

RESOLUTION NO.

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SANTA ROSA
RECOMMENDING APPROVAL TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF A GENERAL PLAN
AMENDMENT FOR THE SOUTHEAST GREENWAY GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT
AND REZONING PROJECT - FILE NUMBERS ST14-003, GPAM19-002 AND REZ19-007

WHEREAS, in 2009, the Southeast Greenway Campaign was formed, which is a community group established to develop an urban Greenway on approximately 57 acres of land owned by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and planned for a future extension of State Highway 12; and

WHEREAS, on October 18, 2011, the Santa Rosa City Council adopted Resolution No. 27995 which included Council Goal 4, Strategic Objective 4: “Acknowledge Southeast Greenway community planning projects”; and

WHEREAS, on April 16, 2013, the Council adopted Resolution No. 28266 reaffirming Council Goal 4, Strategic Objective 3: “Support Efforts of Southeast Greenway Campaign by Monitoring and Providing Information”; and

WHEREAS, on June 17, 2014, the City of Santa Rosa joined the Southeast Greenway Community Partnership by signing a Mutual Letter of Intent. At that time, the Partnership consisted of the City of Santa Rosa, the Sonoma County Water Agency, Sonoma County Regional Parks, the Southeast Greenway Campaign, and LandPaths. As outlined the Mutual Letter of Intent, the initial vision was that the highway land between Summerfield Road and Spring Lake Regional Park would be transferred to the Sonoma County Water Agency and operated/maintained by Sonoma County Regional Parks. The remaining land would be transferred to the City of Santa Rosa and would be operated and maintained by City of Santa Rosa’s Recreation and Parks Department with support from community members and nonprofits; and

WHEREAS, on August 20, 2014, the California Transportation Commission adopted a resolution to rescind the freeway adoption due to lack of operational need, local support and funding, allowing the land to be transferred or sold; and

WHEREAS, in late 2014, the Sonoma Land Trust joined the Southeast Greenway Community Partnership and is contributing expertise and effort toward facilitating the future transfer of the Caltrans land to public ownership; and

WHEREAS, on July 7, 2015, the Council adopted Resolution No. 28666 approving a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Caltrans, Sonoma Land Trust, and the Southeast Greenway Community Partnership. The MOU documents how the Partnership, Sonoma Land Trust, and Caltrans will collaborate and work together toward development of an agreement that will transfer the highway land to public ownership; and

WHEREAS, the MOU states that the City of Santa Rosa would develop an Existing Conditions, Opportunities and Constraints Report to document existing conditions on the property and opportunities and constraints resulting from existing adopted plans. This report was completed and presented to the City Council on October 6, 2015; and

WHEREAS, on October 6, 2015, the Council considered the information contained in the Existing Conditions, Opportunities and Constraints Report and adopted Resolution No. 28696, initiating a General Plan Amendment and Rezoning of the site, along with development of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR); and

WHEREAS, on June 14, 2016, the Council approved a Professional Services Agreement with PlaceWorks, Inc. for preparation of the General Plan Amendment, Rezoning, and EIR for the 57-acre site; and

WHEREAS, on August 6, 2016, the first community workshop was held, with participants envisioning desired uses on the site; and

WHEREAS, on October 8, 2016, the second community workshop was held for participants to consider and provide feedback regarding draft guiding principles and three land use and circulation alternatives; and

WHEREAS, on November 1, 2016, a joint meeting of the Planning Commission and City Council was held to review the draft guiding principles, land use and circulation concept alternatives, and results from the public outreach effort. At the meeting, the Council and Commission directed staff to create a single draft land use and circulation concept alternative; and

WHEREAS, on March 28, 2017, a second joint meeting of the Planning Commission and City Council was held to receive feedback on the single preferred land use and circulation alternative and proposed General Plan amendment; and

WHEREAS, on April 24, 2017, a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an Environmental Impact Report was mailed to properties within 500 feet of the project area, and was distributed for a 30-day public review period, ending on May 23, 2017, to State agencies and other local and regional agencies, departments and individuals that requested notification; and

WHEREAS, on May 15, 2017, a Scoping Meeting was held at the Bennett Valley Senior Center to gather comments and guidance on the scope and content of the EIR from the community, interested public agencies, and organizations; and

WHEREAS, a notice of availability of the 2017 Draft EIR was provided and the 2017 Draft EIR was made available to the public for review and comment for a period of 45 days beginning on August 21, 2017 and ending on October 4, 2017; and

WHEREAS, on September 14, 2017 the Planning Commission held a noticed public hearing regarding the Southeast Greenway General Plan Amendment and Rezoning project

(Project) and 2017 Draft EIR at which time all persons wishing to be heard were invited to speak or submit written comment; and

WHEREAS, during the public review period for the 2017 Draft EIR, the City received public comments requesting additional traffic analysis to address future conditions without the Farmers Lane Extension (if the roadway extension is not completed prior to the Southeast Greenway project). Following the October 4, 2017 closing of the public review period, staff and the consultant team began work on preparing the additional traffic analysis; and

WHEREAS, on October 8, 2017, and continuing for days thereafter, a series of wildfires burned over 90,000 acres in Sonoma County and damaged or destroyed approximately 3,000 homes and 100 commercial structures within the City of Santa Rosa. Due to the impact on City staff resources related to the fires, as well as staff's work on the Council's existing priorities, most notably implementation of the City's Housing Action Plan, work on the Southeast Greenway project was put on hold; and

WHEREAS, in November 2018, with much of the policy work related to the wildfires complete and significant progress made towards the Housing Action Plan initiatives, staff redirected time toward completion of the Project, and finalization of the updated traffic analysis; and

WHEREAS, a Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report (Revised Draft EIR) was prepared and sent to the State Clearinghouse for review by State agencies. The Revised Draft EIR was prepared to evaluate a new traffic scenario and any subsequent residual impacts in response to written and verbal comment made during the 45-day public review period for the 2017 Draft EIR. The written and verbal comments requested that additional traffic analysis be conducted to address potential impacts should the Southeast Greenway project be constructed prior to the extension of Farmers Lane. In compliance with Section 15088.5(f) of the CEQA Guidelines, the Draft EIR was revised to include the new traffic scenario and changes to the traffic noise evaluation; and

WHEREAS, a notice of availability of the Revised Draft EIR was provided and the Revised Draft EIR was made available to the public for review and comment for a period of 45 days beginning on January 28, 2019 and ending on March 13, 2019; and

WHEREAS, on February 14, 2019 the Planning Commission held a noticed public hearing regarding the Revised Draft EIR at which time all persons wishing to be heard were invited to speak or submit written comment; and

WHEREAS, on May 23, 2019 at a public meeting of the Planning Commission, the Commission considered General Plan and Zoning Code Amendments and proposed Rezoning for the 57-acre property located along the right-of-way owned by Caltrans in southeast Santa Rosa, between Farmers Lane/Highway 12 and Spring Lake Regional Park; and

WHEREAS, adoption of the Southeast Greenway General Plan Amendment and Rezoning project will further General Plan land use, transportation and open space goals and

objectives that support intensification of land uses around public services, improved multi-modal connectivity and circulation, and enhancement of the physical environment; and

WHEREAS, changes to the General Plan's Land Use Diagram, text and figures are proposed in order to provide land use designations, goals and policies, based on input from the public, the Planning Commission and the City Council, for the 57-acre area in southeast Santa Rosa that spans a 1.9-mile linear path from Farmers Lane/Highway 12 to Spring Lake Regional Park, which is currently owned by Caltrans and was the former location of an extension of Highway 12, and such changes are set forth in Exhibits "A" attached to this resolution and made part hereof; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds that the changes to the General Plan text and Land Use Diagram are justified to achieve the objectives and policies of the General Plan in that:

- A. The proposed amendments ensure and maintain internal consistency with the goals and policies of all elements of the General Plan;
- B. The proposed amendments would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare of the City;
- C. The area is physically suitable (including absence of physical constraints, access, compatibility with adjoining land uses, and provision of utilities) for the requested/anticipated land use developments; and
- D. The proposed amendments have been reviewed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

WHEREAS, the proposed General Plan Amendment is part of the Summer 2019 General Plan Amendment Package, one of the three General Plan amendments allotted to the City per year; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has considered the Final Environmental Impact Report and, by separate resolution, recommended that the Council certify the Final EIR; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Planning Commission has considered the testimony on the Southeast Greenway General Plan Amendment and Rezoning project and has reached consensus on issues important to the community and has determined that the General Plan Amendment will provide necessary and appropriate policy guidance for additional park and open space amenities, increased residential densities and commercial opportunities, and improved multi-modal connectivity to support bicyclists and pedestrians.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, based on the foregoing, the Planning Commission hereby recommends that the City Council adopt the General Plan Amendment in the form set forth in Exhibit "A" to this resolution.

REGULARLY PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Planning Commission of the City of Santa Rosa on this 23rd day of May, 2019, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

APPROVED: _____
CHAIR

ATTEST: _____
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

ATTACHMENTS:
Exhibit A – General Plan Amendment

Exhibit 'A'

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT

LAND USE AND LIVABILITY ELEMENT

Page 2-14:

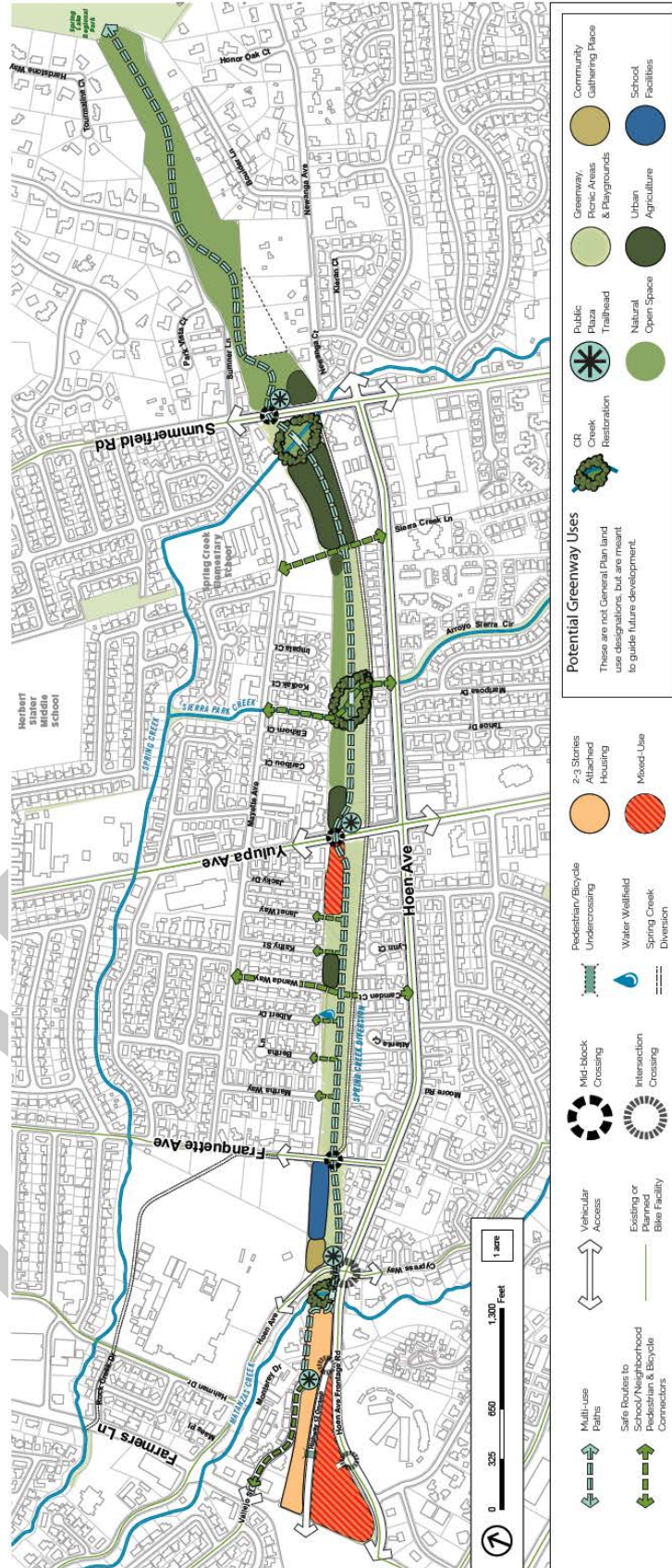
Add the following language to Section 2-4, Land Use Classifications:

“SOUTHEAST GREENWAY

The Southeast Greenway is a continuous linear space located in southeast Santa Rosa, between Farmers Lane to the west and Spring Lake Regional Park to the east. The majority of the Greenway is designated for Parks and Recreation, with smaller areas designated for Medium Density Residential and a mix of Retail and Business Services and Medium Density Residential near Farmers Lane and Yulupa Avenue. Separated bicycle and pedestrian paths are identified, linking Spring Lake Regional Park to Hoen Avenue, with a bicycle connection to Farmers Lane and beyond. Additional north-south pedestrian and bicycle connections would link the Greenway to adjacent neighborhoods. The envisioned land uses and circulation improvements are shown in Figure 2-3, Southeast Greenway Illustrative Map; detailed descriptions of the improvements are located in the Southeast Greenway General Plan Amendment and Rezoning Environmental Impact Report's Project Description (Chapter 3). Goals and policies related to the Southeast Greenway are included in the Goals and Policies section of this Land Use and Livability Element, as well as the Transportation and Public Services and Facilities Elements.”

Page 2-15:

Add the following new Figure 2-3, Southeast Greenway Illustrative Map, to Section 2-4, Land Use Classifications:



Pages 2-35 – 2-36:

Add the following Goals and Policies:

“SOUTHEAST GREENWAY

LUL-NN Develop the Southeast Greenway sustainably to enhance and protect wetlands, wildlife habitat, groundwater and air quality.

LUL-NN-1 Restore or enhance the areas around the three creeks that cross the Southeast Greenway: Matanzas Creek, Sierra Park Creek and Spring Creek, consistent with the Citywide Creek Master Plan.

LUL-NN-2 Maximize open space and native plantings in the Southeast Greenway to provide a wildlife corridor to the greatest extent possible and reduce maintenance costs with the use of self-sustaining plant species.

LUL-NN-3 Improve stormwater management to increase infiltration and groundwater recharge, reduce flood risk, and/or enhance the environment.

LUL-OO Develop the Southeast Greenway to support a walkable, livable neighborhood, promote economic vitality, and encourage social equity.

LUL-OO-1 Develop the site between Hoen Avenue Frontage Road and the Highway 12 onramp with a mix of residential and commercial development. Residential uses are required on this site and should be maximized. Lodging uses are allowed. Development of the site will require provision of pedestrian and bicycle access to the Southeast Greenway trails to the north.

LUL-OO-2 Create a Southeast Greenway gateway on the western edge of the Greenway that offers a prominently visible entrance to the open space and increases visitor awareness of the amenity.

LUL-OO-3 During the next General Plan update, consider a future planning effort for the area south of the Southeast Greenway between Franquette Avenue and Summerfield Road to identify land uses which would enable these properties to redevelop to improve the interface with the Greenway.

LUL-PP Design uses on the Southeast Greenway to maximize the Greenway’s safety, accessibility and respect for adjacent neighborhoods.

- LUL-PP-1 Require all new development on or abutting the Southeast Greenway to front the Greenway with windows and entries, and limit fencing height and material to ensure views from private property into the Greenway that enhance public safety.
- LUL-PP-2 Locate new residential uses at select locations along the Southeast Greenway where they can access existing streets and infrastructure. These new uses should be sensitively designed to consider the scale of neighboring residential areas, maintain public views of the hills, and limit shade on the Greenway's recreation areas.
- LUL-PP-3 Require design of all structures, utilities and access roads in the Southeast Greenway to maximize public safety, ease of access, attractiveness and compatibility with other uses in the Greenway and surrounding neighborhood.
- LUL-PP-4 In future design phases of the project, minimize parking impacts on surrounding neighborhoods by providing parking on the Southeast Greenway and seeking opportunities to share parking with adjacent non-residential uses, such as Montgomery High School and Spring Lake Regional Park."

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

Page 5-25:

Add the following Goals and Policies:

"SOUTHEAST GREENWAY

- T-N Provide a continuous pedestrian, bicycle, and non-motorized transportation connection from Spring Lake Regional Park to Farmers Lane and link to downtown Santa Rosa, surrounding neighborhoods and schools, and the regional trail system.***
- T-N-1 Provide separate trails for bicycle and pedestrian use, and permit them to meander to respond to topographic or other features in the Southeast Greenway. Separate bicycle and pedestrian facilities should join together to cross streets and creeks for safety and habitat protection.
- T-N-2 Provide multi-use path crossings where the Southeast Greenway intersects with Hoen Avenue, Franquette Avenue, Yulupa Avenue, and Summerfield Road to enhance the crossings for cyclists and pedestrians at these

locations. These could include enhanced crosswalks, median refuges, pedestrian and bicyclist activated signals and warning signage for drivers.

- T-N-3 Identify and sign a bicycle route from the Southeast Greenway to Downtown that is direct, well-marked, and easy to navigate, while ensuring multiple connections. Consideration should be given to the following routes to determine the highest priority for improvement: Franquette to Sonoma Avenue; Hoen Avenue to Sonoma Avenue; Hoen Avenue to Hahman Drive to Sonoma Avenue; and Vallejo Street to E Street.
- T-N-4 Ensure additional bicycle facilities connect to the Southeast Greenway as proposed in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.
- T-N-5 Provide for parking on the Southeast Greenway and seek shared parking opportunities in adjacent non-residential uses, such as Montgomery High School and Spring Lake Regional Park in future design phases of the project to maximize a park once experience and minimize parking in surrounding neighborhoods.”

PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES ELEMENT

Page 6-24 – 6-25:

Add the following Goals and Policies:

“SOUTHEAST GREENWAY

PSF-J Provide natural open space, educational and cultural opportunities, and active and passive recreation for residents and visitors.

PSF-J-1 Coordinate with Santa Rosa City School District and Montgomery High School to share educational, recreational, and parking facilities to the greatest extent feasible.

PSF-J-2 Site the locations of community gardens as closely as possible to access points from neighboring residential areas to encourage use and activity.

PSF-K Ensure that the Southeast Greenway’s natural open space is continuous from Spring Lake Regional Park to Hoen Avenue (except in existing street crossings), and is as wide as possible but not less than 125 feet in width. The only exception is the “pinch point” east of Summerfield Road where the right-of-way narrows to approximately 68 feet in width.

PSF-K-1 Explore acquisition of property at the “pinch point” from property owners to allow for a wider and more accessible trail in that location.

PSF-L Accommodate public infrastructure on the site.

PSF-L-1 Allow an easement for the Sonoma Water to install a pipeline through the Southeast Greenway to help provide needed redundancy in the regional water system.

PSF-L-2 Plan around the existing City well and allow potential additional wells near Albert Drive and Wanda Way.

PSF-L-3 Allow the existing Spring Creek Diversion, and existing and new water and sewer lines through the Southeast Greenway.

PSF-M Plan for the Southeast Greenway’s improvements collaboratively to ensure an effective Greenway that meets the needs of the City, public agencies, and the citizens of Santa Rosa.

PSF-M-1 Coordinate the Greenway’s planning, acquisition, development, maintenance, stewardship, safety, and funding by working with the community, public agencies and private partners.

LAND USE DIAGRAM

Add land use designations on the General Plan Land Use Diagram for the area located within the boundaries of the Southeast Greenway area, a 1.9 linear mile area between Farmers Lane/Highway 12 and Spring Lake Regional Park, in southwest Santa Rosa, as identified below, and illustrated in the Excerpt from the General Plan Land Use Diagram map below:

Location	Previous General Plan Land Use Designation	New General Plan Land Use Designation
The area between Vallejo Street and the Highway 12 westbound on-ramp, from Farmers Lane east to Matanzas Creek	None	Medium Density Residential
The triangular area between the Highway 12 westbound on-ramp and Hoen Avenue Frontage Road, on the east side of Farmers Lane	None	Medium Density Residential/Retail and Business Services
An approximately 129-foot wide area on the north side of the Southeast Greenway, From Yulupa Avenue west to Janet Way	None	Medium Density Residential/Retail and Business Services

Location	Previous General Plan Land Use Designation	New General Plan Land Use Designation
The area between the north and south boundaries of the Southeast Greenway area, from Matanzas Creek east to Spring Lake Regional Park, excluding the Medium Density Residential/Retail and Business Services area on the west side of Yulupa Avenue	None	Parks and Recreation

