlines will arise during the life of this  
9 document, if it goes through 2025?

10  
11 Pamela Tuft: The constraints of utilizing those expansion areas before 2018 are  
12 listed in the ballot measure. We intend to talk about the possibility of the  
13 expansion areas within the framework of the General Plan. There is not going to  
14 be, at this point in time, a great deal of discussion on the possibility of moving the  
15 UGB beyond where it is, other than the possible expansion areas. That discussion  
16 may come at the mid-term review of the General Plan. The intent of the General  
17 Plan, from the beginning as directed by the City Council, is that it will be a living  
18 document and will be subject to, as required by law, an annual review report. In  
19 addition, every five years we will touch base with the Plan to identify what we  
20 have achieved. Perhaps move the achieved goals out of the Plan into a chapter on  
21 achievements and identifying those new challenges that we identify as the new  
22 goals or programs that need to be added into the Plan. We are respecting the UGB  
23 as a 20-year voter-mandated decision.

24  
25 Commissioner Asselmeier: Through this planning process, will the City be  
26 looking at these expansion areas and giving them General Plan designations and  
27 potentially predetermining use?

28  
29 Pamela Tuft: I do not believe so. The ballot measure said those areas are not  
30 meant to be exclusive. We will talk about expansion areas in general and not  
31 identify the exact locations that were shown on the Exhibit A1 and A2 of the  
32 Ballot Measure.

33  
34 Commissioner Asselmeier: Through this General Plan update process, will this be  
35 an issue?

36  
37 Pamela Tuft: It will be an issue in a generic sense and to whether the expansion  
38 areas are needed, or if something comes up in the analysis or preferred  
39 alternatives, we might look at specific opportunities.

40  
41 Chair Barrett: Suggested that in the 12 planning areas around the UGB area, try to  
42 standardize the 300-foot Urban Separator on the west side where there are still  
43 development possibilities. Since it has been required on the east side, it seems we  
44 would want to extend that same standard to areas that are set up for development  
45 in the west and south hills area; this should be added as an opportunity and  
46 challenge. Regarding development on west side, i.e., Rockridge Point, there is a  
47 challenge about areas that are within the UGB; in order to access them you have  
48 to use County roads. We have LAFCO to make sure that we can service the land

1 that the City is going to be bringing into its domain, but we do not have anything  
2 that deals with the roads to get there. We are behind in our parkland acreage and  
3 question the funding for purchase and maintenance of future parks. We need a  
4 specific definition for mixed-use—different developers use different definitions.  
5 Regarding re-use potential, agrees with Commissioner McAllister. Regarding  
6 density, I would not like increased density at the margin and suggest increasing  
7 density in the center or close to the center of the City and keep the idea of  
8 feathering as we reach the UGB. Is there any way to enact localized zoning  
9 density? On page 492, regarding conversion of non-residential land to residential,  
10 is there a provision in zoning or a sliding designation on parcels other than mixed  
11 use? Is there a way to keep some of this underutilized land and rezoning so that  
12 the developer has the option without going through a zoning change requirement?  
13

14 Commissioner von Raesfeld: In Pamela’s general introduction, it was mentioned  
15 that there was an informal discussion on how to deal with existing residential  
16 neighborhoods with the possibility to increase densities?  
17

18 Pamela Tuft: That is an opportunity that has been identified during the visioning  
19 workshops.  
20

21 Commissioner von Raesfeld: It is probably something that this General Plan  
22 needs get its hands around, i.e., the beach communities of Los Angeles where the  
23 policy is tear the house down and build three/four on a lot. Do we want to do that?  
24 When you have UGB’s that is the next thing that will happen. Need some goals  
25 and policies.  
26

27 Pamela Tuft: Need to balance the possibility of increasing the density without  
28 losing the physical assets that presently exist.  
29

30 **CHAPTER 5 COMMUNITY DESIGN AND CHARACTER**  
31

32 Commissioner von Raesfeld: This chapter really matters in the Central Petaluma  
33 Specific Plan.  
34

35 **CHAPTER 6 GROWTH MANAGEMENT**  
36

37 Commissioner Glass: Should the City take the 500 housing units per year, lower  
38 them to manage that growth and get to the .7% rate of increase? I think this is  
39 covered in the document but it may need more explanation so someone would  
40 understand why he or she may want to do that and what the danger is if they  
41 don’t. How far can you go above that .7%, at any given time, and still be  
42 comfortable that you will have going out to 2025, or be able to deal with the  
43 traffic?  
44  
45

1 Commissioner McAllister: Regarding densities and where they occur and how  
2 they regulate whether it is on the perimeter, etc., how do the General Plan  
3 alternatives get generated? Is there going to be community involvement? How are  
4 the Plan alternatives going to address these different density potentials and where  
5 they occur?  
6

7 Pamela Tuft: The alternatives will be first drafted on a preliminary level by staff  
8 and consultant, using the comments that we have gained from this document, and  
9 from the visioning workshops and community survey. Three alternatives will be  
10 presented that can be selected individually or, to a certain extent, blended for a  
11 preferred alternative.  
12

13 Commissioner McAllister: Will they address this place-sensitive density?  
14

15 Pamela Tuft: Yes, it could.  
16

17 Commissioner Glass: On page 58 of the ECOC Executive Summary under  
18 Chapter 6, under Environmental Design Plan of 1978, it states the 1978 Plan  
19 identified an optimum population of approximately 70,000-90,000 residents and  
20 then later down beneath the Urban Limit Line it states that based on a detailed  
21 analysis housing construction in the early 80's, and potential housing units within  
22 the Urban Limit Line, projected buildout population totaled 67,600 residents—we  
23 need to look at increased densities especially in the Central Specific Plan. As  
24 some of the other projects have come in, we arrive at this ABAG projection of  
25 67,600 based on patterns of the 1980's, but we may end up with a completely  
26 different number. If we do end up with a different number under challenges, we  
27 need to know what those challenges are. Need to keep in mind, if we increase  
28 densities, what are the ramifications?  
29

30 Commissioner Asselmeier: Regarding the above comments, could the alternatives  
31 address incentives for developers wanting to create higher densities on existing  
32 parcels? Could we develop some ideas as to what those incentives might look like  
33 to give greater incentive for areas we want to see have higher density first and  
34 then working outward?  
35

## 36 CHAPTER 7 TRANSPORTATION

37

38 Chair Barrett: Regarding Level of Service (LOS), when proposals for  
39 developments come before us, where we have not been able to tell what the  
40 impact of that project would be on the streets because the LOS is only measured  
41 at intersections, is it possible to, in the future, measure the LOS at the streets?  
42 LOS measures A-F—need to break it down, as sometimes it is not accurate; i.e.,  
43 pedestrian, bike, bus and private car. Neighborhood Traffic Management Program  
44 is a good idea, but to eliminate or diminish the unintended consequences; i.e.,  
45 Rockridge neighbors not wanting trucks on Windsor. Need opportunities to help  
46 people get around town by providing bike racks on the local buses. Bike  
47 commuting is mapped at 1%--too low and doesn't take in consideration of the  
48 Spanish population.

1 Commissioner Asselmeier: Look at Palo Alto, as it has a very successful Bike  
2 Plan.

3  
4 Commissioner McAllister: Include more aggressive programs for promoting  
5 alternative transportation, in terms of incentives and disincentives. Look at other  
6 Cities (Palo Alto) for successful programs. To what extent do programs get  
7 defined in the General Plan? How detailed does that become? Suggested using a  
8 check list and rating system; i.e., the Leadership and Energy and Environmental  
9 Design (LEED) is being promoted by the Green Building organization. LEED  
10 program is more mainstream. A checklist is used to rate how well you do in all  
11 areas. Cities and Counties are becoming more mainstream and are adopting this  
12 method. The LEED web site is [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org).

13  
14 Commissioner Glass: On page 71 in the ECOC Executive Summary, regarding  
15 downtown Petaluma, feels will not be able to achieve a LOS in that area, so is  
16 there a way to have standards that you can grant exceptions as incentives to  
17 channel development where you want it to take place? When revitalizing the  
18 downtown area, do not sacrifice traffic flow all over town and maintain a traffic  
19 LOS standard but accept it where we want fast-traffic development. How do we  
20 achieve incentives in certain areas?

21  
22 Commissioner von Raesfeld: Suggested a sliding LOS scale; i.e. Denver. Over the  
23 past couple of years, many projects, in the area of traffic, we are being asked to  
24 find for overriding considerations in the action that the Commission takes, and  
25 there needs to be a goal/policy.

26  
27 Chair Barrett: In terms of acting as a Planning Commissioner, in table 7.2.2,  
28 screen line #15 is on Western Avenue and starts at Water Street and goes onto  
29 Hill Avenue—is concerned with Rockridge and the traffic impact and the problem  
30 of County roads. This is an area that will be developed and there are no  
31 intersections that were measured out by the Jr. High School or on Webster Street.  
32 Would like to know if the new Traffic Model can measure this? These are heavily  
33 trafficked intersections, especially at school times and are not a great road for  
34 bicyclists. If they haven't been measured, I do not know how it can access what  
35 we will be asked to look at, and throughout the City, when we are being asked to  
36 look at developments.

37  
38 Pamela Tuft: The stopping of the screen line, just past Webster Street, is  
39 indicative of the limited number of major access points beyond that and the  
40 limited number of destinations. The traffic model will address that issue by  
41 spreading traffic volumes based on the land use information from the County in  
42 the outlining west areas. The screen line is typically measuring major roadways  
43 that have a significant number of intersecting road networks. Will have to  
44 research the bike concerns.

45  
46 Chair Barrett: Is concerned with future developments and needs as much  
47 information as possible for what exists right now and how it flows.

48

1 Pamela Tuft: Will talk to the Traffic Consultant about this issue.

2

3 Chair Barrett: Do traffic counts measure all the traffic from all the legs of the  
4 intersections?

5

6 Pamela Tuft: Measures traffic volumes from all legs of the intersection and  
7 individual lanes that interact with the intersection.

8

9 **Public Comment:**

10

11 Geoff Cartwright: Water supply projections have already exceeded. According to  
12 Urban Water Management Plan by the Sonoma County Water Agency, we are  
13 already looking at increased water costs. We already, at this point, are in a Stage 1  
14 voluntary reduction of our water use, which is 15% (Stage 2-25% or Stage 3-  
15 65%). At what point does that become prohibitive?

16

17 **CHAPTER 11 ECONOMIC HEALTH AND SUSTAINABILITY**

18

19 Chair Barrett: When looking at areas to be redeveloped, we need to look at  
20 reusing the area and reusing what is already there, if possible, to promote  
21 sustainability.

22

23 Commissioner von Raesfeld: In the ECOC Executive Summary, page 109, item 8,  
24 it states Petaluma is fairly in line with all the other cities of the North Bay in a per  
25 capita revenue of about \$350.00 per person—this statement makes us the second  
26 highest in the region in operating expenditures—do we know who is in first place  
27 and why? Is it because we are an old City? Are there any land-use decisions that  
28 can improve that?

29

30 **Other Comments:**

31

32 Commissioner McAllister: Water Resources, Chapter 9 - suggests a program that  
33 would encourage more regulation of landscape irrigation and make it a part of the  
34 building permit process. Too much water is wasted on landscape maintenance.  
35 Regarding the Housing Element, is this a draft?

36

37 Pamela Tuft: The Housing Element was heard by the Planning Commission  
38 earlier in the year and moved on to City Council with a recommendation to adopt.  
39 The City Council formally adopted it. State Housing Community Development  
40 (HCD) has certified the Element. It will be readopted when the General Plan is  
41 adopted in 2004; we will be reviewing it to ensure that it is internally consistent  
42 with the rest of the General Plan.

43

44 Commissioner McAllister: In the ECOC full report, Chart 14-15, is concerned  
45 that income levels do not match the affordability of our housing. Need to  
46 encourage more affordable housing.

47

48 Chair Barrett: Suggested an energy tax of housing over a certain size.

1 Commissioner von Raesfeld: Is encouraged that the database collection and  
2 modeling potentials will address flood mitigation issues. Need more discussion of  
3 flooding in the Health and Safety Chapter.  
4

5 Pamela Tuft: It was taken out of the Health and Safety Chapter because the Plan  
6 will have a separate Water Resources Element. Also, three Master Plans (Surface  
7 Water, Water Supply, Recycled Water) are being prepared in concert with the  
8 General Plan.  
9

10 Commissioner von Raesfeld: Need more definition to what is the intent of hillside  
11 development.  
12

13 Chair Barrett: The water flow model can show how changing the channel affects  
14 flows upstream and downstream; will it also be able to show what different  
15 development projects, if they are placed there, will do?  
16

17 Pamela Tuft: Yes.  
18

19 Chair Barrett: When is the Model available?  
20

21 Pamela Tuft: The XP-SWMM Model is being built right now and will be working  
22 on calibration of it and checking it in January. Will not necessarily be for use in  
23 current projects but will allow us to work on the alternatives analysis through the  
24 spring and into the summer.  
25

26 Commissioner Asselmeier: Regarding the alternatives, when they are developed,  
27 i.e., bicycling and pedestrian access issues, will the alternatives address what it  
28 would take to purchase easements along creeks and put in bike paths? How would  
29 this be funded?  
30  
31

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32  
33 **VI. LIAISON REPORTS:**  
34

35 **City Council:** None

36 **SPARC:** Chair Barrett: Preliminary Proposals: COTS Mary Isaac Center,  
37 Haystack Landing, Staples Office Supplies; Chair Barrett will continue to be the  
38 SPARC liaison.  
39  
40

1           **Petaluma Bicycle Advisory Committee:**     Commissioner Asselmeier:  
2           Considering discussion on the SMART EIR that was up for public comment. Had  
3           visit from Pamela Tuft to discuss options of whether the Bicycle Plan should be  
4           integrated in one area of the new General Plan versus splicing it in, as appropriate,  
5           throughout the transportation and other elements and integrating the separate  
6           concepts as opposed to including it as a separate free standing element. PBAC  
7           agreed to the idea of integrating the Bike Plan into the General Plan.

8           **Tree Advisory Committee:** Chair Barrett: Developer for Poultry Street came  
9           before the Committee to get landscaping ideas; moving ahead with the Community  
10          Garden project; demonstration on different kinds of Oaks.

11  
12          **CPSP:** Commissioner McAllister: Reviewed Draft of the consultant’s first drafts  
13          of the Central Petaluma SMART Code. Future meetings: December 5, 2002  
14          (traffic & parking); December 7, 2002 (District walkthrough with the consultant  
15          team from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM); December 11, 2002 (Final Review of Draft at  
16          7:00 PM)



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19          **Adjournment: 9:02 PM**

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22          S:\Planning Commission\agenda02\11/26/02

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26