



Your input is needed to make our great community even better!

Help plan for growth and development in Windsor

What do you see happening in Windsor in 2040? In May the Town of Windsor initiated a two-year process to update the Town's General Plan, which was last updated in 1996. The General Plan is the Town's policy document that guides land use, transportation, infrastructure, community design, environmental, and other decisions. The General Plan is a long-range planning document, and the updated Windsor General Plan will look ahead to 2040.

The most important part of the General Plan Update process is public engagement. The public input we receive will help shape the vision, goals, and policies of the General Plan. Visit the General Plan website (www.windsor2040.com) and join the email list to stay informed. Plan to attend one of the upcoming Town Council/Planning Commission study sessions or community workshops and make your voice heard.

Visit the project website:
www.windsor2040.com

Upcoming Meetings

Stay tuned for information on upcoming workshops for both the General Plan and the Housing Element. Announcements will be sent to the email list and advertised around town. We want to get input from as many residents of Windsor as possible!

Where are we in the process?



Phase 1: Project Initiation

Town staff and its consultants are currently laying the groundwork for a successful process. In a joint study session to be held at Town Hall on Tuesday, May 27, at 6:00 p.m., the Town Council and the Planning Commission will receive an overview of the process and provide Town staff and the consultants with information on key community issues and future opportunities. The Town and the consultants will also formulate a robust community engagement strategy that includes workshops, a website, an online town hall forum, and newsletters.





What Is a General Plan?

Every city and county in California must have a general plan, which is the local government's long-term blueprint or "constitution" for future development. The general plan represents the community's view of its future and expresses the community's development goals. The general plan contains the goals and policies upon which the Town Council and Planning Commission will base their land use decisions. California State law requires that each City and County adopt a general plan "for the physical development of the town and any land outside its boundaries that bears relation to its planning." Typically, a general plan is designed to address the issues facing the community for the next 15-25 years.



The general plan is made up of a collection of "elements," or chapters, seven of which are mandatory. The seven State-mandated elements are:



land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety. Communities may include other elements that address issues of particular local concern, such as economic development or urban design. Communities can also organize their general plan any way they choose, as long as the required topics or elements are addressed.

Why Is Windsor Updating the General Plan?



The Town of Windsor adopted its current General Plan in 1996. The plan has served the Town well for many years, but since that time the town has grown and changed. When the last General Plan was adopted, the internet was not widely used, the youngest members of today's workforce had not been born yet, and many State laws that affect general plans had not been written. These changes require a reevaluation of the existing General Plan and confirmation of the vision for Windsor. This update offers many possibilities for Windsor, including:

- Exploring options for future growth;
- Expanding economic growth and fiscal stability;
- Preserving and enhancing established neighborhoods;
- Enhancing community and regional connectivity and mobility;
- Improving the health and quality of life of residents; and
- Ensuring resources are available to future generations.

Windsor Housing Element Update

The Town will be updating the Housing Element, one of the elements of the General Plan, on a faster schedule compared the General Plan. State law requires each local government to update its housing element every eight years. The Town of Windsor last updated its Housing Element in 2009. That Element covered a 7½-year planning period from 2007-2014. The planning period for the 2015 Housing Element is January 31, 2015, to January 31, 2021. The Town must update the Housing Element by January 31, 2015.

The Housing Element is also the only element reviewed and certified by the State for compliance with State law. The purpose of the housing element is to identify and analyze existing and projected housing needs in order to preserve, improve, and develop housing for all economic segments of the community. Once the Housing Element update is complete, it will be incorporated into the final General Plan. Please refer to the website for more details on the upcoming Housing Element Workshop on June 19th.

Stay Informed! Get Involved!

The General Plan process provides all residents and businesses with the chance to help guide the future of Windsor. A successful General Plan will reflect the community's priorities, and your input is needed to confirm the community's values and establish its vision. We need as many voices contributing to this process as possible. Here are a few easy ways to get involved:

Visit the project website



The General Plan website (www.windsor2040.com) is frequently updated with information on the status of the project, announcements of upcoming workshops and meetings, and publication of milestone reports.

Sign up for the General Plan email list



Visit the General Plan website at www.windsor2040.com and sign up for our email list. The email list will be used to send out notices about upcoming meetings and community workshops, project milestones, and recently-released public documents.

Attend community workshops



The Town will hold a series of Planning Commission/Town Council study sessions and community workshops at key points in the General Plan and Housing Element Update processes. Study sessions and workshops will be fully participatory with presentations, small group discussions, and thought-provoking, hands-on exercises.



Contact Town Staff

If you have questions about the General Plan process, please contact:

Ned Thomas

Community Development Director
Email: nthomas@townofwindsor.com
Phone: (707) 838-1021



The Windsor General Plan Process

1

Project Initiation (Spring 2014) **We are here!**

This phase lays the groundwork for success through the rest of the process. Town staff, the Town Council, and the Planning Commission will receive an overview of the process and provide the consultant planners with information on key community issues and future opportunities. The General Plan Team of Town planners and consultants will formulate a robust community engagement strategy that includes project branding, a website, and newsletters.

2

Update Background Data (Spring/Summer 2014)

During this phase the General Plan Team will review existing plans and collect new data needed to form the baseline existing conditions analysis for the General Plan. The General Plan Team will also engage the Town Council, Planning Commission, and community stakeholders to better understand what matters to residents. The goal is to get an idea of where Windsor is now so we can have a clear starting point for when we envision Windsor in the future.

3

Identify Issues and Opportunities and Confirm Vision (Summer/Fall 2014)

The community visioning process will include several opportunities for the community to get involved by attending Town Council/Planning Commission study sessions and participating in online discussions. This input from the community is essential for the next phases of the project and will be used to refine the vision of what Windsor should become in the future. The General Plan will be the Town's tool for reaching that vision of the future.

4

Focus Area Alternatives (Winter 2014-2015)

An important aspect of the General Plan is the land use diagram, which sets the direction for land use in Windsor. The land use diagram will identify areas where the community wants land uses to change or to stay the same, and it will determine the types of land uses that will be allowed or encouraged in the future. During this step in the process, the Town will consider and analyze different land use scenarios, with several opportunities for input from the community.

5

Focused General Plan Review and Revision (Spring/Summer 2015)

The goals and policies make up the heart of the General Plan. They are the mechanisms for achieving the community's vision of the future. The Town Council and Planning Commission will hold joint study sessions to discuss focus policy updates. Based on direction from the Town Council, the General Plan Team will prepare a Public Review Draft of the General Plan.

6

Environmental Review (Summer/Fall 2015)

A General Plan is considered a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), so the Town must analyze the potential environmental impacts of carrying out the General Plan. The General Plan Team will prepare an Environmental Impact Report with opportunities for community review and comment.

7

Final Documents and Adoption (Fall 2015 - Winter 2016)

The General Plan will go to the Planning Commission and the Town Council for public hearings. The Town Council has the ultimate authority to adopt the General Plan. The community will have opportunities to provide comments to the Planning Commission and Town Council during the final public hearings.