



TOWN HALL MEETING #2

SUMMARY

St. Helena General Plan Update
Town Hall Meeting #1: Land Use and Infrastructure
May 19, 2010

INTRODUCTION

On May 8, 2010 a Town Hall Meeting was held to review proposed land use and infrastructure policies included in the Draft St. Helena General Plan. The meeting included a facilitated discussion and electronic polling of participants about specific water policy, housing and proposed land use designation changes. Following is a summary of the discussion and electronic polling results.

Mayor Del Britton opened the Town Hall Meeting shortly after 9:30 am, welcoming participants to review preliminary proposals for the Land Use and Infrastructure Elements of the Draft General Plan. Daniel Iacofano of MIG, Inc. made a presentation of the planning issues for consideration and moderated the discussion.

PRESENTATION

The presentation began with an overview of the General Plan process and description of policies and measures in place that provide the planning context for the policies and actions included in the Draft General Plan (e.g. the current General Plan, the City's Growth Management System and Urban Limit Line, Napa County Measure J, State housing and greenhouse gas emissions reduction mandates). It also presented information about the City's water resources and residents' comparatively high water usage rates, as well as St. Helena's higher than average greenhouse gas emissions.

The presentation included a discussion of specific aspects of the community development framework. In particular, appropriate water conservation measures, strategies to address the City's state-mandated Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), and proposed land use change areas.

A significant portion of the presentation and discussion centered on strategies to meet the City's RHNA target. Town Hall Meeting participants considered a number of potential housing strategies and discussed which present preferred policy directions for St. Helena. Key strategies considered include:

- Expand the Urban Limit Line to accommodate potential future housing needs;
- Accommodate potential housing needs on existing parcels zoned for residential uses within the Urban Limit Line (i.e. infill);
- Allow housing to be mixed with commercial at vacant or underutilized locations Downtown; and
- Accommodate potential housing units on existing residential lots (i.e. granny flats).

In addition, the presentation included a facilitated discussion about proposed land use change areas, and the addition of a new Mixed-Use zoning designation. Key land use change areas addressed include:

- Adams Street and Library Lane
- Main Street, Spring Street and Oak Avenue
- Mitchell Drive and Oak Avenue – northwest
- Mitchell Drive and Oak Avenue – southeast
- Main Street and Charter Oak Avenue
- Main Street and Vidovich Lane
- Grayson Avenue

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION AND ELECTRONIC POLLING

The community discussion and electronic polling consisted of four parts: **(1) Participant Profile** with polling questions about meeting participants' demographic information; **(2) Planning for St. Helena's Water Needs** with questions and discussion related to conservation measures appropriate to St. Helena; **(3) Planning for Future Housing Needs** with a specific focus on preferred strategies; and **(4) Proposed Land Use Change Areas** with a discussion of key changes included in the Draft General Plan Update.

Participant Profile

Prior to discussion of specific land use and infrastructure issues, meeting participants were asked to respond with electronic voting keypads to a series of demographic questions. The results of the demographic poll provide a detailed profile of the meeting's participants. Following are the results of the participant profile.

1. Gender:

- | | |
|-----------|-----|
| a. Male | 48% |
| b. Female | 52% |

2. Did you attend the first Town Hall Meeting?

- | | |
|--------|-----|
| a. Yes | 51% |
| b. No | 49% |

3. Team Preference:

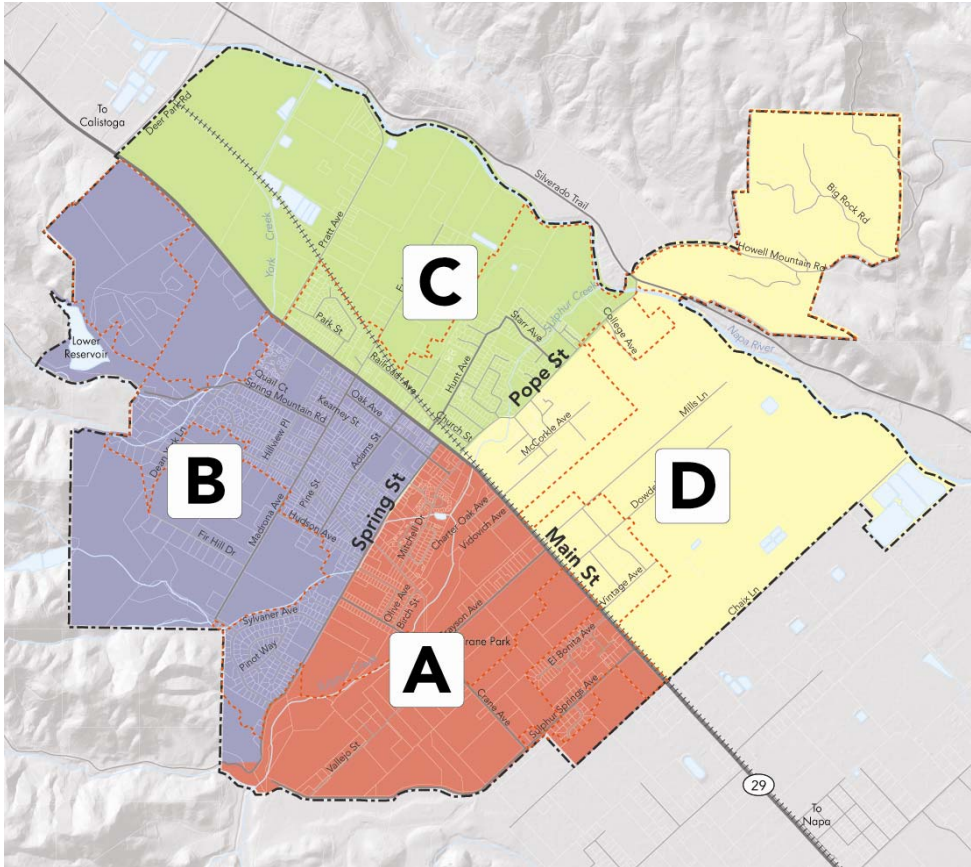
- | | |
|------------------------|-----|
| a. Los Angeles Lakers | 26% |
| b. Cleveland Cavaliers | 13% |
| c. Both Teams | 2% |
| d. Neither Team | 29% |
| e. Don't Know | 29% |

4. Primary Residence:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| a. In St. Helena | 91% |
| b. Outside St. Helena | 9% |

5. Geographic Location:

- a. Area A 16%
- b. Area B 34%
- c. Area C 32%
- d. Area D 18%



6. Age Category:

- a. Under 18 2%
- b. 18 – 24 1%
- c. 25 – 34 4%
- d. 35 – 44 9%
- e. 45 – 54 16%
- f. 55 – 64 22%
- g. 65 and Over 46%

7. Children (ages 0 – 17 years) living at home:

- a. 0 75%
- b. 1 15%
- c. 2 5%
- d. 3 or more 5%

8. Years living in St. Helena:

- | | |
|---------------|-----|
| a. 0 – 4 | 8% |
| b. 5 – 9 | 10% |
| c. 10 – 14 | 24% |
| d. 15 or more | 57% |

9. Home Status:

- | | |
|-----------|-----|
| a. Owner | 84% |
| b. Renter | 16% |

Planning for St. Helena’s Water Needs

Meeting participants were polled about how to plan for St. Helena’s future water needs and appropriate water conservation measures. Following is a summary of polling results.

10. Residential water demand has decreased in the last two years.

- | | |
|----------|-----|
| a. True | 36% |
| b. False | 64% |

In recent years, St. Helena residents have employed a number of measures to conserve water. The biggest decrease in demand is due to a reduction in water used for landscaping.

11. Relative to other communities in Napa County, residential water use is:

- | | |
|------------------|-----|
| a. Average | 26% |
| b. Above Average | 55% |
| c. Below Average | 19% |

The City estimates that each St. Helena resident uses 150 gallons of water per person, per day. By comparison, Calistoga residents average 67 gallons/person/day and Yountville residents average 116 gallons/person/day.

12. Agricultural uses and wineries account for the majority of City water use.

- | | |
|----------|-----|
| a. True | 30% |
| b. False | 70% |

Residential use accounts for about 55% of total water use. Wineries account for approximately 14% of total usage. Most agricultural uses and wineries get water from other sources, such as well.

13. What conservation measure is most appropriate for St. Helena residents?

- | | |
|---|-----|
| a. Require drought tolerant landscaping | 8% |
| b. Alternate days for landscape watering | 20% |
| c. Encourage on-site rainwater catchment | 8% |
| d. Upgrade to water conserving appliances | 9% |
| e. All of the above | 55% |

14. What conservation measure is not appropriate for St. Helena residents?

- | | |
|---|-----|
| a. Require drought tolerant landscaping | 28% |
| b. Alternate days for landscape watering | 12% |
| c. Encourage on-site rainwater catchment | 32% |
| d. Upgrade to water conserving appliances | 7% |
| e. None of the measures are appropriate | 22% |

During the course of discussion, a number of questions arose about the information presented, indicating a desire for more information or a distrust of the validity of the data. For example, the following questions and comments arose:

- Is ground water use tracked, which might change the consumption profile?
- Why does St. Helena have above average water use?
- Will the state force us to provide more housing even if our water supply is not adequate? We need an accurate consumption report from the Water Committee.
- Should infrastructure concerns take priority over housing? We need to know if the data is really correct.
- Water use varies by property type, for example condominiums will use less, so the statistics should account for that.

Other comments addressed potential remedies to water issues, and linked water availability to housing:

- We should limit new housing to reduce water consumption.
- The best way to limit consumption is to institute a progressive rate scale, so that each increment of higher water use would result in progressively higher rates.
- Bell Canyon Reservoir capacity could be increased, even though it would be expensive.
- Bell Canyon capacity increase is not likely, so we need to balance transportation and housing.
- We need to realize that our water infrastructure will not control housing policy.

Planning for Future Housing Needs

The next part of the discussion addressed the State’s housing requirements and the City’s planning to accommodate projected future housing needs. **This part of the meeting included two rounds of polling, with a period of discussion in between. The results of the two rounds of polling and community comments are summarized below.**

The following statements are housing strategies that meeting participants were asked to consider as future policy directions for the City.

15. Expand the Urban Limit Line to accommodate potential future housing needs.

a. Yes	28%
b. Yes, with qualifications	12%
c. No	32%
d. Don’t Know	7%

16/19. Accommodate potential housing needs on existing parcels zoned for residential uses within the Urban Limit Line (i.e. infill).

	1 st Round	2 nd Round
a. Yes	42%	30%
b. Yes, with qualifications	34%	54%
c. No	21%	16%
d. Don’t Know	4%	1%

17/20. Allow housing to be mixed with commercial uses at vacant or underutilized locations Downtown.

	1 st Round	2 nd Round
a. Yes	51%	44%
b. Yes, with qualifications	33%	50%
c. No	14%	6%
d. Don’t Know	2%	1%

18/21. Accommodate potential housing units on existing residential lots (i.e. granny flats).

	1 st Round	2 nd Round
a. Yes	36%	14%
b. Yes, with qualifications	44%	66%
c. No	17%	21%
d. Don’t Know	2%	0%

22. Choose two of the following that best represent your preferred housing directions for St. Helena. (percentages represent combined totals)

- | | |
|--|-----|
| a. Expand the Urban Limit Line to accommodate potential future housing needs. | 6% |
| b. Accommodate potential housing needs on existing parcels zoned for residential uses within the Urban Limit Line (i.e. infill). | 31% |
| c. Allow housing to be mixed with commercial uses at vacant or underutilized locations Downtown. | 43% |
| d. Accommodate potential housing units on existing residential lots (i.e. granny flats). | 19% |

23. Choose the strategy that you least prefer as a housing direction for St. Helena.

- | | |
|--|-----|
| a. Expand the Urban Limit Line to accommodate potential future housing needs. | 64% |
| b. Accommodate potential housing needs on existing parcels zoned for residential uses within the Urban Limit Line (i.e. infill). | 15% |
| c. Allow housing to be mixed with commercial uses at vacant or underutilized locations Downtown. | 3% |
| d. Accommodate potential housing units on existing residential lots (i.e. granny flats). | 18% |

24. For the current housing cycle, which strategy do you think St. Helena should pursue?

- | | |
|---|-----|
| a. Multiple sites of 25 units or less per site | 56% |
| b. Four to five sites of 25 to 50 units per site | 8% |
| c. One to three sites of 50 to 100 units per site | 8% |
| d. A combination of A and B | 13% |
| e. A combination of A, B and C | 16% |

Many community members commented about the impacts of higher density housing, that it is a complex issue, and that the qualifications that would be necessary to allow additional housing need to be carefully evaluated. Comments included:

- Parking is a big issue with multi-unit buildings, and the impacts need to be considered.
- If granny flats are allowed, they should be restricted to housing rental so they contribute to solving the housing need.
- Taller units and the resultant infringement on privacy of adjacent single family homes is one of the "qualification" issues that must be addressed for infill housing.

- Infill building heights, privacy, and parking all need to be considered. There is no rubber stamp for infill housing.
- An apartment complex of 10 units is different than a granny flat, and the impacts need to be considered. One might be acceptable, the other not.
- There are six infill houses on Allison which is a fire hazard and impacts the neighborhood.

Another area of discussion was the methodology used to determine housing need. Many community members seemed to be wary of pressure from outside agencies determining St. Helena's needs:

- We need to know the facts of what housing is really needed.
- How does the RHNA number compare to our real need? We need to provide for people who work here.
- The RHNA number is provided by people from out-of-town. This number is not sensitive to local opinion. What is the local demand?
- St. Helena is already diverse; we need to know who really wants to live and work here.

Other comments reflected mixed attitudes about the issues:

- Our schools are about 50% Hispanic and many of the families are workers in the community, clearly demonstrating a need for more affordable housing.
- What is the definition of affordable? We won't be able to build affordable housing unless we sell land at a lower price and the City finds a way to help.
- We need to find the best way to plan St. Helena, not limit who can live here, and we need to give City Council tools to increase diversity.

One person spoke passionately on behalf of Hispanic workers, asking everyone to think of the future of all the children, stating that "we are diligent workers in the field and in the home, and we want to be able to live here and buy a house". He also pointed out that the Saturday morning meeting times conflicted with work schedules, and asked that the time of meetings be changed so all residents, including field workers, could participate in the planning discussion. Another meeting participant commented that working people would like the opportunity to purchase homes locally.

Many people were not sure what the categories of low/medium/high density really meant in terms of physical development. Regarding the preferred size of housing developments, most preferred smaller dispersed development:

- Smaller sites with a small number of units per site are better. Housing needs to be more dispersed.

- Large complexes are more urban and have greater impacts, and do not fit St. Helena.

Finally, two comments again linked housing and water supply, and questioned the validity of the water usage data:

- Water is a major factor affecting housing. What is the source of the data?
- The water use numbers are wrong.

Proposed Land Use Change Areas

Following the second round of polling about housing strategies, the meeting continued with a discussion of seven proposed land use change areas. Each change area was identified by location and proposed zoning designation change. Following is a summary of participants' polling results and comments about the proposed land use change areas.

Proposed Change Area 1: Adams Street and Library Lane

A mix of public/quasi-public, residential and mixed uses are proposed for the site, with a modification of the Urban Limit Line to orient development along Adams Street.

25. Do you agree with this proposed land use change?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| a. Yes | 41% |
| b. Yes, with qualifications | 35% |
| c. No | 21% |
| d. Don't Know | 3% |

Opinions about the proposed change were mixed. Some felt that mixed-use development on Adams St. east of the library was a positive contribution to activity in town, and should extend even further when Adams St. is connected to the Silverado Trail. In contrast, another person made the point that the existing Urban Limit Line bisects the property in question and the proposed Mixed Use designation is outside the Line, stating the opinion that there should be no high density development east of the Urban Limit Line, and in fact, the line should be pulled back.

Some participants were concerned that they did not have enough information to respond adequately to the question, charging that the questions were oriented towards getting approval for development. One person stated that "We don't know what we are voting on; what is the impact of the change?" Participants were also concerned that the phrase "with qualifications" was vague, possibly allowing undesirable development without adequate controls, pointing out that

qualifications might be adequate in one case, but not in another, and that it depended on the details of the development. Other comments include:

- A density of 14-16 people per acre is needed to support transit, and the housing needs to be within 1/4 mile of a bus stop to make it work.
- Housing is needed for seniors, and especially for single senior women, therefore the emphasis should be on smaller units.

Proposed Change Area 2: Main Street, Spring Street and Oak Avenue
Mixed-Use is proposed for this area to allow a mix of commercial, office and residential uses in the Downtown area.

26. Do you agree with this proposed land use change?

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|-----|
| a. | Yes | 31% |
| b. | Yes, with qualifications | 27% |
| c. | No | 29% |
| d. | Don't Know | 13% |

A single comment followed the vote, making the point that Mixed Use should be allowed, but not required.

Proposed Change Area 3: Mitchell Drive and Oak Avenue – northwest
Higher Density Residential is proposed for this area to allow for higher density development within walking distance to downtown.

27. Do you agree with this proposed land use change?

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|-----|
| a. | Yes | 26% |
| b. | Yes, with qualifications | 20% |
| c. | No | 32% |
| d. | Don't Know | 22% |

- How does this relate to preference for 25units/___?
- What is the definition of high density?
- What is acreage?
- Does the Oak extension prohibit project? No, it helps.

Proposed Change Area 4: Mitchell Drive and Oak Street – southeast side
Mixed-Use is proposed for this area to allow a mix of commercial, office and residential uses in the Downtown area.

28. Do you agree with this proposed land use change?

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|-----|
| a. | Yes | 43% |
| b. | Yes, with qualifications | 36% |
| c. | No | 15% |
| d. | Don't Know | 6% |

No comments were received following the vote.

Proposed Change Area 5: Main Street and Charter Oak Avenue

Mixed-Use and Parks and Recreation designations are proposed for this area to allow a mix of residential and commercial along Main Street and open space along Sulphur Creek.

29. Do you agree with this proposed land use change?

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|-----|
| a. | Yes | 42% |
| b. | Yes, with qualifications | 33% |
| c. | No | 21% |
| d. | Don't Know | 3% |

- The river floods at this location.
- Mixed use is OK – too much land taken for park (owner).

Proposed Change Area 6: Main Street and Vidovich Avenue

Mixed-Use is proposed for this area to allow a mix of commercial, office and residential uses. Also, community and GPUSC input have indicated a desire for locating a hotel on this site.

30. Do you agree with this proposed land use change?

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|-----|
| a. | Yes | 52% |
| b. | Yes, with qualifications | 31% |
| c. | No | 12% |
| d. | Don't Know | 5% |

No comments were received following the vote.

Proposed Change Area 7: Grayson Avenue

Medium Density Residential is proposed on these parcels to allow more flexibility in density for this area.

31. Do you agree with this proposed land use change?

a.	Yes	49%
b.	Yes, with qualifications	34%
c.	No	15%
d.	Don't Know	3%

- There is a lot of traffic here and schools. It is not a wise idea.
- This is a useless exercise – there are homes here. Why is this proposed?
- Homes should not be built in the flood plain.

General Dissatisfaction with the Town Hall Meeting

- The questions are not on target, too much talk.
- Need a more diverse group.