



# General Plan Community Meeting

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January 29, 2024



# AGENDA

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- General Plan Update Overview
  - Activities
  - Next Steps
  - Questions and Comments
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# WHY IS THE GENERAL PLAN IMPORTANT?

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## Community Vision

The General Plan Update is an opportunity to reaffirm and refine the Community's Vision for itself:

- Quality of life
- Preservation of Open Space and Agriculture
- Innovation and Sustainability
- Vibrant economy



# WHY IS THE GENERAL PLAN IMPORTANT?

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## Comprehensive in Scope

The General Plan serves as the City's 'playbook' for land use and planning decisions relative to:

- Land Uses (residential, commercial, industrial, business parks, open space, etc.)
- Infrastructure Planning (roads, water, sewer, etc.)
- Public Services (police, fire, parks, libraries, cultural activities, etc.)
- Resource Conservation (clean air, sensitive habitat, waterways, groundwater, agriculture, etc.)



# EXISTING GENERAL PLAN

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- Last comprehensive update was 2006
  - Circulation Element updated in 2017
  - Housing Element updated in 2023
- Numerous changes to State law
  - Climate change
  - Environmental justice
  - Complete streets
  - Flood and Fire protection



# GENERAL PLAN CONTENT

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## REQUIRED ELEMENTS

- Land Use
- Circulation
- Conservation
- Open Space
- Safety
- Noise
- Housing (*updated in 2023*)

## OPTIONAL ELEMENTS

- Economic Development
- Sustainability and Climate Change
- Historic and Archaeological Resources
- Parks and Recreation
- Environmental Justice (Required for Disadvantaged Communities)
- Administration and Implementation



# SUMMARY OF THE PROCESS

Public Participation

Existing Conditions Report



**We are here!**

Identify Community Priorities



Land Use Map Refinements

General Plan Goals, Policies, and Programs

Draft General Plan

Environmental Impact Report

Public Hearings - General Plan and EIR



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Planning Commission/City Council Study Sessions (4)
- Community Visioning Workshops (2) - COMPLETE
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Community Open House Workshops (2)
- Public Hearings (3)
- General Plan Update Task Force
- Workshop “Toolkit” for staff use
  - Pop-up events – Farmers Market
  - Coordination with Organizations/Businesses







# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

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- November 2, 2023 – Community Visioning Workshop #1
- November 9, 2023 – Chamber of Commerce
- November 13, 2023 – Community Visioning Workshop #2
- November 16, 2023 – Chamber of Commerce
- November 28, 2023 – Community Center Leadership Meeting
- November 29, 2023 – Sonoma Valley Community Advisory Commission
- December 3, 2023 – Sonoma Valley Housing Group
- January 4, 2023 – Moon Valley Garden Club
- January 10, 2023 – Sonoma Valley Collaborative
- Farmers Markets



# DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

- Dedicated Website  
[www.SonomaCity.GeneralPlan.org](http://www.SonomaCity.GeneralPlan.org)
- Leverage existing City social media accounts
- Online surveys
- Newsletters

**GENERAL PLAN 2046**  
CITY OF SONOMA

HOME FAQ GET INVOLVED DOCUMENTS & MAPS CONTACT US

Search

**What's New**

**We Want to Hear from You!**

Please complete the [Public Input Online Questionnaire](#) to provide input about key issues facing your community.

**The General Plan Update is underway!**

**Welcome**

Welcome to the Sonoma General Plan Update website! The City is excited to embark on the process of updating its General Plan, and this website will provide the community with an ongoing resource to provide input, track progress, review resource documents, and participate in this very important project.

Each city in California is required to have a General Plan, which serves as a guiding document for the city's long-term growth and development. Sonoma's existing General Plan dates back to 2006, and a lot has changed since then. New housing developments have been built, business and industry are changing, and several new laws and requirements have been enacted by California.

The General Plan addresses a range of important community topics including land use, housing, economic development, transportation, parks and recreation, public safety, and more. City staff, elected and appointed officials, business owners, developers, and citizens can reference the General Plan for guidance on what the community values and what its policies require.

While we cannot see exactly what the future holds, we are preparing for it by updating our General Plan! Looking forward 20 years, how will state and regional trends impact life in Sonoma? What new technologies and



# “COMMUNITY CHARACTER”

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- “Community character” refers to the distinct identity of a place. It is the collective impression a neighborhood or town makes on residents and visitors.
  - Physical and social characteristics one values and most closely associate with their neighborhood or town.
  - “Sense of Place” is the lens through which people experience and make meaning of their experiences in and with place.
  - People may attribute various meanings to the same place in relation to its ecological, social, economic, cultural, aesthetic, historical, or other aspects.
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# POST-IT NOTE EXERCISE

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Select a word, phrase, or place that describes the **City of Sonoma's Community Character** for each of the following categories. Place the word on the correct color post-it then on the wall under each category.

Built Environment  
*Urban Form – streets,  
setbacks, building  
types*

Natural Environment  
*Natural Features –  
vegetation, wildlife,  
water bodies*

People, Feelings,  
Association

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# MAPPING ACTIVITY

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At your table, ask yourself the following questions and identify and make notes on the map.

- Where are the places that represent the City of Sonoma's community character? (Built, natural, socio)
  - Where do you take visitors or recommend visitors go in the City?
  - Highlight places and networks that are important to you, for example, what paths do you use regularly for commuting and transportation, where do you visit often to eat, shop, live, work, or play.
  - Are there certain areas in the City that are in need of attention, revitalization or change? What is needed?
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# NEXT STEPS

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- General Plan Update Task Force Meeting  
February 6 - EOC
- Draft Existing Conditions Report Released
- Joint Planning Commission and City Council  
Meeting Spring



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# Questions and Comments

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**Thank You**

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