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2 **MOTION to approve the minutes of the September 9 meeting, as amended.**

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4 **MOTION: Brooks                      SECONDED: Bender      APPROVED: 4-0-1**

5  
6 **F. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

7  
8 None

9  
10  
11 **THE PLANNING COMMISSION AS STEERING COMMITTEE FOR**  
12 **THE GENERAL PLAN UPDATE PROCESS**  
13

14  
15 **G. OLD BUSINESS:**

16  
17 1. Review of Draft Housing Element Update and Residential Land Use Densities

18  
19 Planning Manager Winston Rhodes & Redevelopment Analyst Leslie Carbahal  
20 provided a Power Point presentation for the staff report dated 10/13/09. Ms.  
21 Carbahal informed the Committee that the presentation would highlight changes  
22 made to the draft Housing Element since the last meeting.

23  
24 Ms. Carbahal noted the following changes:

- 25  
26
- 27 • Grammar and typos have been addressed
  - 28 • Building code references on page HE-45 have been updated
  - 29 • Opportunity site #33 (6001 Pinole Valley Road) has been added and all  
30 vacant acreage and dwelling unit potential calculations have been  
31 updated.
  - 32 • Incorporates language as directed by the Steering Committee about  
33 “Inclusionary Housing Requirements” as directed by the Planning  
34 Commission (page HE-45)
  - 35 • New Appendix H was added to include ownership information for Housing  
36 Opportunity Sites

37  
38 Ms. Carbahal noted that the State Department of Housing and Community  
39 Development requires suburban jurisdictions to plan for low and very low income  
40 housing needs by identifying vacant and opportunity sites zoned to  
41 accommodate a minimum density of 20 units/acre. This should be considered  
42 when setting densities. She presented a vacant housing sites summary table and  
43 highlighted an increase in dwelling unit potential as a result of the addition of  
44 opportunity site #33.

45 On RHNA progress, Ms. Carbahal stated that 262 units are still needed to meet

1 Pinole’s RHNA requirements.  
2

3 Mr. Rhodes asked the Steering Committee to provide further comments on the  
4 draft Housing Element, and requested authorization to send the document to  
5 HCD for review with any additional changes.  
6

7 Commissioner Martinez-Rubin asked for points of clarification on the following  
8 items:  
9

- 10 • Page HE-3. Lines 4 and 5. What level of terminology specificity is needed  
11 when referring to local city government (e.g. City, Council, staff) and the  
12 mandatory?
- 13 • Page HE-13. What are the noted “non-family households?” Term needs to  
14 be defined in document.  
15

16 Mr. Rhodes responded by noting assisted living environments as an example of  
17 a non-family household.  
18

19 Commissioner Kurrent asked to have the term “non-family households” defined in  
20 the Housing Element document.  
21

22 Commissioner Martinez-Rubin questioned the use of the term “unattainable” to  
23 describe housing costs in the discussion of overcrowding cited in the document.  
24

25 Staff explained the intent of the language in the overcrowding discussion. Ms.  
26 Carbahal noted that staff would clarify the discussion of overcrowding in the  
27 document and modify the language.  
28

29 Commissioner Martinez-Rubin requested clarification about how the City’s size  
30 affects its ability to provide homeless services.  
31

32 Mr. Rhodes explained that limited City and Redevelopment Agency resources,  
33 the small size of the documented homeless population, and availability of  
34 established homeless services nearby influenced how this housing issue is  
35 addressed in collaboration with other countywide agencies and groups. Although  
36 homelessness exists in Pinole, the homeless population relies on regional  
37 programs for assistance and the City contributes funds to support homeless  
38 services.  
39

40 The Steering Committee consensus was to strike the sentence referring to the  
41 City’s size in this last paragraph of the homeless individuals and families  
42 discussion.  
43

44 Commissioner Martinez-Rubin asked if the more than 323 units cited in Appendix  
45 F on page HE-97 was an accurate count of the number of housing units built or

1 approved in Pinole between 1999 and 2006.

2  
3 Mr. Rhodes and Ms. Carbahal confirmed the accuracy of this figure and the  
4 coincidence that the RHNA for 2007 – 2014 is the same number.

5  
6 Additional information about existing multi-family residential densities in Pinole  
7 was provided by staff. Ms. Carbahal presented densities and described several  
8 existing multi-family complexes in Pinole. The density range varied from 19  
9 units/acre to 31 units/acre.

10  
11 Mr. Rhodes mentioned that density does not necessarily compromise or enhance  
12 design but that the State views density as necessary to produce lower income  
13 housing.

14  
15 Commissioner Kurrent summarized the challenges about meeting state  
16 standards and setting density standards attractive to developers and desirable  
17 for the community. Additionally, he clarified that the corridor specific plan should  
18 have consistency with the land use designation and corresponding densities.

19  
20 Ms. Carbahal stated that multi-family examples were also researched with higher  
21 densities outside Pinole. Staff noted examples of recently built multi-family  
22 development both less and greater than 30 dwelling units/acre. She noted that at  
23 most sites, design features can be incorporated to ensure the development is  
24 consistent with the scale of surrounding development. She presented examples  
25 of higher density projects in the surrounding region.

26  
27 Mr. Rhodes emphasized the relevance of these examples for small site  
28 development with various constraints as there are opportunity sites with various  
29 challenges that discourage development or require redevelopment assistance to  
30 get built.

31  
32 Mr. Rhodes presented the relationships between land use recommendations and  
33 the Housing Element. He presented a series of summary tables featuring land  
34 use category and density range recommendations. He emphasized that staff's  
35 recommendation accounts for the dwelling unit potential at the low end of the  
36 proposed zoning density.

37  
38 Mr. Rhodes discussed the following explanations as rationale for the land use  
39 recommendations:

- 40
- 41 • Encourage market-driven parcel assembly and redevelopment through
  - 42 density
  - 43 • Encourage viable non-automobile travel
  - 44 • Allow for a variety of housing products to meet diverse housing needs
  - 45 • Provide greater clarity and consistency about allowable densities

- 1 • Provide for decision-making flexibility during environmental review

2  
3 Mr. Rhodes reviewed the land use recommendations for the various  
4 contemplated General Plan residential land uses types and existing Specific Plan  
5 categories. He also described the recommended land use density to study for  
6 projects involving a Transit-Oriented Density (TOD) incentive and why the  
7 maximum density was recommended at 50 dwelling units/acre for further EIR  
8 analysis.

9  
10 He also noted that State law includes provisions for a density bonus that could be  
11 used by developers to propose projects with higher densities than normally  
12 allowed within the Corridor Specific Plan area and elsewhere in the City. He  
13 explained how studying the TOD incentive density would be beneficial during the  
14 environmental review process and could help understand the impacts if all  
15 residential opportunity sites sought density bonuses allowed under State law.

16  
17 Staff sought the following direction:

- 18 • Clearance to send draft Housing Element with any Steering Committee  
19 changes to State for Review
- 20 • Action on land use density recommendations to inform GP, SP, and  
21 Zoning Ordinance work products was requested on behalf of the staff.

22  
23 A Housing Element schedule was presented summarizing the major upcoming  
24 milestones for preparation and action on the Housing Element. The schedule  
25 included City action on the Housing Element update in the Spring of 2010 with  
26 the adopted Housing Element sent for final State review in May 2010.

27  
28 Commissioner Kurrent stated his support for addressing the circumstance of the  
29 Housing Element proceeding ahead of the other General Plan Element and the  
30 Specific Plan by having new land use categories studied to anticipate State  
31 residential rezoning commitments in order to demonstrate adequate sites zoned  
32 to plan for RHNA numbers and satisfy State requirements.

33  
34 Staff described the City's obligation to commit to rezoning available residential  
35 sites within the draft Housing Element based on existing General Plan residential  
36 densities and zoning as well as because action on the Housing Element would  
37 occur ahead of action on the other General Plan Elements, the Corridor Specific  
38 Plan, and the Zoning Ordinance Update. The City must commit to rezone  
39 adequate opportunity sites at densities specified by the State to plan for the  
40 RHNA for affordable units. Staff described the draft Housing Element rezoning  
41 commitment and the anticipated response from the State during review of the  
42 draft Housing Element.

43  
44  
45 PUBLIC HEARING Opened:

1  
2 Tim Banuelos, commented on Medium Density Residential areas described on  
3 Figure 6.4 of the draft Specific Plan Pinole Valley Road corridor in the Old Town  
4 vicinity and in the area between Ramona and Simas. After confirming the color of  
5 the draft Figure 6.4 map, it was noted by staff that the area from Ramona to  
6 Simas in the draft Specific Plan was contemplated for a density of 1.1 to 10.0  
7 dwelling units per acre.

8  
9 Commissioner Bender thanked staff for the presentation of existing Pinole  
10 projects as well as project information outside of the community. He also  
11 expressed appreciation for the listed rationale as well as proposing TOD density  
12 incentives.

13  
14 Commissioner McGoldrick thanked staff and subcommittees for writing the  
15 Housing Element in a way to allow for future flexibility and latitude.

16  
17 Commissioner Brooks stated that he feels comfortable with the Housing Element  
18 in its present form.

19  
20 Commissioner Martinez-Rubin appreciated the staff reports, draft  
21 recommendations, and the flexibility contemplated as well as the effort to  
22 improve regulatory clarity.

23  
24 Commissioner Kurrent stated is comfortable authorizing staff to send the Housing  
25 Element to the State.

26  
27 **MOTION to authorize staff to submit the draft Housing Element for initial State**  
28 **review.**

29  
30 **MOTION: McGoldrick                      SECONDED: Bender      APPROVED: 5-0**

31  
32 Mr. Rhodes asked if there was consensus on the proposed residential density  
33 recommendations.

34  
35 Commissioner Brooks expressed concern about the rezoning process and asked  
36 about implementation.

37  
38 Mr. Rhodes responded that the process would be enacted when the Specific  
39 Plan is adopted, it will require re-zones for consistency. Including proposed  
40 zoning changes in the Housing Element will allow staff to do outreach to the  
41 owners of the opportunity sites identified in the draft Housing Element.

42  
43 Commissioner Brooks suggested workshops for areas where rezoning are  
44 contemplated in order to expedite the process.

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4

The Planning Commission agreed by consensus to staff recommended proposed Residential Density Ranges as described in the following table:

| Land Use Category                           | Land Use Recommendation (dwelling units/acre)   |
|---|---|
| Low Density Residential (LDR)               | .21-1.0 units/acre  |
| Suburban Residential (SR)                   | 1.1-10.0 units/acre   |
| Medium Density Residential (MDR)            | 10.1-20.0 units/acre  |
| High Density Residential (HDR)              | 20.1-35.0 units/acre  |
| Mixed Use (includes RMU, CMU, OPMU)         | 20.1-35.0 units/acre for RMU, CMU, OPMU Includes provisions to allow lower densities for special needs housing groups |
| Corridor Specific Plan Sub-Area             | 20.1-35.0 units/acre w/TOD incentives up to 50.0  |
| Corridor Specific Plan Old Town Sub-Area    | 20.1-35.0 units/acre w/TOD incentive up to 50. Units  |
| Corridor Specific Plan Mixed-Use Sub-Area   | 20.1-35.0 units/acre w/TOD incentive up to 50. Units  |
| Corridor Specific Plan Residential Sub-Area | 1.1-10.0 units/acre   |

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6

**H. NEW BUSINESS**

7  
8

1. Review of Traffic & Circulation Background Report

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Scott Davidson of PMC presented the draft Traffic and Circulation Background Report and described existing trip behavior and existing auto transportation levels of service and cumulative conditions based on existing land use designations and the regional traffic model for Contra Costa County. He described the role of the West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee

1 (WCCTAC) and Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA). He described  
2 existing transit service.

3  
4 Mr. Rhodes spoke of ridership of local transit systems as the determining factor  
5 of routes and transit options. Land use can influence this factor over time.  
6

7 Mr. Davison also described bikeway facilities including opportunities and  
8 constraints He also reviewed pedestrian transportation issues to consider and  
9 ways to improve pedestrian transportation. He mentioned no decisions are  
10 requested but feedback for the preparation of the Circulation Element would be  
11 helpful.  
12

13 Commissioner Martinez-Rubin asked for clarification on roadway classifications,  
14 and asked what could be done to improve pedestrian transportation through  
15 changing roadway classification Level of Service.  
16

17 Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Davidson made note of this concern and described  
18 applicability of the WCCTAC Action Plan for routes of regional significance and  
19 specifically San Pablo Avenue within the Old Town area.  
20

21 Mr. Rhodes pointed out that page 26 of WCCTAC Action Plan provided as  
22 Attachment B for this item and how they relate to a potential narrowing of San  
23 Pablo Avenue.  
24

25 Chair Kurrent asked to see further discussion on the impact of schools. He would  
26 like to see drop off and pickup statistics evaluated. He would also like to see  
27 information about draft I-80 corridor study including variable posted speeds, and  
28 how contemplated on ramp metering may affect traffic in Pinole.  
29

30 Referencing Graph 14, he noted that the Appian I-80 interchange and lane  
31 configuration is poorly designed and needs to be analyzed. The middle lane was  
32 noted as a cause for confusion and safety issues.  
33

34 Commissioner Martinez-Rubin referenced page 5-12, and asked about traffic  
35 volumes and how Table 5-2 relates to Table 5-3.  
36

37 Mr. Davidson responded that this is simply an analysis of the intersection  
38 function. Intersections are evaluated at peak hours and the questioned road  
39 segments are evaluated by average daily values.  
40

41 Commissioner McGoldrick referenced page 5-30, and noted that it listed the  
42 Prune Street Bridge as closed, when it is actually open.  
43

44 Mr. Davidson described the use of the background report and presented  
45 additional information relating to potential road narrowing or a "road diet" for San

1 Pablo Ave. He reviewed the current San Pablo Avenue conditions within the Old  
2 Town area and possible suitability future narrowing.

3  
4 Mr. Rhodes described how the City could make the case regionally for a road  
5 diet for the portion of San Pablo Avenue that runs through Old Town if desired.  
6 Ultimately, it was explained that this is not a unilateral decision and there would  
7 need to be a notification of the City Hercules, WCCTAC and CCTA to review this  
8 type of General Plan Amendment based on the WCCTAC Action Plan and  
9 adopted CCTA General Plan Amendment procedures.

10  
11 Mr. Davidson described the advantages and disadvantages of reducing the  
12 number of lanes for San Pablo and how a road diet change affects automobile  
13 travel speeds and auto levels of service within the Old Town area.

14  
15 Commissioner Bender asked about turn movements between side streets such  
16 as John Street and San Pablo Avenue. Mr. Davidson responded and mentioned  
17 that this has not been studied yet but information will be provided to describe the  
18 impact of narrowing on San Pablo Avenue side streets as part of evaluating  
19 alternatives within the EIR.

20  
21 Commissioner Bender noted he was bothered by seeing the

22  
23 Commissioner McGoldrick expressed her desire to continue to look at the  
24 possibility of a road diet for San Pablo Avenue.

25  
26 Commissioner Brooks noted that time is still needed, consider the balance of  
27 increasing Appian Way capacity and decreasing San Pablo Ave. capacity.

28  
29 Commissioner Martinez-Rubin is concerned about making the case for how San  
30 Pablo Avenue within the Old Town area is unique and is interested in studying  
31 the narrowing.

32  
33 Commissioner Kurrent noted that most walkable downtowns in the area such as  
34 Walnut Creek's is off the main arterial roads and mentioned that the weather may  
35 not lend the area to outdoor dining. Additionally, other surrounding communities  
36 will not be receptive to the idea. However, he stated that any study of narrowing  
37 should include a middle left lane and the elimination of landscaped medians.  
38 Commissioner Kurrent noted that diverting traffic to I-80 may be a great concern.

39  
40 Mr. Rhodes noted that I-80 is not in the jurisdiction of the City of Pinole and  
41 outside the City's ability to control. San Pablo Avenue is currently used as a cut  
42 through for traffic to and from Pinole. He mentioned that the Planning  
43 Commission and City Council will want to evaluate this issue further based on  
44 what may best serve Pinole recognizing adjacent jurisdictions such as Hercules  
45 will be concerned and will object to lane reductions along San Pablo Avenue.

1  
2 Commissioner Brooks asked about how economic vitality could be evaluated. Mr.  
3 Davidson mentioned that BAE had been asked but it is difficult to predict how  
4 economic vitality will be affected given the high degree of uncertainty.

5  
6 The Steering Committee provided encouragement to continue to look at the  
7 roadway diet concept for ongoing evaluation.

8  
9 **I. CITY PLANNER'S/COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:**

10  
11 1. Upcoming Subcommittee meetings

12  
13 Oct 23<sup>rd</sup> 3:30 pm- Community Services and Facilities  
14 Future subcommittee meetings will be scheduled as information becomes  
15 available.

16 Remaining Steering Committee meetings this year are October 26<sup>th</sup>,  
17 November 9<sup>th</sup>, and December 14<sup>th</sup>.

18  
19 2. There has been preliminary interest expressed in the closed Long John  
20 Silver's restaurant site for a new bank building. A formal application has not  
21 been submitted thus far.

22  
23 **J. ADJOURNMENT: 10:00 P.M.**

24  
25 Transcribed by: Planning Intern Ben Dines and Associate Planner Anne  
26 Hersch  
27  
28