

TOWN OF WOODSIDE

Report to Town Council

Agenda Item 4

Prepared by: Jackie C. Young, Director of Planning and Building

February 10, 2009

Reviewed by: Susan George, Town Manager

SUBJECT: GENERAL PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATE PROJECT KICK-OFF: GENERAL PLAN REPORT CARD AND PROJECT SCHEDULE

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Town Council review and discuss the attached 1988 General Plan Report Card (**Attachment A**) and General Plan Update Schedule (**Attachment B**), accept public input, and direct staff to proceed with the General Plan Review and Update accordingly.

BACKGROUND

On December 9, 2008, the Town's Interim Director of Planning and Building, Irwin Kaplan, presented a thoughtful proposal for providing a process for the review and update of the Town's General Plan (**Attachment C**, Staff Report). The Town Council discussed this proposal and had the following input (excerpted from the draft minutes, **Attachment D**):

"The Council noted that the proposal was excellent. The Council expressed concern with the feasibility of finding candidates to meet consistently on a weekly schedule and reiterated the importance of having representation from different Town contingencies. The Council discussed quorum requirements, providing an opportunity for initial public input and Council direction to the task force at the front end of the process, the importance of the Council being actively involved but not controlling of the process, posting the draft reports on the Town's web site with the ability for citizens to comment, setting priorities for ordinance changes to be in compliance with the revised General Plan..."

"The Council also noted that the General Plan has stood in good stead over the course of 20 years and that considerable time and energy went into the development of the current General Plan. The Council proposed that input be invited about new policies and new ideas that are not currently represented, e.g. sustainability, green technology, conservation or fire safety, and agreed that the Council would provide direction to the task force; that the initial meetings of the task force would consist of a discussion of the Town's core values and the vision for Town, noting the possibility of involving new residents to the Town."

DISCUSSION

Given the Town Council's initial input, staff has: (1) revised the project schedule to a twice monthly format; (2) suggested a process for ensuring representation from different Town contingencies on the Task Force; (3) included posting information on the Town's web site with the ability for citizens to comment; (4) built in priority-setting for ordinance changes to be in compliance with the revised General Plan; and (5) included consideration of additional General Plan Elements, Guidelines and/or Specific Plans. A detailed discussion follows.

Staff Resources

The Director of Planning and Building will be the facilitator for the review process, working with the Task Force to identify issues and to develop community objectives, goals, and action plans. The staff would assist with this process. Outside resources will be needed to undertake special studies for certain of the elements of the General Plan, such as the Noise and Circulation Elements. Outside assistance would also be needed for the environmental review of the draft General Plan, to ensure that it complies with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as well as for final production and graphics.

Task Force Formation

As discussed, the Task Force will be comprised of representatives of the Town's various advisory bodies, as well as a diverse cross section of residents at large. Task Force selection from the Town's advisory bodies has been agendized for each body, as noted on the schedule, with the desired participation as follows:

<u>Advisory Body:</u>	<u>No. of Participants:</u>
ASRB	2
Bicycle Committee	2
Conservation Committee	2
History Committee	2
Livestock Committee	2
Open Space Committee	2
Public Safety Committee	1
Recreation Committee	2
Trails Committee	<u>2</u>
Total:	17

Additionally, Task Force applications were sent out on January 30, 2009 and February 2, 2009, to all residents and Post Office boxes via bulk mail (reference **Attachment E**, Task Force Application). The application period will close on February 23, 2009, and staff will provide the Town Council will an update on the response at their regularly scheduled meeting of February 24, 2009 (with final selection scheduled for March 10, 2009). The desired number of participants for residents at large is a maximum of 13. If a diverse cross section of residents is not reflected in the response, staff would propose subsequent and direct solicitation of additional possible participants to equitably reflect community demographics, and other contingencies.

Schedule

The General Plan Review and Update will require the allocation of Town resources over the course of an extended period of time. The attached schedule proposes twice monthly meetings, in lieu of the weekly meetings suggested in the December 9, 2008 staff report. Although twice monthly meetings extend the duration of the public input process, this may be more manageable for Task Force participants and would give staff the needed time between meetings to prepare and provide information to the Task Force participants and the community at large.

Process

The attached schedule includes benchmarks which set forth the process steps. In summary, the process includes the following steps:

1. Introduction to Council (complete).
2. Task Force Formation (underway).
3. RFP for EIR Consultant, Phase I: Preparation of Element "Primers", Legal Updates and Draft Scopes for Technical Studies (underway).
4. General Plan Kick Off at Town Council (this evening).
5. Task Force Update to Town Council (February 24, 2009).
6. Finalization of Task Force Selection at Town Council (March 10, 2009).
7. Task Force review of Core Values, Land Use Elements, Open Space Element, Conservation Element and Circulation Element.¹
8. Mid-Process Planning Commission and Town Council Update.
9. Task Force Review of Natural Hazards/Safety Element, Noise Element, Public Utilities Element, Historic Preservation Element, Design Guidelines/Specific Plans and Optional Elements, Guidelines and/or Specific Plans.¹
10. End-Process Update to Planning Commission and Town Council.
11. RFP for EIR Consultant, Phase II: Preparation of all Needed Technical Studies and EIR.
12. Preparation of all Needed Technical Studies and EIR.
13. Circulation and Finalization of EIR.
14. Public Hearings before the Planning Commission and Town Council for certification of the EIR, and adoption of the Updated General Plan.

- ¹ The typical process for the Task Force review of each General Plan Element will include:
- o Preparation and distribution (to the Task Force and the Town website) of a pre-meeting informational packet for Week I Meeting;
 - o Week I Meeting: Review of the 1988 General Plan Report Card, presentation of the "primer" and legal updates by the EIR Consultant's team member; brainstorming regarding goals, policies, objectives, changed conditions, etc.; and requests for information;
 - o Post Week I Task Force Notes to the Town website.
 - o Preparation and distribution (to the Task Force and the Town website) of a pre-meeting informational packet for Week II Meeting;
 - o Week II Meeting: Recap of Week I meeting; review of new material; summarization and prioritization of Task Force input;
 - o Post Week II Task Force Notes to the Town website; and,
 - o Post Meeting II: Preparation of draft scope for technical studies.

It will be important during this process to remain cognizant that the General Plan is a document of guiding principles, a "blueprint" for the community, as differentiated from the Municipal Code which contains the specific regulations which implement the General Plan. Municipal Code changes often do, and will, occur after the adoption of the updated General Plan (pursuant to CEQA, the General Plan and the Municipal Code must be consistent with one another). Additionally, because unexpected changes will occur in the future, the General Plan should clearly articulate what is sacred and must be protected, irrespective of any future plans. Finally, although goals which are not set are seldom achieved, goals should be set which are within the Town's exercise of control.

1988 GENERAL PLAN REPORT CARD

The attached Report Card includes the goals, the program objectives and 2009 program objectives status for each Element of the 1988 General Plan, including: Land Use, Open Space, Conservation, Circulation, Natural Hazards/Safety, Noise and Public Utilities. Staff requests that the Town Council discuss the goals (e.g., Do these goals remain the current community values? Brain storm on possible new goals.), program objectives, and 2009 status (e.g., Are the program objectives complete or incomplete, and why? Do the program objectives of an on-going nature remain community objectives? Brain storm on possible new program objectives.).

Additionally, the Town Council directed staff on January 13, 2009, to proceed to the Planning Commission for consideration of formal adoption of a Draft Historic Preservation Element ahead of the General Plan Update. The Planning Commission public hearing to formulate a recommendation to the Town Council regarding adoption will be held on February 18, 2009, and the Town Council public hearing to consider formal adoption is tentatively set for March 10, 2009. The Council desired to have these values included in the General Plan now so that further refinement and incorporation could be folded into the General Plan Review and Update. Other possible General Plan Elements include, but are not limited to, a Sustainability Element. Lastly, the Housing Element is on a separate track to align with the State's certification schedule.

FISCAL IMPACT

In addition to the cost of staff time, resources will need to be expended for the following outside services:

- EIR Consultant (including their team of technical advisors) for Phase I and Phase II.
- Production/Graphics
- Bulk Mailings and Notices
- Duplication Costs

A determination of cost is currently underway for the EIR consultant for Phase I. Specific appropriation requests will be made during the Third Quarterly Budget Review in April and with the 2009-11 Proposed Budget.

CONCLUSION

The review of the General Plan and its update will be a significant and exciting undertaking for the Town. Town staff welcomes the participation of our citizenry to build a sound blue print for the Town which reflects the community's values.

Attachments:

- A General Plan Report Card
- B General Plan Review and Update Schedule
- C Town Council Staff Report of December 9, 2008
- D Town Council Minutes of December 9, 2008
- E Task Force Application dated January 27, 2009