

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
STAFF REPORT FOR PLANNING COMMISSION
January 22, 2026

PROJECT TITLE

First 2026 General Plan Amendment
Package

APPLICANT

City of Santa Rosa

ADDRESS/LOCATION

Various

PROPERTY OWNER

Various

ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER

Various

FILE NUMBERS

PLN25-0650

APPLICATION DATES

Not applicable

APPLICATION COMPLETION DATES

Not applicable

REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS

General Plan Amendment

Specific Plan Amendment

Zoning Map Amendment

FURTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED

Approval by City Council

PROJECT SITE ZONING

Various

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION

Various

PROJECT PLANNER

Amy Nicholson, Supervising Planner

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend approval to City Council

For Planning Commission Meeting of: January 22, 2026

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
PLANNING COMMISSION

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: AMY NICHOLSON, SUPERVISING PLANNER
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: FIRST 2026 GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT PACKAGE

AGENDA ACTION: ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS RECOMMENDING APPROVAL TO THE CITY COUNCIL

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning and Economic Development Department recommends that the Planning Commission, by three resolutions, recommend to the City Council: 1) adoption of an Addendum to the General Plan 2050 Environmental Impact Report (EIR); 2) adoption of land use diagram and text amendments to the General Plan 2050 and amendments to the land use figure within Downtown Station Area Specific Plan; 3) adoption of Zoning Map amendments to maintain consistency with the proposed General Plan land uses.

BACKGROUND

1. Project Description

Santa Rosa's General Plan 2050, adopted by the City Council on June 3, 2050, is the City's primary land use policy document. It provides the overarching framework for zoning regulations, ordinances, design guidelines, and area-specific plans, and establishes actions that guide City department work programs.

The General Plan sets forth a long-term vision for the City's physical development while enhancing quality of life. It reflects current State and federal legislation related to land use, transportation, climate resilience, and public safety, and addresses regional housing needs, economic development, placemaking, and natural resource protection. Planned transportation improvements include roadway modifications, protected bicycle lanes, and pedestrian enhancements consistent with the City's Active Transportation Plan.

The General Plan includes eight State-mandated elements, including Land Use, Circulation, Open Space, Conservation, Safety, Noise, Environmental Justice, and Housing, as well as optional elements addressing areas important to the community. The General Plan Land Use element includes a land use diagram which established allowed land uses and their intensity on each parcel within the Urban Growth Boundary.

This proposed First 2026 General Plan Amendment includes multiple amendments to the City's General Plan, consisting of:

- Revisions to the Land Use Diagram to address discrepancies between current land use designations and existing or surrounding land uses on 33 properties throughout the City, including seven parcels within the Downtown Station Area Plan boundary, which would also require corresponding amendments to the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan Land Use Figure Map LU-3.
- The addition of bicycle and pedestrian network improvement figures to the Circulation Element to reflect the City's Active Transportation Plan, adopted after the General Plan 2050.

The project also includes zoning map amendments to ensure zoning consistency with the proposed land use designations for 10 of the 33 properties.

2. Project History

The City of Santa Rosa initiated the General Plan 2050 update in March 2020. The revised General Plan and Draft EIR were released in October 2024. The Planning Commission held hearings on the Draft and Final EIR and recommended adoption of the General Plan and associated Specific Plan amendments in April 2025. On June 3, 2025, the City Council held a public hearing and unanimously voted to certify the Final EIR (RES-2025-090), adopt the General Plan 2050 and approve the Specific Plan amendments (RES-2025-091).

Following adoption of General Plan 2050, staff identified that previously proposed land use modifications for the two parcels west of the SMART rail along Sebastopol Avenue (80 & 100 Sebastopol Avenue) were inadvertently omitted. The proposed change was intended to add the Retail and Business Services designation in combination with the existing Medium Density Residential land use.

On July 8, 2025, the City Council adopted the City's Active Transportation Plan (ATP), which establishes a long-term vision for improving walking, bicycling, and rolling citywide, with a focus on creating an active transportation network for users of all ages and abilities. The ATP includes recommended bicycle and pedestrian network improvements proposed for inclusion as reference figures within the Circulation Element of General Plan 2050.

The General Plan 2050 assigns land use designations to all parcels within the City's Urban Growth Boundary. As part of implementation of the General Plan, Planning staff identified approximately 2,093 parcels where existing zoning was inconsistent with adopted land use designations and initiated zoning map amendments to achieve consistency. As part of this effort, property owners subject to proposed rezoning received mailed notification.

During outreach and at the Planning Commission public hearing on September 25, 2025, Planning staff received concerns from residents in the Memorial Hospital neighborhood, particularly along the south side of Parker Drive between Doyle Park Avenue and Alderbrook Drive. Residents expressed concern that the proposed rezoning to Office Commercial to implement the pre-2050 General Plan Office designation would render existing residential uses nonconforming and alter neighborhood character. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Planning Commission directed staff to exclude these parcels from the rezoning effort and initiate a General Plan amendment to redesignate the properties as Low Density Residential.

Following the Planning Commission meeting, additional concerns were raised by property owners on Giffen Avenue and at the Mountain Hawk Shopping Center regarding inconsistencies between existing uses, zoning, and General Plan land use designations. Separately, the property owner of 1266 Janet Drive contacted staff regarding development potential for the parcel. Staff determined that the parcel lacked a General Plan land use designation and that designation as Medium Density Residential, with corresponding zoning consistent with the adjacent property, would allow for development compatible with the surrounding area.

In addition, staff identified seven parcels along Maxwell Drive within the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan area that were designated as Neighborhood Mixed Use when the Specific Plan was adopted in October 2020. Upon further evaluation, staff determined that redesignation to Maker Mixed Use would better align with surrounding land uses and support long-term compatibility and development opportunities in the area.

ANALYSIS

1. General Plan and Downtown Station Area Specific Plan Land Use Amendments

The General Plan 2050 land use diagram establishes land uses for every parcel within the City's Urban Growth Boundary. The comprehensive update to the City's General Plan (General Plan 2050) resulted in land use changes to a total of 14 properties.

In Fall 2025, Planning staff brought forward a General Plan Implementation Package to the Planning Commission and City Council. As part of that project, staff performed an analysis to review the consistency between Zoning and General Plan land use Citywide. As part of this effort, a total of 2,119 parcels within the City were proposed to be rezoned to

implement the existing General Plan land use designation to reduce confusion for property owners, and bring the City into compliance with State law.

The engagement for the General Plan Implementation item included direct mailed notices for properties proposed to be rezoned for General Plan consistency. Through this process, numerous property owners raised concerns about the proposed rezoning creating non-conforming issues given the existing development.

The result of the public process, and additional staff analysis of land use in targeted areas throughout the City has resulted in the recommendation to change the General Plan land use of 33 properties, indicated in the table below.

These proposed amendments would modify the General Plan Land Use Diagram, and for the seven properties on Maxwell Drive and W. College Avenue, the Downtown Land Use Map (Map LU-3) in the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan would also be amended.

Assessor's Parcel Number (APN)	Address	Existing Land Use	Proposed Land Use
009-146-003	1520 Parker Drive	Office	Low Density Residential
009-147-006	1507 Montgomery Drive	Office	Low Density Residential
009-151-009	265 Doyle Park Drive	Office	Low Density Residential
009-153-002	309 Talbot Avenue	Office	Low Density Residential
009-146-022	1551 Montgomery Drive	Office	Low Density Residential
009-146-004	1526 Parker Drive	Office	Low Density Residential
009-151-008	257 Doyle Park Drive	Office	Low Density Residential
009-146-021	1536 Parker Drive	Office	Low Density Residential
009-153-008	1420 Parker Drive	Office	Low Density Residential
009-153-012	1416 Parker Drive	Office	Low Density Residential
009-153-009	1428 Parker Drive	Office	Low Density Residential
009-147-005	1635 Montgomery Drive	Office	Low Density Residential
009-147-002	301 Alderbrook Drive	Office	Low Density Residential

009-146-011	306 Talbot Avenue	Office	Low Density Residential
009-146-001	300 Talbot Avenue	Office	Low Density Residential
009-153-014	300 Doyle Park Drive	Office	Low Density Residential
009-153-001	303 Talbot Avenue	Office	Low Density Residential
009-153-003	315 Talbot Avenue	Office	Low Density Residential
009-146-002	1516 Parker Drive	Office	Low Density Residential
009-147-001	304 California Avenue	Office	Low Density Residential
153-180-029	5761 Mountain Hawk Drive	Very Low Density Residential	Medium Density Residential/Retail Business Services
153-180-028	5755 Mountain Hawk Drive	Very Low Density Residential	Medium Density Residential/Retail Business Services
010-421-011	50 W College Avenue	Neighborhood Mixed Use	Maker Mixed Use
010-132-014	1060 Maxwell Drive	Neighborhood Mixed Use	Maker Mixed Use
010-132-017	1040 Maxwell Drive	Neighborhood Mixed Use	Maker Mixed Use
010-421-004	50 W College Avenue	Neighborhood Mixed Use	Maker Mixed Use
010-132-018	1038 Maxwell Drive	Neighborhood Mixed Use	Maker Mixed Use
010-132-011	1056 Maxwell Drive	Neighborhood Mixed Use	Maker Mixed Use
010-132-012	1044 Maxwell Drive	Neighborhood Mixed Use	Maker Mixed Use
035-610-015	2616 Giffen Avenue	Low Density Residential	Very Low Density Residential
125-181-023	100 Sebastopol Road	Medium Density Residential	Medium Density Residential/Retail and Business Services
125-181-008	80 Sebastopol Road	Medium Density Residential	Medium Density Residential/Retail Business Services
014-283-024	1266 Janet Way	None	Medium Density Residential

2. General Plan Text Amendments

Circulation Element – Chapter 3

The General Plan 2050 includes a Circulation Element which includes a Planned Transportation Network Improvements diagram (Figure 3-3), which provides a high-level overview of planned pedestrian and transportation improvements.

The City’s Active Transportation Plan (ATP) was being updated in tandem with the General Plan 2050 update. For this reason, staff intended to bring forward ATP figures to integrate at a later date. More refined and detailed pedestrian and bicycle network improvements are shown in the ATP, which are proposed to be integrated into the General Plan 2050 Circulation Element as Figure 3-3 (a) and Figure 3-3 (b) as described below, and pictured in Attachment 2 to this Staff Report.

- Figure 3-3 (a) Active Transportation Plan Figure 13 – Pedestrian Recommendations
- Figure 3-3 (b) Active Transportation Plan Figure 19 – Bicycle Recommendations

3. Zoning Map Amendments

As discussed in the Project History of this Staff Report, a total of 10 properties, described in the table below, are proposed to be rezoned to implement the proposed General Plan land use designation amendments. The remaining 23 properties do not require a rezoning because the existing zoning is consistent with the proposed General Plan land use.

Assessor’s Parcel Number (APN)	Address	Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning
010-421-011	50 W College Avenue	NMU (Neighborhood Mixed)	MMU (Maker Mixed Use)
010-132-014	1060 Maxwell Drive	NMU (Neighborhood Mixed)	MMU (Maker Mixed Use)
010-132-017	1040 Maxwell Drive	NMU (Neighborhood Mixed)	MMU (Maker Mixed Use)
010-421-004	50 W College Avenue	NMU (Neighborhood Mixed)	MMU (Maker Mixed Use)
010-132-018	1038 Maxwell Drive	NMU (Neighborhood Mixed)	MMU (Maker Mixed Use)
010-132-011	1056 Maxwell Drive	NMU (Neighborhood Mixed)	MMU (Maker Mixed Use)
010-132-012	1044 Maxwell Drive	NMU (Neighborhood Mixed)	MMU (Maker Mixed Use)
125-181-023	100 Sebastopol Road	IL (Light Industrial)	CN (Neighborhood Commercial)

125-181-008	80 Sebastopol Road	R-3-15 (Multi-Family Residential)	CN (Neighborhood Commercial)
014-283-024	1266 Janet Way	R-1-6 (Single-Family Residential)	R-3-15 (Multi-Family Residential) and MMH-S (Missing Middle Housing-Small)

4. No Net Loss Analysis (Government Code Section 65863)

None of the 33 parcels subject to the proposed General Plan land use amendments or Zoning Map amendments are identified in the City’s adopted Housing Element sites inventory, nor were they rezoned pursuant to the Housing Element to accommodate the City’s Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). As such, the proposed amendments do not reduce the residential capacity of the City’s identified housing sites under Government Code Section 65863.

When considered collectively, the General Plan land use and Zoning Map amendments include changes that increase residential opportunity, including:

- Redesignation of parcels to include the Medium Density Residential land use; and
- Introduction of residential land uses to parcels where none previously existed.

The City remains in substantial compliance with its adopted Housing Element and continues to maintain adequate sites to accommodate its remaining RHNA.

FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of the Project will not have an effect on the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The proposed General Plan Amendment Package has been reviewed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and an Addendum to the General Plan 2050 EIR has been prepared and is included as Exhibit A to Resolution 1. The Addendum concludes that adoption of the General Plan Amendment Package would not result in any new or more severe significant environmental impacts compared to the impacts previously disclosed and evaluated in the General Plan 2050 EIR. Therefore, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15162, no additional environmental review is required.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

Pursuant to Zoning Code Section 20-66.020(D), Alternative to Mailing, if the number of property owners to whom notice would be mailed would exceed 1,000, the City may, as an alternative to mailing and on-site posting, provide notice by placing an advertisement of one-eighth page in at least one newspaper of general circulation 10 days prior to the hearing. The proposed General Plan and Zoning Map amendments affect the City as a whole, and, as such, a one-eighth page advertisement was placed in the Press Democrat.

In addition, electronic notice to parties that had expressed interest in projects taking place in this geographic area of Santa Rosa, and bulletin board postings at City Hall and on the City website. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65091, where necessary, the City has incorporated notice procedures to the blind, aged, and disabled communities. These procedures include audio amplifier/assistive listening device support at public meetings, closed captioning, and optical character recognition conversion of electronic notices.

LEVINE ACT

This project is exempt the Levine Act (Gov. Code Section 84308) which prohibits city officials from participating in certain decisions regarding licenses, permits, and other entitlements for use if the official has received a campaign contribution of more than \$500 from a party, participant, or agent of a party or participant in the previous 12 months. The Levine Act is intended to prevent financial influence on decisions that affect specific, identifiable persons or participants. For more information see the FPPC website: www.fppc.ca.gov/learn/pay-to-play-limits-and-prohibitions.html

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – General Plan Land Use Amendments
- Attachment 2 – General Plan Text Amendments
- Attachment 3 – [General Plan 2050 Draft EIR](#)
- Attachment 4 – [General Plan 2050 Final EIR](#)

- Resolution 1/Exhibit A –Addendum to the General Plan 2050 EIR
- Resolution 2 – General Plan and Downtown Station Area Specific Plan Amendments
- Resolution 3 – Zoning Map Amendments

CONTACT

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