

| COUNCIL POLICY  |                  |                   |                    |
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| Subject:<br>SANTA ROSA GENERAL PLAN<br>CONSISTENCY AND AMENDMENT POLICY | Policy<br>Number | Effective<br>Date | Number<br>of Pages |
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## GENERAL PROVISIONS

### BACKGROUND

The General Plan of the City of Santa Rosa outlines the Policies for the growth and development of the City. In administering the General Plan on a day-to-day and year-to-year basis, the Planning Commission and staff shall follow the policies and procedures listed below in implementing the policies contained within the General Plan.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of these policies is to establish procedures which will guide the staff, the Planning Commission and the City Council in exercising their discretion in a way which will assure that the goals and policies as set forth in the General Plan are furthered.

The adopted General Plan is the expression of the long-range policies for the development of Santa Rosa and its Planning Area. It is a statement of intent regarding the development needed to achieve the social, economic and environmental goals and objectives Santa Rosa has chosen for itself. All of the elements making up the adopted General Plan are to varying degrees related and interdependent.

The General Plan is a compendium of policies in the following areas:

- Land Use and Livability Element, including the Land Use Diagram
- Urban Design Element
- Housing Element
- Transportation Element
- Open Space and Conservation Element
- Noise and Safety Element
- Public Services and Facilities Element
- Growth Management Element
- Historic Preservation Element
- Economic Vitality Element
- Youth and Family Element
- Art and Culture Element"

## GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY POLICY

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General Plan Consistency

All proposed private projects for development within the City of Santa Rosa shall be consistent with the adopted City of Santa Rosa General Plan. All public agency projects shall also be reviewed for consistency with the adopted City of Santa Rosa General Plan.

Consistency shall be determined by taking into account the location of the proposed project with respect to the General Plan Land Use Diagram and all the policies contained within the General Plan.

General Plan Consistency Determination

It is the policy of the City that before taking or recommending final affirmative action on any project, the approving official shall determine that the project is consistent with the adopted Santa Rosa General Plan.

Examples of the body or official making such determinations in typical situations are as follows:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Land Divisions  | Subdivisions committee or the Planning Commission,<br>whichever grants final subdivision approval. |
| Private Projects (Conditional Use Permits, Variances, etc.) | The Community Development Director or Planning Commission, whichever grants final approval.        |
| Annexations, Zoning Actions, and General Plan Amendments    | The Planning Commission, in its advisory capacity, and the City Council, in taking final action.   |
| Projects of the City of Santa Rosa                          | The City Council   |

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY AND INTERPRETATION PROCEDURE

The function of the General Plan Land Use Element is to designate the proposed general

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distribution, location, and extent of the various uses of land contained within the Urban Boundary. The distribution, location and extent of land uses are illustrated on a fold-out map titled “General Plan Land Use Diagram”. The Land Use Diagram is not parcel specific.

In order to protect the integrity of the General Plan document, it is vitally important that General Plan land use interpretations follow a reasoning process which can be applied consistently in every instance. The following approach should be taken as a preface to making a General Plan consistency finding:

1. Determine what land use the Plan indicates, and thus, what direction the plan is proposing in the long term.
2. Review the project to determine if it furthers the goals of the General Plan.
3. If the project furthers the goals of the Plan and is consistent with the General Plan Land Use Diagram, then consistency can be found.
4. If the project does not appear to forward General Plan goals and is clearly inconsistent with the Diagram, it cannot be found consistent with the General Plan.

In most cases it is reasonably simple to ascertain the General Plan Land Use designation. However, when the proposed project’s designation is unclear due to the fact that more than one land use designation is in the immediate project area, then a General Plan consistency interpretation is required. Such flexibility in determining project’s consistency with the General Plan is only applicable when a project site appears to have more than one land use designation or is located at the boundary between two different land uses.”

Findings for Consistency Determination

In rendering a determination of a project’s consistency with the General Plan, the following findings shall be made by the staff, Planning Commission, and/or the City Council:

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1. That the proposed project is consistent with the General Plan, based upon the land use designation shown on the Land Use Diagram and the following policies contained within the Santa Rosa General Plan. (Briefly relate intent of policies).
2. That adequate City services can be provided for the proposed project.

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT POLICY

The City Council, Planning Commission, and/or staff, in reviewing the General Plan, may find that certain portions should be changed due to circumstances which arise within the community or that certain portions are in conflict which conflict was not recognized at the time of the adoption of the General Plan or any elements thereof or amendments thereto.

There may arise a need for amendment to the General Plan caused by changing policies of the Commission and/or City Council, or based upon periodic review of the Plan on the issue of whether it continues to meet the needs of the changing community.

The citizens of Santa Rosa and/or project applicants may find that certain portions of the Plan are inadequate or do not meet the needs of the citizenry of Santa Rosa.

When it is found that a change is necessary, the following policy and procedures shall be applicable. Amendments to the General Plan may take the form of:

- A. Change to the text of any element of the Plan, such as the goals, policies, or standards.
- B. Change to the Land Use Diagram.
- C. Adoption of specific district or neighborhood plans.

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General Plan Amendment Application

Applications for amendment to the General Plan may be filed at any time with the Department of Community Development. The Planning Commission or City Council may initiate an amendment to the General Plan at any time during the year. Concurrent processing of General Plan Amendment applications with applications for other land use entitlements IS allowed.

General Plan Amendment Procedure

Government Code Section 65358 provides that, with a stated exception, a mandatory element of the General plan shall not be amended more than four times in any calendar year. In order to implement the provisions of Section 65358, and its exception, and to provide for the orderly consideration of proposed General Plan Amendments, the following schedule is established.

A. Consideration by the Planning Commission

Hearings to formally consider proposed General Plan Amendments for the purpose of determining whether to make approval recommendations thereon to the City Council shall be conducted by the Planning Commission during the months of February, June, and October of each year. To allow City staff adequate time to analyze the request and prepare a report to the Planning Commission, applications must be submitted as follows:

| <u>Planning Commission Hearing</u> | <u>Submittal Deadline</u> |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| February                           | October 1                 |
| June                               | February 1                |
| October                            | June 1                    |

When the first day of the month falls on a weekend, the following Monday will be the final day for submittal. The provisions and limitations of this section shall not apply to an application for a General Plan Amendment requested and necessary for the type of

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development described in Government Code Section 65358(c), as the same now exists or may be amended in the future. Proposed amendments requested and necessary for the type of development described in Government Code Section 65358(c) may be heard at any time during the calendar year.

B. Consideration by the City Council

City Council hearings to consider proposed General Plan Amendments shall be scheduled, following Planning Commission consideration thereof, in the months of March, July and November. In accordance with Government Code Section 65358, the provisions and limitations of this section shall not apply to an application for General Plan Amendment requested and necessary for the type of development described in Government Code Section 65358(c) as the same now exists or may be amended in the future. A proposed amendment requested and necessary for the type of development described in Government Code Section 65358(c) may be heard by the City Council at any time during the calendar year following Planning Commission consideration of the proposal.

General Plan Amendment Application Information

The following information shall be provided by an applicant for an amendment to the General Plan.

1. A description of the specific areas of the General Plan which are requested to be changed.
2. A full statement of the reasons and justifications for such changes in the General Plan.
3. A description of any events which have taken place which have rendered portions of the General Plan inadequate or unattainable.
4. A description of any studies or policies which have brought into question the specific policies or portions of the General Plan sought to be changed.
5. A description of the effect of the General Plan upon future development of a specific area

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or the overall development of the City of Santa Rosa.

Staff Analysis-General Plan Amendment Hearing

The staff shall conduct a detailed analysis of the proposal and impacts of the proposal upon the surrounding area and/or the entire community. Environmental review shall be conducted with a recommendation for an environmental determination to be made by the Planning Commission.

At the conclusion of the General Plan Amendment hearing, the Planning Commission shall either recommend to the City Council that the proposed amendment be approved as submitted or as modified by the Commission, or the Commission shall deny the application. The City Council shall conduct a public hearing on all applications recommended for approval by the Planning Commission, following which the Council shall either approve or deny the proposed amendment.

General Plan - Annual Review

It is the policy of the City of Santa Rosa that the staff, the Planning Commission, and the city Council review the status of the General Plan and its implementation on an annual basis. To initiate this review, a joint study session of the Planning Commission and City Council will be held in March of each year.

Amended by Resolution No. 25730  
 Amended by Resolution No. 25493  
 Amended by Resolution No. 21545  
 Amended by Resolution No. 20752  
 Amended by Resolution No. 15502  
 Adopted by Resolution No. 15064

Dated: August 5, 2003  
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