

4.9 LAND USE

This section includes a description of the existing land uses in the vicinity of the project site and an analysis of the potential impacts that the project may have with regards to those land uses.

A. Regulatory Framework

This section describes existing plans and policies related to land use in the current General Plan (1987) and the City's Zoning Ordinance.

1. Petaluma General Plan

The State of California requires every city and county to have a comprehensive General Plan that serves as a constitution for long-term physical development. The General Plan identifies current and future needs in areas such as land use, housing, transportation, public services, environmental quality, and economic viability. The General Plan is also a policy document that embodies the community's goals and guides decisions about physical development over the long term.¹ The currently adopted General Plan is the Petaluma General Plan 1987 to 2005, which was last amended in 1999.²

The 1987 General Plan is currently in the process of being updated. A Draft General Plan was prepared and distributed to the public for review in September 2006. The EIR for the Draft General Plan was completed in October 2006 and has been reviewed by the public. The review process for the Draft General Plan and the EIR for the Draft General Plan will continue until early 2007, at which time the City can consider adoption.

¹ City of Petaluma, Community Development, Planning Services, General Plan Update, retrieved at <http://cityofpetaluma.net/cdd/plan-general-plan.html>, on June 20, 2005.

² City of Petaluma, Community Development, Planning Services, General Plan Update, <http://cityofpetaluma.net/cdd/plan-general-plan.html>, website accessed June 20, 2005.

Applicable goals and policies of the of the Petaluma General Plan direct the pattern of land use in Petaluma and set out standards for future development. Representative policies and programs from the existing Land Use Element, and other applicable elements, that are relevant to the proposed project are listed in Table 4.9-1. Relevant policies from the proposed 2025 General Plan are also identified Table 4.9-1.

2. Petaluma Zoning Ordinance

The Zoning Ordinance implements the policies of the City of Petaluma's General Plan by classifying and regulating the uses of land and structures within the City of Petaluma. Among the specific development matters regulated by the Zoning Ordinance are allowed uses of land and buildings, building setbacks, the height, bulk, number of stories and size of buildings, parking requirements and signs.

B. Existing Conditions

This section addresses existing land use issues relative to the project site, project vicinity and other development in the area.

1. Project Site

The project site consists of approximately 37 acres of land adjacent to East Washington Street and Highway 101. The project site is the location of the former Kenilworth Junior High School, including athletic fields and bus storage facilities. The land use designation for the majority of the project site in the existing General Plan is “Existing School District Lands” and “Industrial” for the southern corner where the bus barn is located. In addition, the General Plan has identified a “Gateway” adjacent to the project site along East Washington Street. Current zoning is “R-1-6,500” and “Light Industrial.” In the proposed 2025 General Plan, the land use designation for the project site is “Mixed-Use.” The entire site would be re-zoned from “R-1-6,500” and “Light Industrial to “Planned Unit District” under the proposed project.

TABLE 4.9-1 **PETALUMA GENERAL PLAN POLICIES & PROGRAMS — LAND USE**

Policy/Program Number	Policies/Programs
Existing General Plan	
<i>Community Character Element</i>	
Program 30	Strengthen existing ordinances to regulate the types of commercial establishments, such as “fast food” so that they will not impact negatively on traffic flow or community appearance.
<i>Land Use and Growth Management Element</i>	
Policy 5	It is the policy of the City to discourage urban sprawl.
Policy 23	Convenience shopping in proximity to residential shall be encouraged.
Policy 28	The City shall support residential development only in those areas where adequate City facilities are available or will be provided with development.
Program 9	Develop additional zoning districts, similar to Riverfront Warehouse, that promote mixed use in infill development, consistent with existing General Plan policies and respectful of existing historic districts.
Program 11	Calculate density for infill projects with a factor for previously dedicated roadways to achieve better consistency and fairness between Zoning and General Plan regulations.
Program 12	Zone for convenience shopping in proximity to residential.
<i>Open Space, Conservation and Energy Element</i>	
Policy 31	Land development practices should be consistent with greater energy-efficiency opportunities in conservation and solar energy for space heating and cooling and transportation.
Program 46	Develop land use regulations and zoning ordinances for new subdivisions to provide opportunities for passive solar heating and cooling.
<i>Parks, Recreation, Schools and Child Care Element</i>	
Policy 1	The City shall require all new residential development to dedicate land or pay a park fee for public parks.
Policy 14	The City shall promote private open space and recreation facilities in large-scale residential developments in order to meet a portion of the open space and recreation needs that will be generated by the development.

TABLE 4.9-1 **PETALUMA GENERAL PLAN POLICIES & PROGRAMS — LAND USE (CONTINUED)**

Policy/Program Number	Policies/Programs
<i>Local Economy Element</i>	
Policy 10	The City shall strive to make land available for effective residential/workplace (mixed-use) developments.
Policy 13	Cluster retail and related uses so that they are concentrated rather than dispersed.
Policy 22	The Petaluma Community Development Commission (PCDC) should seek to reduce land use incompatibilities while at the same time improving the mix of uses.
<i>Housing Element</i>	
Policy 1	The City shall encourage a mix of housing types, including lower-density housing.
Policy 4	The building of housing on under-utilized land shall be encouraged.
<i>Transportation Element</i>	
Policy 10	New development shall be required to pay a pro-rata share of needed traffic improvements.
Policy 32.1	Amend Zoning Ordinance to allow more flexibility in parking requirements for mixed-use developments.
<i>Community Health and Safety Element</i>	
Policy 3	Land uses in areas prone to natural hazards shall only be allowed with appropriate mitigation.
Program 3	Continue to regulate development to assure adequate mitigation of safety hazards on sites having a history or threat of slope instability, seismic activity (including liquefaction, ground failure, and ground rupture), inundation from dam failure or flooding, or fire.
Proposed General Plan	
<i>Land Use, Growth Management, and the Built Environment Element</i>	
Policy 2-P-2	Use land efficiently by promoting infill development, at equal or higher density and intensity than surrounding uses.
Policy 2-P-12	Encourage reuse of under utilized sites along East Washington Street and sections of Petaluma Boulevard as multi-use residential/commercial corridors, allowing ground-floor retail and residential and/or commercial uses on upper floors.
Policy 2-P-6	Encourage mixed-use development, which include opportunities for increased transit access.

TABLE 4.9-1 **PETALUMA GENERAL PLAN POLICIES & PROGRAMS — LAND USE (CONTINUED)**

Policy/Program Number	Policies/Programs
<i>Community Design, Character, and Sustainable Building Element</i>	
	Strengthen the visual and aesthetic character of major arterial corridors.
Policy 3-P-5	A. Improve key arterial corridors through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Intensification via infilling, orientation of facades toward the street, appropriate building height, and interior parking lot configuration on the parcel. ◆ Sidewalk improvements including trees, lighting fixtures, planters, curbs, shading devices, public and commercial-related seating, and paving materials. ◆ Streetscape improvements including use of planted medians, parking configuration, signage, and paving materials.
Policy 3-P-17	Encourage development with active ground level uses, plazas and open spaces, while allowing residential and commercial uses at upper floors.
Policy 3-P-18	Facilitate development patterns that provide an urban edge along East Washington Street, providing visual continuity and cohesiveness.
Policy 3-P-18 (D)	Ensure that development at the old Kenilworth Jr. High school site and any future redevelopment of the Fairgrounds property maintains a public, pedestrian, and active face along East Washington Street, and provides civic and ceremonial spaces with links to the Library and other uses.
Policy 3-P-66	Develop the area (Washington Core) with a diverse range of commercial and residential uses with intensity and character appropriate to a central urban neighborhood.
Policy 3-P-67	Capitalize on opportunities to provide regional and Community Commercial facilities at the old Kenilworth school site, while integrating new development with the intended scale and new character for East Washington Street.
Policy 3-P-71	Permit a range of large and small-sized retail and office as well as residential uses on the former Kenilworth School site, while ensuring that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Development presents an urban/pedestrian face on Washington Street, with parking tucked behind buildings. ◆ Incorporates a plaza or other civic open space.

2. Surrounding Uses

The project site is bordered by the Sonoma-Marin Fairgrounds and Petaluma Raceway to the west with residential uses to the west of the fairgrounds, light industrial to the southeast, and Highway 101 to the northeast. These surrounding uses are shown in Figure 4.9-1 and described in detail below.

a. North

The proposed project is bordered along its northern edge by East Washington Street. Adjacent to the project site, East Washington Street contains a variety of commercial uses, including a small shopping center, gas station, fast-food restaurant, and a historical building converted into private office. The existing swim center and skate park are located along East Washington Street, adjacent to the project site.

b. South

Lindberg Lane borders the proposed project to the south. This area is zoned for light industrial uses and includes trucking companies and other light industrial uses.

c. West

The Sonoma-Marin Fairgrounds are located to the west of the site, adjacent to the proposed project. A variety of events are scheduled at the fairground, from community group picnics to the annual Sonoma-Marin Fair and Carnival. The fairground is also the headquarters of the Fourth District Agricultural Association, which strives to promote and showcase agricultural as well as preserve agricultural heritage.

The fairground is also the home of the Petaluma Speedway and Nor Cal Paintball Park, both of which are located along the boundary of the fairgrounds with the project site. Other uses along the western edge of the fairgrounds property include storage and parking areas.

The Petaluma Speedway generates a substantial amount of noise during racing events. Section 4.10, Noise, discusses the potential impacts associated with

the speedway noise. Another use of the fairgrounds is the annual 4th of July fireworks show. Given the nature of fireworks, the discussion regarding the potential risks associated with the fireworks show is addressed in Section 4.7, Hazards and Hazardous Materials.

Residential uses are located across Payran Street on the southwestern edge of the fairgrounds.

d. East

Highway 101 borders the project site along the east. Residential neighborhoods are located on the northeastern side of the freeway.

C. Standards of Significance

The proposed project would create a significant land use impact if it would:

- ◆ Physically divide an established community.
- ◆ Create or exacerbate a conflict between land uses on the project site and in the surrounding area.
- ◆ Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

D. Impact Discussion

1. Project Impacts

This section discusses potential impacts that could occur from the proposed project related to land use. The impacts for subsections a and b, below, would occur under both the existing, as well as the 2025 General Plans. However, there would be different potential impacts with relation to poten-

tial conflicts with applicable land use plans. These differences are discussed in detail below under subsection c.

a. Division of an Established Community

Implementation of the proposed project would not physically divide an established community as the project is located in a developed urban area and is considered infill development. The location of the site is such that it is not part of an existing residential neighborhood, rather is a parcel tucked in between existing barriers such as the 101 Highway, East Washington Street and the fairgrounds. Therefore, there would be *no impact* regarding division of a community.

b. Conflict Between Land Uses

Implementation of the proposed project could create a conflict between land uses on the project site and in the surrounding area. The greatest potential for conflicting uses would occur between the proposed project's residential uses and differing uses at the adjacent Sonoma-Marin Fairgrounds, as well as the adjacent Highway 101. The fairgrounds typically hold large public events, including agricultural events, which could conflict with the proposed residential units. As discussed below, vehicular noise generated on Highway 101 could also present a conflict with residential uses.

The Petaluma Speedway, which operates on Saturday evenings and includes auto racing and destruction derbies, has the potential for noise impacts to nearby residents. The proposed project's residential component would be located directly across from the Speedway on Kenilworth Drive. Additionally, the Nor Cal Paintball Park operates on the fairgrounds as well. Its hours of operations are on Fridays from 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m., and Saturdays and Sundays from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The paintball park may also conflict with residential uses, due to the sound of air-powered paintball rifles.

The project could also result in a conflict in that, depending on final project design, noise levels from Highway 101 could exceed the City's noise level threshold of 60 dBA for exterior, residential areas.

Because these conflicts are primarily related to noise, the potential impacts and recommended mitigation measures have been identified and are discussed further in that section of this EIR (Section 4.10). Although exterior noise levels at residential areas would exceed the City's thresholds, this is a noise-related impact rather than a land use impact. The project, by itself, would not generate noise levels that would exceed City thresholds and therefore would not result in any significant conflicts with existing development.

Furthermore, the development of the proposed project may impact the annual City Fourth of July fireworks show held on the fairgrounds. These impacts are analyzed in Section 4.7, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, of this EIR. As discussed in that section, no significant impact is anticipated with the included mitigation measures.

In addition, as discussed in more detail in Section 4.2, Agricultural Resources, the proposed project would not affect the fairground's ability to support agricultural activities in the region through hosting agricultural shows and activities.

Finally, no conflict of use is anticipated between the proposed project and the existing skate park and swim center, since the proposed project would not affect their ability to continue operating.

c. Consistency with Plans and Policies

i. *Existing General Plan*

Implementation of the proposed project would involve a General Plan amendment, if processed under the existing General Plan. Under this scenario, the existing General Plan designation would change from "Existing School District Lands" and "Industrial" to "Mixed-Use." As a result, the proposed land use designation would be a change from the current General Plan land use designation.

However, the proposed project would be consistent with the intent of two of the City's central goals of locating retail and residential uses in close prox-

imity in Petaluma and focusing urban uses within the city limits.³ Re-designation of the project area to Mixed Use would complement the intent of the Petaluma General Plan Land Use Policy 23, which encourages convenience retail in close proximity to residential uses. This policy discourages automobile dependency by increasing non-driving access of residents to retail opportunities near their homes, thus lessening the environmental effects associated with automobile use. Although the project would require an amendment under the existing General Plan, it would be consistent with two primary goals set forth in the Plan related to the location of mixed-uses within the City. Because the project would help the City achieve its larger goals, the need for an amendment would be a *less-than-significant* impact.

ii. Existing Zoning Regulations

Implementation of the proposed project would involve a zoning change if processed under the current zoning code. The project site is currently zoned for R-1-6,500 (Single-Family Residential) and Light Industrial. As part of the proposed project, which includes development of retail and residential, zoning would be changed to Planned Unit Development (PUD). The PUD District is designed to allow a mixture of uses, or unusual density, building intensity, or design characteristics which would not normally be permitted in a single use district. Development in this zone is allowable only after the City Council approves a complete Unit Development Plan. Because the project would be consistent with the City's goals in its existing General Plan, as discussed above, the required rezoning would result in a *less-than-significant* impact.

iii. 2025 General Plan

Implementation of the proposed project would not require a General Plan amendment if processed under the proposed General Plan. Under this scenario, the project would be consistent with the proposed land use designation of mixed-use. However, the project site would require rezoning to Planned Unit District (PUD) following adoption of the proposed General Plan. The

³ *City of Petaluma General Plan*, 1987, pages 3 to 4.

implementation of the proposed General Plan would result in the rewriting of the City's Zoning Ordinance and rezoning of parcels, as necessary, including the project parcel. In addition, the rezoning of the site to PUD would result in uses that are consistent with the larger goals of the General Plan concerning infill development on underutilized parcels along major corridors. Therefore, the inconsistency between the intended zoning designation (PUD) and the existing zoning designation (R-1-6,500 and Light Industrial) would result in a *less-than-significant impact* in relation to consistency with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations.

Also, as infill development, the project would involve development in an already urban area within the limits of the city. Therefore, the project is consistent with policies in the 2025 General Plan that support mixed-use infill development along the City's major arterials at higher densities than surrounding uses. In particular, the project is consistent with Policies 3-P-18 (D), 3-P-67, and 3-P-71 of the General Plan, which pertain to development at the former Kenilworth Junior High School site. As a result, *no impact* would occur in relation to consistency with City policies.

2. Cumulative Impacts

A list-based approach has been used for this cumulative analysis. The analysis considers the development projects listed in Appendix C (Cumulative Projects) and whether this project would have significant cumulative impacts related to land use in combination with the cumulative projects.

As discussed above, the proposed project would not divide an established community, significantly conflict with established land uses in the area (other than are identified in the Noise and Hazards and Hazardous Materials sections) or conflict with adopted land use plans or policies. Any potential land use impacts that could arise from developing on the cumulative sites would be addressed under each individual project since the impact would be site specific and would not combine to create a larger cumulative impact. As a result, no significant cumulative land use impact would occur and, the project would *not contribute* to a significant cumulative land use impact.

E. Impacts and Mitigation Measures

There are no significant impacts regarding land use that are not addressed in other sections of the EIR; therefore, no mitigation measures are required. Please refer to the Noise and Hazards and Hazardous Materials sections of the EIR for additional analysis related to potential Noise and Hazards and Hazardous Materials impacts.

CITY OF PETALUMA
EAST WASHINGTON PLACE EIR
LAND USE