

MINUTES
OF THE
VISION SALINAS 2040 STEERING COMMITTEE
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE
September 27, 2023

WELCOME AND STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

PRESENT: Jose Luis Barajas, Jonathan De Anda, Dennis Donohue, Natalie Flores, Rosa Gonzalez, Robin Lee, Devon McCauley, Alexis Mendez, Omar Perez

ABSENT: Alejandro Chavez, Xago Juarez, Vicente Lara, David Mack, Carissa Purnell

STAFF: Lisa Brinton (Community Development Director), Grant Leonard (Planning Manager), Monica Gurmilan (Senior Planner), Jonathan Moore (Senior Planner), Donovan Arteaga (Community Outreach Assistant)

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

MEETING OBJECTIVES

- I. Scoping of the General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
- II. Discussion of First Draft Goals/Policies/Actions for Open Space, Arts/Culture/Youth, and Public Safety Elements

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Alexis Mendez called the meeting into order. Monica Gurmilan took roll. The minutes from the previous meeting were accepted. The discussion was started by Jonathan Moore.

Scoping of the General Plan EIR

Jonathan Moore began the meeting by presenting on the Scoping of the General Plan EIR. Jon described Draft Place Types maps that reflects new land uses. He then began to discuss the General Plan the Climate Action Plan. Jon turned the meeting over to Steve Noack from PlaceWorks for a detailed presentation on the Notice of Preparation.

Steve began by giving an overview to CEQA and the EIR process. He then went over the timeline for the EIR process. The conversation was opened to questions. Jose Luis Barajas asked if the EIR will consider the Future Growth Areas or if only the existing city limits are included. Rosa Gonzalez asked what exactly PlaceWorks is looking for from the Steering Committee. Steve mentioned PlaceWorks is looking for specific environmental concerns the Steering Committee may have. Rosa mentioned health of waterways is important. Robin Lee asked if there were more specific guidelines to “aesthetics” on the CEQA guidelines. Steve mentioned it is very subjective, but focuses on nighttime light and glare, blocking public views, etc. Robin mentioned the way people feel living in an environment should be considered. Devon McCauley how reduction goals of greenhouse gas emissions will be considered. Devon also asked how the homeless population and their physical removal will be included. Steve answered that it is not considered in CEQA. Devon asked if encouraging the use of native species will be included. Steve mentioned that would be included in the General Plan. Jose Luis if transportation is being quantified though VMT or number of vehicles per household. Steve answered VMT is measured. Jose Luis asked how place type planning will affect the projections. Robin asked what will be studied for impacts on water. Steve mentioned if the water supply can support the growth and drought years must be considered. The group then asked more clarifying questions regarding the topics evaluated in the EIR. Devon asked if the EIR only highlights negative impacts of projects. Steve confirmed that only negative impacts are included.

Discussion of First Draft Goals/Policies/Actions for Open Space, Arts/Culture/Youth, and Public Safety Elements

Monica then transitioned the conversation to the Draft Open Space element. Monica asked if any Committee members have any other themes that should be included. Rosa mentioned that intergenerational spaces and native plants need to be included and if farmer’s markets can be more locally based. She also mentioned prioritizing marsh land around Salinas. Robin mentioned there should be a mesh of greenways throughout the City to protect the habitat and wildlife.

Monica then opened the conversation to the goals, policies, and actions. Jose Luis said he would like accessibility to include more abilities and languages. Robin mentioned the need for connecting trailways. Alexis asked if the city has considered a new community native garden and food forest has been considered. Rosa asked if it is possible to rezone historic marshland to green/open space. Jon mentioned there’s been some of that with waterways but there isn’t much marshland in Salinas city limits. Monica then transitioned the conversation to the Arts/Culture/Youth element.

Devon began the Arts/Culture/Youth conversation by questioning if the recurring theme “outreach without risk youth” could be expanded to specifically mention homeless youth. Alexis asked if a youth council could be a goal. Monica replied it is mentioned in Action ACY – 3.1.3. Jose Luis mentioned policy 2.1 should include communication with commercial and residential owners to gauge their interest in volunteering property to host art. Rosa mentioned there should be an action that highlights intergenerational families. Rosa said there could be more emphasis

through an action in supporting and prioritizing local artists. Alexis said this can come through training. Robin mentioned the City should investigate a sports league for adults that would be during night hours (the hours that crime is likely to occur). Dennis mentioned there should be an agreement between the City and schools to use the open space facilities on school campuses, this could be a way to give more people access to greenspace and open space. Rosa asked how the City will assess barriers to access to open space and recommended the City should engage with local stakeholders. Omar Perez mentioned action 2.1.5 should include preserving the history of Salinas. Robin mentioned the City should establish a history walk throughout the city.

Monica then wrapped up the conversation and mentioned the Public Safety Element will be discussed during the next meeting.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is on October 25 and will take place in the Community Room at the Salinas Police Department.

FOLLOW-UP REPORTS

None.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- I. Draft goal/policies/actions for other elements
- II. Draft Land Use Buildout Projections

ADJOURNMENT

Alexis adjourned the meeting.