



**Half Moon Bay General Plan and LCP Update
General Plan Advisory Committee Meeting #16**
Emergency Operations Center, 537 Kelly Avenue, Half Moon Bay, CA 94019
January 26, 2017 | 6:30pm

Meeting Notes

Materials for this meeting can be found at www.planhmb.org/general-plan-library.html.

Project Overview: Project Status and Schedule

- Reviewed notification and agenda availability and format:
 - Notification for this session was similar to previous sessions and included: Half Moon Bay ENews (multiple notifications), Plan Half Moon Bay email (multiple notifications), Next Door website posting, press notification, and www.planHMB.org project web page.
 - Agenda Availability: Posted electronically on City of Half Moon Bay web page calendar and www.planHMB.org; and hard copy January 20, 2017 at City Hall.
- Reviewed schedule and project status.
- Summary Notes – GPAC acknowledgment of summary notes from January 11, 2017 – no requests for changes made.
- 700 Forms: GPAC members will need to submit 700 forms for 2017.

Draft General Plan Elements:

The presentation included reference to materials previously presented on the Noise Element; focus on Highway 1 proposals in the Circulation Element; and a general review of the approach to sea level rise policies, specifically as outlined in the Section 2.5 of the Local Coastal Land Use Plan: Coastal Hazards. The presentation suggested key policy questions for the GPAC and community members to consider as they review the documents. The topics were presented one at a time with GPAC discussion and community comment conducted before moving on to the next item

Noise Element:

Note that these slides were presented at the previous session and made available for the January 26, 2017 session in the event that they would support GPAC discussion.

- Key Policy Choices
 - Soundwalls – when are they acceptable?
 - Between properties
 - Along roadways
 - Remodels – Encourage or mandate?
 - Insulation and/or new windows

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- Align with State energy conservation requirements in the Building Ordinance
- Sensitive uses:
 - Interior – 45 dBA
 - Exterior – 60 dBA

Circulation Element – Character of Highway 1:

- Key Policy Choices
 - Width and number of lanes
 - Crossings
 - Other considerations: Speed and roundabouts
 - Town Boulevard concept
- Staff Recommendation: Maintain options for Planning Commission consideration with results from forthcoming Traffic Study:
 - Existing conditions (2-lane)
 - Configuration as presented in the draft Circulation Element
 - Variations suggested in GPAC and community input

Sea Level Rise – Policy Topics:

- Key Policy Choices
 - Mitigation and Adaptation
 - Managed Retreat
 - Public Facilities
 - Private Development
- Real time example: State Parks Ranger House end of Alcatraz Avenue
- Policy Concepts:
 - Retreat vs. Armoring
 - Remove or move back
 - Rolling easements
 - Nonconforming development
 - Estimate scope of vulnerable properties
 - SAM and sea level rise
 - Public and private development and erosion
- GPAC study – Homework:
 - Review Coastal Hazards Section 2.5 of the First Public Draft Local Coastal Land Use Plan – narrative and policies for sea level rise
 - Our Coast our Future Website: Use the online interactive map to consider a range of scenarios for Half Moon Bay
 - Submit input to staff

GPAC Clarifying Questions, Public Comment and GPAC Discussion:

The GPAC discussion incorporated public comment. The following questions, comments and discussion points were made throughout the remainder of the GPAC session following each staff presentation:

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Noise Element:

- GPAC members agreed that transportation related noise has the biggest impact on Half Moon Bay residents. Comments related to transportation related noise include Highway 1 , SR 92, surface streets and various types of vehicles that are especially noisy including motorcycles and certain types of scooters. A community member stated that the Highway 1 noise is significant and that during warmer months when windows are open, it disturbs sleep.
- GPAC members identified public facility uses that impact the city's noise environment including solid waste collection and disposal and use of the SAM plant property for staging this activity and other potential point sources of noise such as pump stations. Controlling hours of operation and other policy support for quieter practices were suggested.
- A GPAC member explained that the impacts of noise and vibration are cumulative when they occur together; especially from the same source. The member also expressed concern that the draft policies in the Noise Element make reference to Los Angeles which has a significantly different context than Half Moon Bay. *Staff Response: Staff explained that the LA references are not for noise, but rather are for vibration. Staff confirmed that the consultant and staff are well aware of the difference in context. The consultant and staff researched policies that address vibration and found that LA's were the most developed. Many Noise Element do not address vibration to any significant extent, and the LA policies were found to be the most relevant.*
- A GPAC member stated preference for a more sensitive threshold of significance that proposed in the Draft Noise Element – 3 dBa instead of 5 dBa.
- A GPAC suggested avoiding ambiguous language such as “where feasible.”
- GPAC members noted noise sources not addressed in the Noise Element such as ultralight airplanes, drones, and other hobby aircraft.
- With respect to soundwalls, GPAC and community members shared a range of feedback including:
 - Visual impacts: Soundwalls along a highway corridor would diminish the viewshed including the ocean and foothills; would likely not be implemented as a whole and resulting in an unattractive piecemeal installation.
 - Wall alternatives: Vegetated barriers instead of walls.
 - Noise source: Reduce the speed limit; address driving behavior/speeding by changing the perception of a straight-away highway by incorporating features indicating an urban context (e.g. crossings, green strip bike lane, and others) to increase awareness about the town setting and the overall tone of the Highway; synchronize traffic signals on Highway 1 to establish more consistent (and quieter) rate of speed which is quieter than acceleration and deceleration; utilize quieter pavement. A community member stated that recent repaving on Highway 280 with rubberized pavement significantly reduced roadway noise.
 - Priorities: A community member expressed that although they do not like Soundwalls, reducing noise in the city's neighborhoods, especially at night, should be prioritized.
 - Examples:

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- A community member described the history of the Ocean Colony soundwall noting that vegetation was found to be an inadequate sound barrier in that case. A judge mandated the wall. Following that situation a former Half Moon Bay planning director established the practice to require new development to be setback from the roadway out of the noise impacted area.
- Another community member expressed concern about forthcoming construction at Pacific Ridge which will include significant and noisy construction vehicle traffic on Terrace Avenue. The community member suggested that the developer should use the roadway behind the high school to access the property.
- A GPAC member discussed adjacent dissimilar land uses such as residential development adjacent to commercial development or public facilities and that impacts of noisier uses on nearby residential uses needs to be better addressed in the Noise Element.
- GPAC members discussed existing residences that may be impacted by roadway noise. One member described the potential for directing any city funding available for soundwalls instead to retrofitting older homes with triple-paned windows and other insulation methods to reduce interior sound levels. Members discussed noise impact funds which could be established by collecting noise impact fees from new development. One member expressed that any policy about this would need to be specific enough to ensure proper implementation and another member noted that retrofitting would address interior noise, but not exterior sound levels.
- A community member expressed that although the city's noise environment is mostly favorable, vibration from construction activities is a concern. In the Downtown, where construction of larger projects – including those at the Cunha Intermediate School campus and the forthcoming Library – are near residences, some of which have older foundations. There is concern about the long-term effects of vibration on these structures and the ability to ensure that larger projects are compliant with vibration regulations.

Circulation Element – Character of Highway 1:

- GPAC members discussed and provided feedback about the “town boulevard” concept including the following:
 - Purpose: What would a town boulevard accomplish? The GPAC and community discussed a range of design components that could be incorporated in a town boulevard context, in contrast to a highway function. One GPAC member noted that the history of Highway 1 within Half Moon Bay makes it more difficult because the original alignment was Main Street.
 - Feasibility: Can we do this? For example, if lower vehicular speeds at Filbert, Poplar, Grove, etc. is would be beneficial.
 - Design/Character: What would a town boulevard look like? What would be good examples in other towns? Spans of Highway 1 located within other coastal cities and communities were cited by GPAC and community members as possible examples including Santa Cruz, Surfers Beach in El Granada, Pacifica, Crescent City, and Fort Bragg.

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- Lane Configuration: A GPAC member described how merging from 4-lane stretches into 2-lane stretches of the highway results in slower vehicle speeds for these transitional portions of the roadway. Another GPAC member described personal experience with a town boulevard in another town and that it worked well with 4 lanes and that 2 lanes could be a problem. Another GPAC member described potential for a roadway with 2 through lanes an additional separated, frontage lanes that can help with neighborhood ingress and egress. The additional lanes would connect to the through lanes in a limited number of locations.
- Drainage: GPAC members discussed the drainage implications of adding concrete curbs to the highway's edges; that this would concentrate water flow and that a long term approach to storm water management is a needed investment. Natural drainage systems that allow percolation (e.g. green infrastructure) should be prioritized, instead of culverts. Another GPAC member noted that Caltrans is very responsive if conditions resulting in "scour" (e.g. degradation of the roadway because of a pattern of high and fast flowing drainage).
- Comprehensive Approach: GPAC members generally agreed that implementation of a town boulevard would require many coordinated elements – appropriate pavement, curbs, signage, high visibility crosswalks, signal loop detectors, signals, bike lanes, medians, pedestrian refuge, landscaping, green infrastructure for drainage, other visual elements, etc.) to accomplish all of the objectives including improved town image, improved safety, lower speed limits, better drainage, better connectivity for all modes, etc. A partial installation of the concept will not accomplish the intent – the features to be implemented comprehensively and concurrently. There was concern that Caltrans may allow some, but not all of the necessary coordinated elements, resulting in piecemeal implementation.
- Location: GPAC members indicated that the town boulevard concept is most suited to the core area where there is development on both sides of Highway 1 – between north and south Main Street.
- Speed Limit: GPAC members discussed the potential and positive impact of lowering the speed limit on Highway 1.
- Safety: it is critical that the design support safety for children because this span of Highway 1 is located where children are most concentrated because of the location of the City's schools.
- Community members provided additional input about the town boulevard concept:
 - A community member noted the interesting dilemma for Half Moon Bay – considering other jurisdictions narrowing streets and roadways though "road diets," while Half Moon Bay has many Highway 1 conditions requiring consideration of widening and/or narrowing the highway.
 - Community members expressed support for pedestrian refuge space within landscape medians.
 - A community member reported that Caltrans has been locally supportive of context sensitive design solutions. A community member noted that context sensitive design solutions for Highway 1 ha been prepared for the

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- unincorporated Midcoast and that they were supported by Caltrans and could serve as good examples to Half Moon Bay's discussion.
- A community member expressed concern about 4-lane roadway condition north of a proposed signal at Terrace to Grandview and does not believe the neighborhood is aware of this proposal and furthermore that it is not fair or safe. A GPAC member further expressed concern about a 4-lane condition and how hard it will be for vehicles to access Highway 1 from Kehoe and Grandview and that residents do not want to cross two lanes of traffic in each direction; although another GPAC member suggested that it is easier to pull into two lanes than one. *Staff Response: The 4-lane condition north of Terrace as proposed allows for tapering to 2-lanes and merge lanes. It does not include a 4-lane cross section at Grandview.*
 - A community member commented in support of the town boulevard concept and noted that Frenchmans Creek is the beginning of Half Moon Bay, thus the boulevard should begin there. The town boulevard should have a new name for the span within the city.
 - A community member expressed that children should never have to cross 4-lane highway segments. There are schools on both sides of the highway and the elderly population also need adequate time to cross the roadway. Stay with a 2-lane configuration and make it a completely different road than Highway 1.
 - A community member expressed concern that the town boulevard concept won't be implemented. We should address what we have and address the known problems.
 - A community member expressed that they like median islands and Half Moon Bay town specific signs (e.g. "Love Our Village").
 - A community member suggested a pedestrian bridge over highway 1 at Kelly Street to connect the schools and downtown to the beach.
 - A community member expressed concern about curbs along Highway 1 and if they would be stable over time.
 - A community member questioned the GPAC's consensus support for lower traffic speeds and thinks that people want faster traffic.
 - A community member suggested that instead of a signal at Terrace that a 2-lane round-about at Baywood (adjacent to Beachwood) would be better.
- A GPAC member encouraged the group to consider various technologies that improve the function and community awareness of traffic, congestion, safety, etc. WAZE was noted as especially useful because it identifies where red light cameras are in place; which causes drivers to be more careful. A community member expressed that they dislike red light cameras. *Staff Response: Staff noted that the intent for utilizing technology is for smart corridors.*
 - A community member cited that the 2013 Circulation Element includes statements about Highway 1 and SR 92 that are a carryover from the older element and should not be brought forward into the new Circulation Element.

CONCENSUS: The GPAC reached consensus on the following topics related to the character of Highway 1:

- ***Lower Traffic Speeds: All members support lower traffic speeds on Highway 1, a lower speed limit, and that this is regardless of lane configuration (2 or 4-lane roadway).***
- ***Town Boulevard: The concept was generally supported and found to be worth continued consideration by the Planning Commission.***
- ***2 and 4-Lane Options: All members agreed to leave options open in that there is no overwhelming majority support for either configuration. GPAC members agreed that studying both options in future traffic study is an appropriate approach to have more information on this topic.***

Sea Level Rise – Policy Topics:

- A GPAC member cited policy 2.5-I.17 “Relocation Program,” and that relocation and retreat should be better identified.
- A GPAC member noted that most of the presentation addressed existing development and that although Half Moon Bay is in a good position because of bluffs and existing public property ownership patterns, more discussion about new development is needed.
- A GPAC member discussed the various causes of erosion in Miramar and the need to take another look at armoring in that area and how it may have affected the State Parks property. It was noted that reflected energy does not need to go far to have impacts.
- A GPAC member reminded the group that in addition to bluff erosion, the mouths of creeks will retreat and associated habitats are at risk.
- A community member asked about the maps, the scenarios, and various sources of sea level rise projections. *Staff Response: Staff described the scenarios utilized for Half Moon Bay’s sea level rise vulnerability assessment as having been intentionally selected to be near term within the timeline of the planning horizon; and furthermore that these scenarios were selected to not overlap San Mateo County’s similar effort which will include longer range and more extreme scenarios. By making these choices, there will be more data for the City’s use. Staff also notes that this has been previously explained at previous sessions and that it is understood that these studies do not include new engineering work; that USGS is currently preparing new erosion mapping; and that this will be an on-going study.*
- A GPAC member posed the challenge of how to determine when restrictions should be implemented on property use and development. *Staff Response: Staff expressed agreement that this is a key challenge and described how the City has been collaborating with other agencies to study strategies to formulate an approach. Staff anticipates that threshold will be defined which will trigger responses scaled to the level or risk over time. Inverse condemnation is a concern, amortization and other strategies for financial backing will be needed.*
- A GPAC member stressed that the City should inform every property owner about the position of their homes. Some property owners may decide to sell out sooner than later if close to a bluff edge.
- A GPAC member expressed that there is potential risk in having a map; e.g. a map generally indicating a twenty year erosion retreat could be perceived as too

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- conservative if the erosion takes 40 years; or irresponsible if erosion occur in 10 years. Planning around Mother Nature is a very difficult thing.
- A GPAC member encouraged that the mapping and policies are responsible to a maximum level. The document could tell some stories through the scenarios to help the community understand the issue better.
 - A GPAC member encouraged the City to contact USGS about the State Parks ranger house and that it would be good for them to inspect the site before site condition is further affected by wave action and/or the removal of the structure. *Staff Response: After the GPAC session, staff made contact with local USGS staff and they express appreciation for anecdotal information such as this. They may be able to visit the site.*
 - A GPAC member asked about the plan for the closed Half Moon Bay landfill. *Staff Response: Staff reminded the GPAC about San Mateo County's current efforts to study the situation and their plans for addressing it in the future before it is further compromised.*
 - A GPAC member noted that there is another landfill located on Pilarcitos Creek that is threatened by sea level rise.
 - A GPAC member expressed interest in the Pacific Institute mapping which includes the State tsunami map with 6 feet of sea level rise and that a staff report to the California Coastal Commission on this topic is a helpful reference and should be reviewed.

Next Steps in the Process:

City Council Direction: Staff presented that at their January 17, 2017 session, City Council provided the following direction:

- Bifurcate the Local Coastal Program (LCP) from the General Plan Elements
- Prioritize completion of the LCP
- Revise the LCP pursuant to GPAC and community input
- Bring the LCP to the Planning Commission
- Follow with the General Plan Elements

The GPAC agreed to conclude the extensive comment period on these draft documents on February 14, 2017. Staff noted that this date will be broadly announced. GPAC and community members are encouraged to provide any remaining input that has not been addressed in public forum or through other communication with staff.

Over the next six months staff will compile and review all of the GPAC and community comments, work on revising the LCLUP, work with the Planning Commission, and publish the next revision of the LCLUP. At that time, the GPAC will meet again to receive the revision and a presentation on how GPAC and community input was incorporated into the new draft.

Attendance

GPAC Members

James Benjamin
Jo Chamberlain
Hugh Doherty
Brian Holt
Greg Jamison
Steve Kikuchi (Alternate at Large)
Dan McMillan
Shahzad Pantera, Parks and Recreation Committee Member
Sara Polgar

City Staff

John Doughty, Community Development Director
Jill Ekas, Planning Manager
Bridget Jett, Planning Analyst