



DATE: July 8, 2014
TO: Mayor and Members of the City Council
FROM: Andrea Ouse, Planning Manager
Mark Hoffheimer, Senior Planner
SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF CITY OF VALLEJO GENERAL PLAN GUIDING PRINCIPLES

RECOMMENDATION

Approve a resolution adopting the City of Vallejo's General Plan Guiding Principles and directing the General Plan Working Group to proceed in accordance with these principles in preparing the General Plan.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

Reflecting community aspirations, the Guiding Principles are the result of an extensive public outreach effort, including four community workshops. They come with the support and recommendation of the General Plan Working Group (GPWG), which approved the Guiding Principles for recommendation to the City Council in May 2014. The Guiding Principles will guide the preparation of the General Plan update, the Sonoma Boulevard Specific Plan, and the Zoning Code update.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

The establishment of Guiding Principles is the first step in the City's General Plan update and Zoning Code update. The Guiding Principles, as overarching, aspirational statements, define the kind of community Vallejoans want and lay the foundation for the development of the General Plan's goals, policies and actions over the next two years. They also serve as the compass for the other components of the "Propel Vallejo" project; in particular, the Sonoma Boulevard Specific Plan and the City's Zoning Code Update.

The Draft Guiding Principles are the outcome of meetings and recommendations by the General Plan Working Group (GPWG) and an extensive public outreach effort.

Role and Purpose of the Guiding Principles

The Guiding Principles define the kind of community Vallejoans want, describing shared values and a shared vision for the city. They were developed on the basis of extensive input from the community and they represent key concepts on which there is broad consensus. The Guiding Principles are over-arching statements that will inform the decisions the community will be making throughout the project. They will:

- Influence decisions about development and conservation
- Shape development goals, policies, and actions

- Focus implementation efforts

The **Guiding Principles** are general, descriptive statements by design. They are intended to lay out a broad framework for the General Plan, and are organized by categories that could become chapters (elements) of the Plan. Within each chapter, there will ultimately be a series of more specific goals, each with its own set of policies and actions.



The **goals** will describe general desired results that the community seeks to create through the implementation of the General Plan, and the Guiding Principles lay the groundwork for the goals. The policies and actions establish the "who," "how" and "when" for carrying out the "what" and "where" of goals. As shown in the diagram, policies lead to specific actions that support goals.

A **policy** is a specific statement that regulates activities in the City, guides decision-making, and directs implementing actions to achieve a goal. The General Plan's policies guide City staff and the Planning Commission in their review of land development projects and in decision-making about City actions.

An **action** is a program, measure, procedure, or technique intended to implement one or more policies to help reach a specified goal. An action may be ongoing or something that can be completed. Taken together, the actions

in the General Plan constitute a "to-do list" for the future of Vallejo.

Recap of Community Outreach and Input

The Guiding Principles were developed through the direct input of the community through various means of public engagement. Between March 5 and April 14, 2014 the community at large was consulted about their vision and values. Summarized briefly below, community input was collected by way of three methods: community workshops, an online forum, and outreach toolkits used by local community groups. Each method is summarized briefly in this memo and described in detail in the Guiding Principles Community Outreach Report at the project website: www.PropelVallejo.com. The Report contains a full record of all content generated by community members. While this report is substantial, it can be more easily navigated electronically through the use of "bookmarks" or the table of contents to identify particular sections to review.

The communitywide outreach effort to inform the Guiding Principles was promoted with advertisements in local newspapers and on SolTrans buses, posters around town, a banner at the Ferry Building, and postcards handed out at the Farmers' Market, City Hall, community events, and other gathering places. Additionally, more than 8,000 subscribers to the City's mailing list received email notifications, and the effort was publicized in the City Manager's Bi-Weekly newsletter as well as through advertisements and articles in the Vallejo Times-Herald. The project team also made targeted phone calls to community groups to make sure they were aware of the effort and to invite them to participate in the process.

We heard from a broad spectrum of the population, and in all almost 300 Vallejoans contributed their energy, vision, and ideas during this process. Collaborating successfully with local community organizations, the project team also took extra steps to include students at Vallejo High School and residents of South Vallejo in the conversation and to make sure they had a voice in the process.

Community Workshops

Four community workshops were held at different locations around Vallejo in the month of March: Glen Cove Elementary School (March 5), Elks Lodge (March 12), Loma Vista Elementary School (March 15), and Florence Douglas Senior Center (March 19). The format of all four community workshops was the same. The events all started with an ice breaker activity to get people thinking about what they value and what they wish for in Vallejo. Next, the consultant team made a brief presentation on the project, the schedule and the process. Then, participants broke into small groups for a focused discussion and worked collaboratively to create guiding principle statements. The event ended with feedback to the full group to share ideas discussed by the small groups.

Online Forum

From March 7 through April 14, an online forum on Open City Hall was held to reach out to Vallejoans who may not have been able to attend the community workshops in person and to provide them with another avenue with which to communicate. Draft Guiding Principle statements generated from community input at the workshops were posted in the online forum, and participants prioritized the statements in order of importance to them. This provided important feedback about which statements resonated most with the community. Online forum participants also had the option to submit new ideas, and this input is also reflected in the Draft Guiding Principles, together with the priority lists from the workshops.

Outreach Toolkits

An outreach toolkit was developed to supplement the community workshops and online forum with targeted outreach to segments of the community that did not participate via other methods. The toolkit contained a simple-to-use survey tool for use in small groups as a self-guided exercise. Users completed an activity that mimicked the breakout activity from the workshops and the online forum and had the opportunity to interact with ideas generated by others in the community.

In collaboration with Vallejo Together, City staff hosted a toolkit outreach event at the Carquinez Highlands Clubhouse on March 26 to hear from South Vallejo residents. Other community groups who used the toolkit were: Vallejo Heights Neighborhood Association, Vallejo High School Architecture, Construction and Engineering (ACE) program, Fighting Back Partnership, Vallejo Together, and residents of Copper Way in North Vallejo.

Processing Community Input

Input generated by the community was categorized according to common themes in order to develop the Draft Guiding Principles. The process involved four distinct steps, described below.

Step 1 - Community input from the first workshop in Glen Cove on March 5 was grouped according to key concepts and summarized in 22 preliminary Guiding Principle statements. These 22 Preliminary Statements were posted in the online forum on March 7, where other Vallejoans reviewed them and provided further input as described above.

Step 2 - Following workshops 2 and 3, additional community input generated at these workshops was reviewed and compared with the 22 statements. Many common themes were identified and new ideas not raised previously were incorporated into the preliminary statements. This resulted in edits to the 22 preliminary statements, as well as the addition of three new statements, bringing the total to 25.

Step 3 - After the close of the online forum on April 14 and the receipt of outreach toolkits, the remainder of the community input was processed in the same way. Again, many of the same common themes emerged; however, four more preliminary statements were added to the list, bringing the total to 29.

Step 4 - By this stage, key themes important to the community had clearly emerged. The 29 preliminary statements were grouped under the following four categories, and similar statements were combined so that there are a similar number of Principles under each theme and a clear vision is conveyed:

- **Community and People**
- **Nature and the Built Environment**
- **Economy, Education, and Training**
- **Mobility, Transportation, and Connectivity**

The aforementioned themes will likely translate into the elements of the General Plan.

The resulting 17 Draft Guiding Principles were reviewed by the GWPG on April 28 2014, resulting in the 19 Draft Guiding Principles for review and consideration by the City Council.

General Plan Working Group (GPWG) Input and Guidance

The General Plan Working Group (GPWG) consists of 15 members, with 7 appointed by the City Council, 3 members of the Planning Commission, and one appointee each from the Architectural Heritage and Landmarks Commission, Design Review Board, Economic Vitality Commission, Housing and Redevelopment Commission, and the Beautification Advisory and Code Enforcement Commission. The GPWG was created to provide feedback and direction to Planning Division staff and project consultants; make recommendations to the City Council; and to communicate information about the General Plan update to Vallejo residents.

The GPWG met three times, on January 13, February 24, and April 28, to review and consider the public outreach approach and community input on Guiding Principles. At the April 28 meeting, 17 draft Guiding Principles from the community outreach effort were presented to the GWPG for review and consideration. After additional public input and GPWG deliberation, the GPWG voted to recommend 19 Draft Guiding Principles for consideration by the City Council.

The energy and vision of the community was evident in the content generated as part of this outreach effort, and the content reflects the spirit of the community. The Guiding Principles are intended as broad, overarching statements and not to the level of detail or specificity as General Plan goals, policies or actions. Each of the Guiding Principles should be seen as an umbrella that covers a range of more detailed concepts and ideas that are linked by a common theme. More specific ideas suggested by community members and GPWG members are not being lost; rather, at this stage they are being captured and expressed under the common themes presented in the Guiding Principles. For example, community members suggested many very specific ideas for improving City processes and streamlining permitting procedures. The spirit of these ideas is captured under Draft Guiding Principle #5, Collaborative Civic Engagement, which encapsulates the concepts of taking constructive actions; strengthening partnerships between residents, businesses, and City government; proactively addressing challenges; and drawing on lessons learned.

Next Steps

In the next year, the consultant team will use the Guiding Principles to direct their work developing policies for the General Plan and Sonoma Boulevard Specific Plan. These specific and detailed suggestions from the community and the GPWG will also be revisited and reviewed as part of a “policy audit”, which is a first-step detailed review of all City plans and regulations conducted to identify areas of the General Plan to retain as well as any gaps that might need to be filled (for example to comply with new legislation). This first-step audit, in combination with community input from the workshops, community generated documents (such as the Fixer Mixer Report), and industry best practices, will be used to develop a full set of draft goals, policies, and actions. These will be vetted by the GPWG, reviewed by the public at large, and then presented to City Council for adoption as part of the process of updating the General Plan.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with adoption of the Guiding Principles. At the point that specific goals, policies and actions are developed, additional consideration of potential fiscal impacts will be included in the analysis.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15378.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution to Adopt the Guiding Principles
 - Exhibit A: Draft General Plan Guiding Principles
2. NOT ATTACHED - Guiding Principles Community Outreach Report – Executive Summary and Full Report (Full Report includes all community comments; over 500 pages in length) **can be downloaded here:** <http://propelvallejo.com/general-plan-update/working-group/>

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CITY OF VALLEJO CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. 14-_____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPTING GUIDING PRINCIPLES

BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Vallejo as follows,

WHEREAS, the City of Vallejo is undergoing an effort to comprehensively update the Vallejo General Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City of Vallejo created a General Plan Working Group (GPWG), consisting of fifteen (15) members, to advise staff and to develop and provide recommendations to the City Council on the comprehensive update of the General Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City of Vallejo is undertaking the first component of the Vallejo General Plan update, the creation of Guiding Principles that form the foundation for the General Plan’s goals, policies, and actions; and

WHEREAS, the Vallejo community at-large had an opportunity, through four community workshops, an online forum, and other outreach efforts, to formulate Guiding Principles for consideration by the GPWG; and

WHEREAS, the GPWG, based on community input, finalized and recommended a set of nineteen Guiding Principles for consideration by City Council; and

WHEREAS, the City Council, on July 8, 2014 in the City Council Chambers of City Hall, 555 Santa Clara Street, held a duly noticed public meeting to consider the Guiding Principles as recommended by the GPWG; and

WHEREAS, all interested persons filed written comments with the City Clerk at or before the hearing, all persons desiring to be heard were given an opportunity to be heard in this matter, and all such verbal and written testimony was considered by the City Council; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council hereby approves the Guiding Principles for the update of the Vallejo General Plan provided herein as Exhibit A to the Resolution.

ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Vallejo, State of California, at a regular meeting on the 8th day of July, 2014, by the following vote to-wit:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

OBSY DAVIS, MAYOR

Attest:

DAWN G. ABRAHAMSON, CITY CLERK

Draft Guiding Principles Propel Vallejo

General Plan Project

For City Council Review
July 8, 2014





Community and People

1. Pride in Identity

Vallejo takes pride in its identity, natural setting, and history. Its residents, businesses, and government value the City's maritime heritage, cultural diversity, neighborhoods, and thriving arts community - and their links to the region and the world.

2. Strong Community Bonds

Vallejo builds strong community bonds at the neighborhood level, with activities and recreational opportunities for youth, local festivals, and a strong culture of volunteering, positive role models, and leadership programs.

3. Safe City

Vallejo is a safe place for everyone. Residents and businesses in every neighborhood collaborate with each other and with responsive law enforcement to promote personal safety.

4. Caring and Equitable Community

Vallejo treats everyone with compassion, dignity, and fairness and supports stable, diverse neighborhoods. It is a caring community where everyone has access to services, jobs and housing and shares in the vitality and prosperity of the community.

5. Collaborative Civic Engagement

Vallejo identifies its challenges and takes constructive actions to address them. It is a place with strong, collaborative partnerships between government, residents, and local businesses and where challenges are addressed proactively, drawing on lessons learned from their own experience and from other communities.

6. Active, Participatory Community

Vallejo supports and depends on active community participation. Vallejo provides timely and understandable information on planning issues and projects, and community members participate directly in shaping plans and policies for the city's future.

7. Healthy Community

Vallejo promotes the health of its residents and recognizes the value of a proactive, preventative approach to health. All Vallejo neighborhoods have easy access to healthy food, including organic food and locally grown food from school and community gardens.

Nature and the Built Environment

8. Beautiful City

Vallejo values and showcases the City's beauty, historic character, compatible architecture, abundant trees, and local ecology. Gateways into the community make positive, welcoming impressions, and Vallejo's pride is displayed on every block in the way people care for their homes, gardens, businesses, and neighborhoods.

9. A Place People Want To Be

Vallejo's vibrant downtown, attractive waterfront and open spaces, livable neighborhoods, and varied destinations draw people from the Bay Area and beyond. Vallejo is a place where people of all ages want to be, day and night -- to live, work, shop, and recreate.

10. Iconic Waterfront

Vallejo treasures its waterfront as a centerpiece of the community, with a promenade, multi-use trails, natural open space, and access to water activities. It is a place for community gathering, exercising, socializing, shopping, dining out and having fun.

11. Environmental Stewardship

Vallejo pursues and promotes environmental education; protects and manages its watersheds, wetlands, and wildlife habitats; and embraces businesses and industries that are sensitive to the environment. It is a community where environmental stewardship is an asset that attracts people and businesses.

12. Sense of Place

Vallejo values its special character and unique sense of place in its dramatic waterfront setting, varied topography, city-wide views, historic districts, maritime heritage, and favorable weather.

Economy, Education, and Training

13. Good Jobs, Education and Training

Vallejo provides people with good jobs and its young people with job training and the education they need to succeed. Vallejo embraces innovations in education, and the city's excellent educational institutions and trade schools play a prominent role in its economic vitality and community life.

14. Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Successful Local Businesses

Vallejo welcomes innovative businesses and fosters entrepreneurship. It is a community that capitalizes on new technologies, community assets, and local knowledge - while helping local businesses to succeed.

15. Economic Development Aligned with Natural Environment

Vallejo values economic development and aligns well-designed projects with the protection and enhancement of environmental resources. It is a community where sustainable development is efficiently processed and provides broad benefits that serve community needs and enhance the quality of life.

16. Stable, Strong and Diverse Economy

Vallejo is characterized by fiscal stability; a strong, diverse economy, including health care, education, and manufacturing; and efficient use of its lands and waterways. Vallejo's unique setting, community character, and favorable weather are major resources for economic expansion, including tourism and entertainment.

Mobility, Transportation, and Connectivity

17. Regional Transportation Hub

Vallejo provides excellent and affordable connections to the surrounding region for people and goods. It is a regional transportation hub – by rail, road, ferry, transit, bicycle, and on foot.

18. River and Bay City

Vallejo's waterways provide transportation and recreational opportunities and are recognized for their important role in the broader ecosystem.

19. Interconnected, Mobile Community

Vallejo is an interconnected, cohesive community from east to west and north to south, where traveling by foot, bicycle or transit is efficient, easy, safe, and fun. Vallejo offers a range of convenient, affordable, and eco-efficient mobility options for residents and visitors.