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January 25, 2023

County of Calaveras
Planning Department
(Sent by email.)

Dear Director Elliot,

In January of 2020 and 2021, and February of 2022, the Board of Supervisors completed its annual setting of priorities to implement the 2019 General Plan Update (GPU) in accordance with the requirements of the Land Use Element. Over the last three years we have been supportive of the Planning Department's priorities. We have some questions about the Planning Department's 2023 priorities.

1) General plan implementation priorities

Will the Board of Supervisors hold its annual general plan implementation priority setting meeting this year?

2) The Oak Ordinance and the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reduction Plan.

Thank you for the progress you made on the Oak Ordinance and the GHG Reduction Plan in 2022. We at the CPC support making completion of these efforts a priority in 2023. What do you think?

3) The Zoning Ordinance Update.

Thank you for securing an extension of the contract with Miller Planning Associates so they can continue to work on the Zoning Code Update. We support keeping the Zoning Code Update a general plan implementation priority in 2023. What do you think?

4) The map of priority land for long-term conservation.

At the 2021 priority setting meeting, then Planning Director Peter Maurer indicated that it would be wise to add some additional content to the open space plan in the Conservation and Open Space Element to provide direction for the Open Space Zoning Ordinance called for in the 2019 GPU. He said the supervisors should "consider adding open space planning to the programs the

department should be working on “because “before creating the zone we need to look at an overall plan, identify what we have out there.” We at the CPC supported that recommendation.

However, we do not believe that all such open space planning needs to wait for a major general plan update. The Zoning Code Update could include the open space zoning as called for in the 2019 General Plan. To make open space zoning work, it would help to have a map that identifies priority lands for long-term conservation. The Technical Background Report for the 2019 General Plan contains sufficiently accurate maps identifying areas suitable for conservation for each open space use: agriculture, recreation, public safety (fire, flood and emergency services), watershed, carbon sequestration, resource conservation and wildlife habitat. The County’s GIS system includes some of these map layers. We support developing this map of priority lands for long-term conservation as part of the ongoing Zoning Code Update. What do you think?

5) The Copperopolis Community Plan text.

Over the last two years, the County has postponed community planning for Copperopolis due in part to the limitations that COVID-19 placed on community meetings. In response, some community members met by Zoom in 2022 to identify useful pieces of prior draft community plan texts that could serve as a basis for a new community plan. They also built on that base to address current planning challenges in the area. Ralph Copeland sent you a copy of that draft plan text on September 29, 2022. (As you know the community plan land use map is already in the 2019 General Plan.) We would like the refinement and public review of a draft Copperopolis Community Plan text to be a 2023 implementation priority. We note that both the COG’s evacuation planning work and your GHG Reduction Plan work are progressing with public input provided by letters, emails, internet surveys and Zoom meetings of public officials. We believe that community planning can progress in this fashion as well. Also, we would like to give Supervisor Folendorf an opportunity to vote on that community plan in 2024, so that she can keep her campaign promise. What do you think?

6) Quarterly BOS workshops for the Highway 4 corridor communities.

If community planning processes are not going to begin on the Highway 4 corridor, please consider putting on the Board of Supervisors agenda, quarterly workshops to address planning issues of concern in Arnold, Murphys/Douglas Flat, Avery/Hathaway Pines, and Copperopolis. Such quarterly workshops could provide these communities the timely attention they deserve in the absence of community plans. What do you think?

7) General plan mitigation measures.

The prior Planning Director properly advised the Board of Supervisors to place a high priority on implementing 2019 GPU mitigation measures. Would you be willing to identify these measures for the Board of Supervisors to see if there are any additional measures they would like to make a priority in 2023?

8) Information needed for implementation decisions.

Are there additional Planning Department staff positions that are not yet filled? Could any of them be dedicated to general plan implementation? What do you think?

The CPC supports you hiring a consultant to evaluate the remaining dozens of general plan implementation measures, to identify some specific implementation targets, and to estimate the cost and person-power needed to accomplish them. This would give you the information you need in the future to suggest funding mechanisms, staffing levels, and implementation priorities to the Board of Supervisors. What do you think?

Thank you in advance for your response. This will help us prepare to be as supportive as we can when it comes time for the Board of Supervisors to revisit 2019 GPU implementation. Thank you also for all you do to keep the Planning Department functioning in these challenging times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Thomas P. Infusino". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tom Infusino, Facilitator

Calaveras Planning Coalition