



Planning Commission Staff Report

Date: April 27, 2005
Item 6.a.

SUBJECT: General Plan Update – Draft Vision and Principles

PURPOSE: Discuss and reach general agreement on a Draft Vision and Principles for public review

I. BACKGROUND

On March 1, 2005, the City Council directed that the updated General Plan include a Vision statement. Defining a Vision and Principles provides an opportunity for the community to define the desired end result and the “big ideas” that will guide the update process. It also allows the community to reach general agreement on core values and overarching goals prior to discussion of specific goals, policies and programs or map alternatives. On April 7, 2005, the Planning Commission reviewed a draft Vision and Principles statement and provided input to staff as to how it should be amended. A revised Vision and Principles statement for Planning Commission consideration is attached (Attachments 1 and 2).

II. REVISED DRAFT VISION AND PRINCIPLES

On April 7, 2005, Planning Commissioners’ comments focused on several aspects of the Preliminary Draft Vision and Principles. These included:

- A comparison of the Vision statement to a business Mission statement that is usually short and easily committed to memory and the comment that the Vision is lengthy and contains “something for everyone.”
- A preference expressed by some Commissioners to see the vision as a narrative rather than in bullet form.
- Specific comments regarding the ideas expressed in the Vision and Principles.

Staff has incorporated Planning Commissioners’ comments as strikeout (deletions) and underline (additions) in Attachment 1 of this report. In response to Planning Commissioners’ comments, staff has also provided a reformatted version of the Vision statement in a narrative format rather than bullet points (see Attachment 2).

In regard to the comparison between a Vision statement and a Mission statement, staff has provided some additional information which may be useful in terms of defining and distinguishing the two (see Attachment 2 and Attachment 3). In summary they are distinct in purpose in that a Mission Statement is generally a very succinct statement (25 words or less) used by a business or other organization to describe the business and to inspire the people who contribute to its success. A Vision Statement, on the other hand, is a picture in words of a city at some point in the future and, therefore, contains much more detail and complexity. Furthermore, a Vision Statement is usually developed in order to build consensus for the planning process. It is a process that allows discussion of core values and helps people understand that despite differences, they share many of the same goals. The Vision Statement needs to include “something for everyone” for that to work. The advantage is that it brings more people into the planning process, and strengthens community bonds in advance of discussion of more specific and potentially divisive topics.

III. NEXT STEPS

Staff will amend the Vision and Principles as directed by the Planning Commission at the April 27, 2005 meeting, and prepare a Public Review Draft Vision and Principles. This Draft together with the following schedule for public review will be considered by the City Council at its May 3, 2005, meeting. Assuming the City Council concurs with staff’s proposed work plan, work will proceed as follows:

- Late May: Draft Vision and Principles will be published on the City’s General Plan web page, and will be included in a one-page advertisement in the Pleasanton Weekly. In addition, City staff will attend the Farmers’ Market to pass out information on the Draft Vision and Principles and details of two Town Meetings (see below).
- Early June: The Planning Commission hosts two Town Meetings where members of the public work in small groups to review and refine the Draft Vision and Principles. The meetings would conclude with presentations by spokespersons from each small group on their conclusions.
- July 2005: City Council considers the Draft Vision and Principles as recommended by the Planning Commission and amended by public input. City Council reaches agreement on Draft Working Vision and Principles to guide development of General Plan goals, policies and programs.

VI. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Provide direction to staff regarding the content and format of a Draft Vision and Principles to guide the preparation of the General Plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Amended Draft Vision and Principles – bullet point format
2. Amended Draft Vision (narrative format) and Principles
3. Excerpt from e-Business Plan: Mission Statement
4. Excerpt from Community Visioning Handbook, Maine State Planning Office
5. Using Visioning in a Comprehensive Planning Process, Anna Haines, University of Wisconsin Extension
6. Draft Planning Commission Minutes, April 7, 2005

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