

9. GENERAL PLAN ADMINISTRATION

I. Role of the MV2040 General Plan

The General Plan is the link between the expressed values and vision of the community and the resulting public process and decision-making that affect the physical, social, environmental and economic character of the community. As such, the City's General Plan serves as a basis for decisions that affect all aspects of our community's daily lives. The General Plan is a strategic and long term document identifying goals and polices that guides and directs the City in terms of implementing policies, programs and resources.

II. General Plan Update Process

The City initiated an 18 month update process in January 2012, which was broken into three phases:

- **Introductory Phase
(January through May, 2012)**

This phase was intended to provide the community with a common foundation of information, legal requirements and resources about the General Plan and topics specific to Mill Valley. A General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) was established to oversee the work and progress of MV2040.

- **Formulation of goals, policies & programs
(May-December 2012)**

Three Working Groups established by the GPAC, and public input along the way, created the policy framework that will be the basis for the new Plan. Staff from other City departments, as well as City Commissions and Committees were involved in supporting the work of the Working Groups

- **Development of the Draft General Plan for Review and Adoption
(January-July 2013).**

Following preparation of a draft General Plan, the Planning Commission and the City Council held public hearings on the draft Plan and the environmental review. In accordance with state law, the Planning Commission hearings lead to a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council then hold their own hearings before taking a formal action to adopt the environmental review and General Plan.

III. General Plan Community Involvement

General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC):

The GPAC was responsible for reviewing the recommendations of the working groups and will provided additional direction, where needed, to make final recommendations to staff on goals, policies and programs for the Draft General Plan.

Working Groups:

Working groups were responsible for conducting hands-on, in-depth evaluation of issues, and developing, refining and presenting detailed policy and program recommendations for their respective topic areas to the GPAC.

Community Outreach and Input:

Continuous opportunities for public input were included throughout the Plan update process. All working group and GPAC meetings are open to the public. Additional events such as information tables (City Council on the Square; Memorial Day), speaker series on topics of interest at the library and walking tours were conducted as part of the public process.

The City’s virtual meeting space:

www.mv2040.org –served as a primary network to share ideas and make comments as working groups developed policies. Over 235 citizens registered on the MV2040 website and posted 160 comments. Online participation and interaction attracted a wide range of community members, who participated on topics of interest. As opposed to the traditional public meeting being the centerpiece of the process, this virtual online meeting space allowed for on-going dialogue and community participation.

This online interaction was intended to support and assist staff, working groups, and GPAC in better understanding the community on issues and potential policies prior to meetings and events.

**Figure 9.1
General Plan Schedule**



IV. General Plan Administration

Annual General Plan Review

In order for the General Plan to continue to reflect the community's vision and values, it cannot be thought of as a one-time effort that then sits on a shelf for the next twenty years. A General Plan must be dynamic and responsive to change. One way to insure that the plan continues to work for the community is to establish a regular review process. The City is committed to annually reviewing its progress in implementing the goals and policies of the General Plan. Since conditions and circumstances that the General Plan addresses change from year to year, an annual review and reporting of implementation will help ensure the City is moving forward to achieve the Plan's vision. The purpose of the review will be to report on the status of implementation priorities and take into account the availability of new implementation tools, changes in funding sources, and feedback from Plan monitoring activities. The annual review will be timed to coincide with the City's annual review of the budget and Capital Improvements Program in order to better tie General Plan implementation to these essential funding tools.

State law requires the City to prepare an annual report by April 1 of each year on its progress toward implementation of the Housing Element. This report must be submitted to the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR).

Five-Year General Plan Review and Update

The City is committed to undertake a thorough review of the General Plan every five years and revise and update it as necessary. This review and update process will encompass the entire General Plan including the goals, policies, and implementation programs.

General Plan Amendments

As conditions and needs change, proposed amendments to the General Plan may be initiated by the City, by interested individuals or groups or by property owners. Before proceeding, each will need to be carefully evaluated not only for merit and potential impact, but also for consistency with the rest of the General Plan. State law requires that the general plan be an integrated and internally consistent set of goals, policies, standards, programs, and diagrams. State law also limits the number of times that a General Plan can be amended and the process by which an amendment is reviewed and approved.

Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65350 *et seq.*, the Planning Commission must hold a public hearing when considering any amendment to the General Plan. Following the public hearing, the Commission must then make a written recommendation to the City Council. It is also important to note that any Planning Commission recommendation on a General Plan amendment must have an affirmative vote of not less than a majority of its total membership. In Mill Valley, that would be an affirmative vote by three of the Commission's total membership of five. The City Council is required to hold at least one public hearing on the proposed amendment, and if the amendment is substantially modified

and the modification was not considered previously by the Planning Commission, then the City Council must refer it back to the Planning Commission for its recommendation. The City Council adopts amendments to the General Plan by Resolution.

Any mandatory element of the General Plan (Housing, Land Use, Circulation, Open Space, Noise, Safety or Conservation) may be amended no more than four times in any calendar year. However, a number of amendments can be grouped together and processed at one time and will only count as one amendment for purposes of the limitation

General Plan Consistency

State law requires that the actions and decisions of each local government concerning both its own projects and the private projects it approves are consistent with its adopted General Plan. The courts have supported and furthered this trend through their interpretations of state law. The following is a partial list of City actions that must be consistent with the General Plan:

- Master plans for facilities and services
- Capital projects (including facility master plans)
- Subdivision approvals (tentative subdivision and parcel maps)
- Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance and any other Municipal Code amendments affecting land use, transportation or other General Plan policies and programs
- Development projects, including development agreements
- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
- Impact Fees, Service Fees and Special Assessments

General Plan Implementation

General Plan implementation must be a community effort. While much of the responsibility for implementation will be the City's, the General Plan is also community-based and will require the efforts of all citizens in order to be successful. Appendix A contains the "Implementation Plan" for the General Plan. It identifies every General Plan policy and program and then assigns responsibility, identifies potential funding sources, establishes the implementation priority (low, medium or high) and identifies a recommended timeframe for implementation. The Implementation Plan will be the primary means for assessing annual progress and action, as well as helping to set the City's work program for a given year. The Implementation Plan will be modified by the City Council following each annual review of the General Plan to insure that it is current and reflects the City's highest priorities and latest funding opportunities.