



STAFF REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE: Regular Meeting of January 20, 2025

TO: Chair and members of the Planning Commission

SUBMITTED BY: Timothy Rood, AICP, Community Development Director

SUBJECT: General Plan Advisory Committee representative

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the Planning Commission:

1. Request Planning staff present the staff report;
2. Open the public hearing;
3. Receive comments from the public;
4. Close the public hearing;
5. Request clarification from staff on any issues related to the item;
6. By minute order, select one (1) Planning Commissioner to serve as the Commission's representative on the General Plan Advisory Committee

BACKGROUND:

On October 14, 2025, the City Council approved a professional services agreement with Raimi + Associates (R+A) to prepare a comprehensive General Plan update and approved a resolution establishing an ad-hoc General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) to serve until the comprehensive General Plan update is adopted.

ANALYSIS:

The Planning Commission is requested to select one (1) commissioner to serve on the GPAC.

Purpose and Role

As the City embarks on its first comprehensive General Plan update in over 25 years, the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) will provide guidance by reviewing the existing

plan and policies, helping identify targeted updates, and reviewing draft goals and policies. General Plan Advisory Committee meetings will guide the development of the guiding principles, analysis of issues, and evaluation of proposed goals, policies, future development scenarios, and infrastructure improvements.

Consultants will work closely with the GPAC throughout the process, using their input as a sounding board for key concepts to ensure alignment with community priorities. The GPAC will also be a sounding board to review draft materials before outreach events with the general public. This engagement will help keep the project on track and minimize the risk of delays later in the process.

The GPAC members will provide added eyes and ears in the community to provide insight and act as ambassadors to encourage broad engagement in the General Plan update process. The members will also provide unique expertise and invaluable local knowledge.

The role of the Committee will include reviewing milestone documents, providing guidance on policy direction, and providing recommendations to City staff and the consultants at critical junctures. Meetings will be publicized and open to the public. The Committee will act in an advisory capacity and not have decision-making responsibilities and will serve to build support for the updated General Plan.

Composition

The City Council established the following composition for the GPAC:

- One (1) Planning Commissioner, to be selected by the Commission
- One (1) Finance Commissioner, to be selected by the Commission
- One (1) Community & Library Services Commissioner, to be selected by the Commission
- One (1) representative of the Piedmont Historical Society, to be selected by the Society's board
- Five (5) to seven (7) at-large community representatives, to be appointed by the City Council. The Council may wish to consider appointing representatives reflecting the City's diverse population, such as seniors, youth, parents, business owners, and representatives of non-profit organizations and other community groups.

The City publicized the Council-appointed GPAC openings along with other City commission appointment opportunities. Interviews for all Council appointees took place on November 12, 2025 and appointments took place on December 9, 2025.

Any at-large GPAC openings that were not filled in the initial round of appointments can be appointed by the City Council later, following the initial round of public outreach for the General Plan in early 2026, which may generate additional interest in serving on the GPAC.

Process and Timeline

As detailed in the consultant's proposal, the general flow of GPAC meetings will be approximately every two months over a roughly two-year period, and related to the phases of work, as listed below:

- Meeting #1: Introduction to the project and the role of the GPAC
- Meeting #2: Issues, opportunities, community priorities
- Meeting #3: Focus areas and development vision
- Meeting #4 and #5: Land use options
- Meeting #6: Preferred land use options
- Meeting #7: Land use designation changes and development standards
- Meetings #8 and #9: Policy development
- Meeting #10: Responses to comments on the Public Review Draft Elements and Draft EIR

For each GPAC meeting, the consultants will prepare agendas and meeting materials, facilitate the meetings, and provide summary notes. All the meetings will be open to the public and include time for public input and participation. City staff responsibilities will include meeting logistics and communication with GPAC members, identifying meeting spaces, and providing support during the meetings.

GPAC meetings are anticipated to include the following topics:

Focus Areas and Vision: Building on the Part 1 deliverables, the Consultant Team will work closely with City staff and the GPAC (meeting #3) to draft a vision for future development and to identify "focus areas" – sites or areas that are likely to develop or redevelop by 2050.

Land Use Options: For each focus area, the Consultant Team will work with City staff to explore land use development options that are consistent with the vision but vary in the mix of use, density, and/or intensity. The land use options will be refined and confirmed in consultation with the GPAC (meetings #4 and #5), Planning Commission (meeting #2), and City Council (meeting #2).

Preferred Land Use Option: Based on the community feedback, and in consultation with City staff and the Consultant Team, R+A will prepare a recommended land use option for each focus area. The team will refine the recommendation with the GPAC (meeting #6) and Planning Commission (meeting #3) before inviting the City Council (meeting #3) to select the "preferred" land use options.

Land Use Standards and Map: Based on anticipated land use change, and building on the existing Municipal Code, R+A will draft updates to the General Plan land use designations and their associated development standards and refine them in consultation with City staff and the GPAC (meeting #7). R+A will then prepare an updated land use

map based on the preferred land use options and designations. Along with the policy direction confirmed in Part 3, the land use map will be the starting point for the EIR (Task 7).

Engagement Round 3: Using community-friendly summaries of changes in policy direction, community feedback on the policy frameworks will be invited through GPAC meeting #8, Survey #3, Pop-ups #3, Workshop #3, and focused stakeholder meetings. Based on a review of community feedback with City staff, recommendations for policy direction will then be presented to the GPAC (meeting #9) and Planning Commission (meeting #4) before requesting that the City Council confirm the policy direction for each of the General Plan elements being updated (meeting #4).

Engagement Round 4: Using community-friendly summaries of changes made since the community last reviewed land use options and draft policies, community feedback on the Public Draft Elements and Draft EIR will be invited through Online Survey #4, Workshop #4, and focused stakeholder meetings. Based on a review of community feedback with City staff, recommendations for refinements to the elements will then be presented to the GPAC (meeting #10) before proceeding with adoption hearings for the updated elements.

Following adoption of the updated General Plan, anticipated for early in 2028, the GPAC will be dissolved.