

SONOMA COUNTY AIRPORT AREA SPECIFIC PLAN: STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP SUMMARY NOTES

SONOMA COUNTY PERMIT & RESOURCE MANAGEMENT HEARING ROOM
FEBRUARY 27, 2019 | 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

ATTENDEES

COUNTY STAFF

Amy Lyle, Supervising Planner – Supervising Planner
Cecily Condon, Planner III (Specific Plan Update Project Manager)
Chet Jamgochian – Sonoma County Public Works
Jenny Chamberlain, District Director, Sonoma County District 4
Jen Mendoza – Board of Supervisors District 4, District Aide

CONSULTANTS

Heather Hines, Principal, M-Group
Milan Nevajda, Project Manager, M-Group
Shannon Bowman, Associate Planner, M-Group
Bill Lee, Senior Partner, Land Econ Group (LEG)

STAKEHOLDERS (SIGNED IN)

J. Tamanes & E. Brown - Sonoma County EDB
J. Silvestrini - Sonoma County Office of Education
C. Grabill - Sonoma County Conservation Action
E. Carrillo - Burbank Housing
G. Cochnon, R. Cochnon, & T. Sweyle – RPH LLC/RCZ
R. Gleason - B&R
M. Soiland - Soiland Properties
R. Hillmann - Cinergy Media
S. Penning - VineJet/Landmark Hotels
Property Owners: C. Thompson, T. Amatu, R. Schram
J. Fitzgerald - Candesign
D. Fudge - Town of Windsor
R. Coombs & N. Balfour - Airport Business Center
A. De Mars - Sonoma Country Day School
B. Aspinall, B. Alton, S. Sharpe, S. Birdleough – S.C. Transportation & Land Use Coalition

MEETING AGENDA

- Welcome & Introductions 10 Min
- Presentation on Preferred Plan 30 Min
- Facilitated Discussion: Preferred Plan 60 Min
- Summary of Findings for Advisory Team Report 10 Min

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

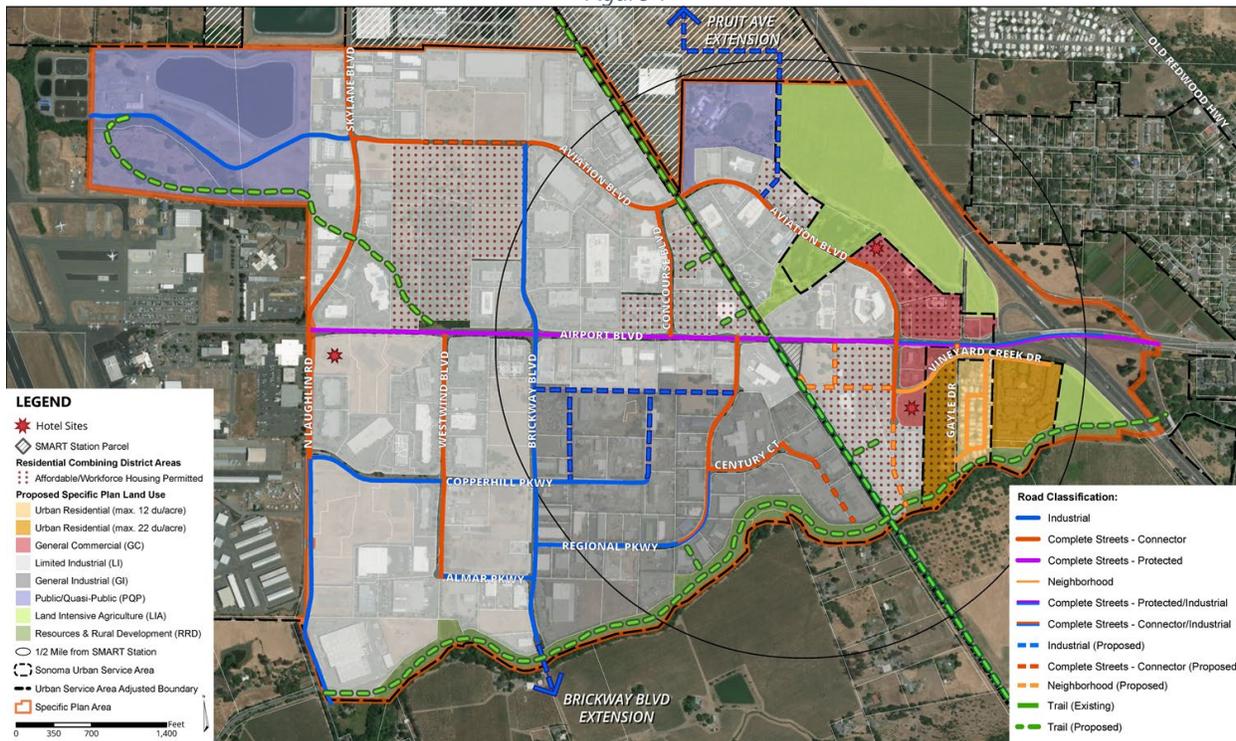
The project team welcomed property owners, business owners, and members of the public to the Sonoma County Airport Area Specific Plan stakeholder workshop. M-Group Project Manager, Milan Nevajda, provided an overview of the Specific Plan update process, the preliminary alternatives that were explored for the planning area in 2017, the “Preferred Plan” framework, and clarified the purpose of the workshop: to seek input from stakeholders in the planning area prior to presenting the Preferred Plan framework to the Advisory Team for direction to proceed with the framework as the basis for the Specific Plan Update.

PRESENTATION ON PROJECT BACKGROUND

Milan Nevajda provided an overview of the project progress. Intervening events since the last property owner workshop on June 1, 2017 include updates to cannabis regulation, the Sonoma Complex Fire, changes in housing policy, and addressing concerns about water supply. Milan also outlined the direction of the Specific Plan effort moving forward, which is to hold a community workshop in April for CEQA scoping and to review a draft of the Specific Plan Update through Summer 2019. M-Group provided a summary of where the project left off in 2017 by summarizing the preliminary alternatives for land use policy in the planning area in the (A) distributed clusters model, (B) a corridor model focused on Airport Boulevard, and (C) a nodal model with growth focused around the SMART station and undeveloped areas near the Airport-Westwind intersection.

M-Group concluded with an overview of the Preferred Plan framework (Figure 1).

Figure 1



GROUP DISCUSSION

M-Group facilitated a group discussion to gather feedback from community stakeholders. The discussion generated consensus on important and valuable refinements to improve the Preferred Plan:

- **Affordable and Workforce Housing Overlays:** Significant discussion centered around the housing overlays in the Preferred Plan with general support for the approach:
 - **Placement of Housing Overlays:** Stakeholders recommended removing the housing overlays from properties west of the tracks adjacent to Concourse Boulevard (APN 059-350-024 thru -026; APN 059-360-001 thru -005; and APN 059-350-103 and -104) as these sites are suitable for housing but unlikely to develop as housing. Stakeholders recommended adding an additional housing overlay east of the railroad tracks at Airport Boulevard (APN 059-350-105).
 - **Land Uses Compatibility:** The majority of stakeholders found that housing in the employment area would be a compatible and welcome addition in the areas identified (with the changes noted above), and that policies should be adopted to require that future residential property owners and tenants recognize the industrial character of the area prior to purchasing property or signing lease agreements.
 - **Increase Housing:Jobs Ratio:** By adding residential, the housing:jobs balance will improve; that will reduce commute times and create a more sustainable and balanced neighborhood in the Specific Plan.

- **Environmental/Health Impacts:** Stakeholders discussed measures to ensure the health and safety of future residents within the planning area, specifically citing air traffic-related pollution and noise. The comments about air traffic were addressed during the meeting by clarifying that the proposal complies with state safety standards, and that air traffic routes around the planning area so that most flights pass over existing residential neighborhoods in Windsor and Larkfield-Wikiup rather than the planning area. Intermittent helicopter overflights pass through the area, but these are less frequent.
- **Heavy Industrial Zone.** The stakeholders recommended maintain the General Industrial (heavy industrial) land use designations west of Brickway, not converting these sites to Limited Industrial (light industrial/business park) because there is very limited land available in the County for heavier industrial activities. Stakeholders also expressed concern that shifting land use policy to light industrial would make it more difficult for the existing heavy industrial activities in on those sites to continue.
 - Demand for heavy industrial demand was characterize as stronger than the demand for office development.
- **Hotels.** Promote specialized/local hotel projects rather than chain hotels.
- **Pedestrian and Bike Trails.** There was general support for the trails shown in the area, particularly the pathway from Westwind at Airport Blvd. that follows the seasonal creek to the northwest. that access the wetlands adjacent to the airport and run along the railroad and Mark West Creek.
 - Property owners requested eliminating the proposed pathways shown on specific sites extending from Mark West Creek onto Regional Pkwy, recommending instead that the link to Regional Pkwy is established from the SMART Multi-Use Pathway to Century Court over Sonoma County properties.
- **Financing.** The financing strategy for identified improvements must reflect the regional or community/county-wide benefit for some improvements (e.g. Brickway and Pruitt Avenue extensions) versus localized benefits at the Specific Plan level, and individual property level.
 - **Employment Investment Area Designation.** If possible, take advantage of the area's Employment Investment Area status to access financial resources that will help fund improvements identified in the Specific Plan.
- **Park Space:** The plan does not identify specific areas for parks, but a policy promoting park development with public access could be incorporated into the Specific Plan and negotiated with property owners at the time a site is redeveloped that could accommodate park or other open space.
- **Amenities:** Include land use policy that allows supportive activities and amenities near and with residential areas such as cafés, childcare facilities, or retail and service businesses.
- **Circulation:** General support for roadway improvements.
 - **Traffic Mitigation Fees:** Should be designated locally.
 - **Brickway Extension.** The extension and road widening should continue to be included in the plan and improvements should be prioritized along this corridor.

- **Aviation.** Re-examine road width recommendations on Aviation Boulevard (approaching Skylane Boulevard).
- **Right-of-Way.** Ensure that street design utilizes existing ROW for existing roads.
- **Roundabouts:** Consider whether roundabouts could benefit the area to maintain continuous flow.
- **Skylane:** Prioritize improvements to the roadway (re-surfacing).
- **Airport-101 Access:** Eliminate the no-right-on-red restriction from Airport to 101.
- **Congestion.** Congestion management programs and improvements are needed.
- **Sustainability:** Community members advised that the Specific Plan should consider incorporating improvements to support environmental goals, such as:
 - **Transit Connections:** Support increased SMART train and other transit service reliability and headways.
 - **Energy:** Explore policies to encourage carbon-free energy use and generation in the area, as well as rainwater harvesting.
 - **Creek Maintenance:** Encourage Sonoma County Water Agency creek maintenance.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FOR PREFERRED PLAN

Before adjourning, M-Group summarized the feedback provided and clarified comments where necessary. The comments would be provided to the Advisory Committee in an afternoon meeting on the same day.