



PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

ITEM NO. 6.1

DATE: April 21, 2026
TO: Chairperson and Members of the Planning Commission
FROM: Steve Riley, Planning Manager
SUBJECT: Comprehensive General Plan Update – Draft General Plan 2045

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Staff recommends the Planning Commission:

- Receive a presentation on Draft General Plan 2045.
- Consider community and General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) feedback on Draft General Plan 2045.
- Consider Staff recommended modifications to Draft General Plan 2045.
- Provide a recommendation to the City Council on any changes or revisions that should be incorporated into Draft General Plan 2045.

DECISION TYPE

Not Applicable

SUMMARY

The Draft Livermore General Plan 2045 (Draft General Plan) updates the City's existing 2003 General Plan to reflect current community priorities, address key challenges, and guide decision-making over the next 20 years. Shaped by extensive public engagement from 2021 to 2026, the Draft General Plan establishes a comprehensive framework of goals, policies, and implementation actions across State-required and locally significant topics such as land use, housing, mobility, infrastructure, and economic development. The Draft General Plan builds on longstanding priorities like preserving open space, supporting downtown and South Livermore vitality, and promoting multimodal transportation, while introducing new emphasis on climate resilience, environmental justice, and healthy communities. Supported by an Environmental Impact Report and ongoing public input, the Draft General Plan is intended to ensure consistent and balanced decision-making in alignment with Livermore's long-term vision, while addressing state-mandated housing requirements and accounting for population levels calculated based on full buildout analyzed in the Environmental Impact Report. The Draft General Plan is available on www.ImagineLivermore2045.org. Staff recommend the Planning Commission review the Draft General Plan and provide recommendations on revisions that should be incorporated for Council

consideration.

DISCUSSION

DRAFT GENERAL PLAN 2045 PROCESS

The Draft General Plan updates the 2003 General Plan to reflect community priorities, address key issues facing the City, support future decision-making, and improve overall organization and clarity. The Draft General Plan is shaped by input received through over 50 community events (a combination of workshops, staff presentations, property owner meetings, pop-up events and a communitywide survey), 36 General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) meetings, seven Planning Commission meetings, and eight City Council meetings from 2021 through 2026. The Draft General Plan is a culmination of community, GPAC, and Planning Commission feedback and ultimately City Council direction.

DRAFT GENERAL PLAN 2045 OVERVIEW

The Draft General Plan includes a Vision, description of key community issues, and goals and policies that guide how the City will address those issues and is supported by maps and diagrams. The Draft General Plan covers all State-required topics and additional locally important themes identified by the community. The document also includes an Implementation Plan, which identifies specific actions the City can take to prioritize work programs, allocate resources, and ensure decisions are aligned with the community's long-term vision. Together the Draft General Plan's goals, policies, and actions provide guidance to the City on how to direct change and manage resources over the next 20 years.

The Draft General Plan is made up of the following elements (an “*” indicates the element is State-required):

- **Land Use.*** Determines the types and location of future uses and development of land in Livermore and establishes policy guidance more broadly for land uses within the Sphere of Influence (SOI) and Planning Area.
- **Community Identity.** Provides information about the unique qualities of Livermore, including civic life and governance, social interactions, arts and culture, the natural setting, urban design, scenic resources and gateways, lighting and glare, and cultural and historic resources, and establishes policy guidance to identify, protect, and enhance these systems and features.
- **Mobility (Circulation).*** Establishes policy guidance for transportation systems and the movement of people and goods within the community, including roadway safety, public transit systems, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, parking facilities, air transportation, goods movement, and emerging transportation technology, and identifies system improvements necessary to meet existing and projected needs.
- **Housing.*** Identifies housing needs for residents of all income levels and establishes an action program to meet those needs, including planning for and requiring new affordable housing, preserving existing affordable housing, ensuring equal opportunity to access housing, collaborating regionally to address housing needs, and supporting energy efficiency in existing and new homes. The Housing Element is updated on a separate schedule from the rest of the General Plan to meet the requirements of State housing law. The current 2023-2031 Housing Element is available under separate cover on the City of Livermore's website and will not be modified as part of General Plan 2045.
- **Infrastructure.** Establishes policy guidance to maintain adequate infrastructure service levels,

including water facilities and delivery, wastewater collection and treatment, and stormwater capture and management.

- **Community Services.** Establishes policy guidance to support adequate access to services such as schools, childcare, solid waste, healthcare and healthy food, libraries, and programs intended to support aging adults.
- **Open Space and Conservation.*** Establishes policy guidance to conserve and protect open space and natural and agricultural resources, including park and recreation facilities in Livermore.
- **Noise.*** Quantifies current and projected noise levels from a variety of sources, explains impacts associated with noise, and establishes policies to inform land use decision-making to address current and foreseeable noise impacts.
- **Safety.*** Establishes law enforcement, emergency preparedness, and emergency response policies to ensure a safe community and protection from risks associated with the effects of seismic hazards, other geologic hazards, flooding, and wildland and urban fires.
- **Economic Development.** Establishes policy guidance to facilitate and maintain a balanced mix of economic activity and variety of economic sectors throughout the community to support the fiscal vitality of Livermore.

The Draft General Plan carries forward important ideas and concept in Livermore's current General Plan and other long-standing planning efforts:

- Maintaining and strengthening Downtown as the heart of the community.
- Facilitating Infill Development consistent with the Urban Growth Boundary.
- Protecting the natural environment and preservation of open space.
- Promoting agricultural conservation and economic vitality of South Livermore.
- Supporting bicycling, walking, and transit as modes of travel.

Draft General Plan 2045 also introduces new approaches and areas of emphasis to General Plan topics and opportunities:

- *Climate Resilience and Sustainability* addresses climate change adaptation, greenhouse gas reduction, water conservation, and sustainable development through policies integrated throughout the Draft Plan and denoted with an icon.
- *Environmental Justice* ensures all residents have access to services and safe and healthy places to live and play. Policies are woven into all elements of the Draft Plan and denoted with an icon.
- *Economic Development* emphasizes Livermore's diverse economy by strengthening existing businesses and facilitating the growth of an innovation, visitation, and craft economy.
- *Community Identity* celebrates Livermore's unique qualities shaped by science, agriculture, and arts.
- *Healthy Communities* addresses access to healthcare, healthy food, childcare, and services for aging adults.

COUNCIL POLICY DIRECTION

On April 28, 2025, the City Council directed that General Plan policy language should remain at a higher level of abstraction and detailed strategies should be incorporated into the appropriate implementation documents (such as the Development Code). Following Council direction, staff prepared the complete set of draft goals and policies, which are published as part of Draft General Plan 2045.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON DRAFT GENERAL PLAN 2045

Following publication of the Draft General Plan on February 20, 2026, City staff have undertaken outreach efforts to inform the community and gather feedback, as summarized in Table 1. As of April 13, 2026, approximately 169 people have provided feedback on Draft General Plan 2045. Attachment 1 provides a summary of community input received to date. Based on the open house, online tool, and written comments, some of the emerging themes from the community feedback on the Draft General Plan include:

- Maintain and protect retail and industrial uses.
- Protect open space and agricultural resources.
- Provide a variety of housing types affordable to different incomes.
- Plan for a multi-modal transportation system.

Table 1 Draft General Plan 2045 Outreach Activities and Comments

Outreach Activity	Date	Number of Participants
Draft General Plan 2045 Online Commenting Tool at www.ImagineLivermore2045.org	Published February 20, 2026	3
Public Hearing on the General Plan 2045 Environmental Impact Report	March 17, 2026	3
Open House at Robert Livermore Community Center	March 18, 2026	30
Draft General Plan 2045 Informational Video	Published March 18, 2026	n/a
Draft General Plan 2045 Executive Summary	Published March 19, 2026	4
GPAC Meeting on Draft General Plan 2045	April 1, 2026	4
Pop-up Events at Farmers' Market	April 9, 2026	15
Bilingual Intercept Outreach by La Familia (local Community Based Organization)	March and April 2026	100
Emails	February through April 2026	10

GPAC FEEDBACK ON DRAFT GENERAL PLAN 2045

On April 1, 2026 the GPAC provided a range of comments and recommended adoption of General Plan 2045. A summary of the GPAC meeting and feedback is included as Attachment 2. Some of the overarching themes that emerged from the GPAC's discussion included:

- Clarification that no new land uses are proposed for the east of Greenville future study area.
- Emphasized planning a future Midtown Specific Plan area that would not be dependent upon future Valley Link service.
- Expressed the importance of keeping the General Plan at a high level to maintain flexibility in responding to evolving needs and technologies.
- The General Plan highlights the importance of South Livermore and identifies policy direction and actions to implement the continued vitality of the visitor serving region.

STAFF CONSIDERATIONS ON DRAFT GENERAL PLAN 2045

Staff have received various questions from property owners, brokers, and the community regarding land use and policy positions. Based on those questions, Staff recommends the following modifications to Draft General Plan for clarity.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

Staff received questions and comments from property owners and brokers asking for clarification of feasible development. Based on these questions, Staff recommend clarifying the FAR identified in the Land Use Element is the maximum allowed. Staff do not recommend any changes to the FAR numbers in the Draft General Plan.

Doolan Canyon

Land Use and Open Space policy language exists for maintaining an open space separation in South Livermore Valley between the Cities of Livermore and Pleasanton. Based on feedback received, Staff recommends adding a similar policy for the Doolan Canyon area between the Cities of Livermore and Dublin.

Minor Land Use Change

Staff recommends minor changes to the land use map to better reflect current conditions and ongoing coordination with property owners. (Attachment 3)

- First Street Transition Area. Maintain a dual designation of Medium Density Residential (MDR3) and Commercial Service (CS) for the area nearest the First Street/Railroad overcrossing to support existing businesses and transition Commercial Services into a compatible neighborhood over time.
- Las Positas and Contractor's Place. Replace the Commercial Service (CS) designation back to a General Industrial (GI) designation to reflect the previous land use designation, current zoning standards, and the existing industrial buildings and facilities to support existing businesses, reduce nonconformities, and support long term economic goals.

CONFORMING AMENDMENTS TO OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS

To ensure consistency with the General Plan upon its adoption, staff are preparing Livermore Development Code amendments to be presented concurrently with (or shortly after) the adoption of the General Plan. Conforming amendments to the Livermore Development Code (LDC) are intended to align the City's various zoning districts with the General Plan land use designations and policy direction.

Conventional Zoning Districts: includes recommended updates to purpose statements, clarification of permitted uses, and adjustment to nonresidential development standards.

LDC Chapter 9: includes recommended amendments to the Conditional Use Permit/Zoning Use Permit (CUP/ZUP) review process consistent with General Plan land use and economic development policy to support diversity of businesses and create workforce amenities and services. Additionally, staff recommends updates to the Application Processing Procedures to implement the Draft General Plan Policy related to Health Risk Assessments. (This draft language was originally in the Draft General Plan, and it was determined that it would be more appropriate in a regulatory document consistent with Council direction).

LDC Definitions: includes recommended addition of "Advanced Manufacturing" definition based on Public Resources Code and the expansion of "Commercial Amusement Facility" definition to create opportunities for smaller facilities to locate in commercial zoning districts.

Staff will present these amendments for Planning Commission review and consideration during the adoption phase of the General Plan Update process, scheduled for July.

DRAFT GENERAL PLAN 2045 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

As required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the City has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to address the environmental effects associated with adoption and implementation of Draft General Plan 2045. The public review period for the Draft EIR began on March 7, 2023 and will end at 5:00 pm on April 24, 2026. (The Draft EIR is located on the [ImagineLivermore2045.org](https://www.livermore2045.org) site). The Draft EIR discloses the environmental impacts expected to result from implementation of the General Plan 2045 including the effects of potential future maximum buildout.

On March 17, 2026, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the Draft EIR to receive public comments. Public comments received pertained to population assumptions included in the Draft EIR, remarking that the projections anticipate more population growth than will actually occur. The population assumptions included in the Draft EIR are not a projection or forecast. Rather, they reflect population growth that could occur with the maximum development capacity identified in the General Plan to accommodate future state housing requirements. The Draft EIR plans for 16,610 net new housing units by the horizon year 2045 which would house approximately 43,820 net new people based on Livermore's current average household size.

Livermore's state housing requirement (the Regional Housing Needs Assessment, or RHNA) for 2023-2031 is 4,570 housing units, distributed among four income categories that range from Very Low Income to Above Moderate Income. However, the Draft General Plan extends beyond the end of the 6th Housing Element cycle (2023-2031). Assuming continued 8-year housing allocation cycles, and that the General Plan's expected horizon year is 2045, the updated General Plan designates sufficient residential land to accommodate the future 7th cycle (January 2031 to January 2039) and most of the 8th cycle (January 2039 to January 2047).

The scale of future RHNA housing allocations is unknown and difficult to predict. Housing requirement numbers are ultimately determined by the State and Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) based on statewide demographics. Hypothetically, if the 7th cycle of state Housing requirements is in the same proportion to the existing number of homes as the 6th cycle, it would call for approximately 5,100 new units. Similarly, if the 8th cycle continues that trend, it could be expected to call for an additional 5,900 new units. The combined total would be approximately 11,000 new units over the 7th and 8th cycles (2031 to 2047). This does not include any additional "buffer" for the two future housing requirement cycles. A buffer is necessary to ensure that if the sites listed in the housing opportunity sites inventory are developed without housing or are developed with less than the full amount of housing claimed in the inventory, there is remaining capacity to ensure an ongoing supply of sites for the full allocation during the eight years of the Housing Element cycle. The State recommends a buffer of least 15% to 30%.

If the City does not designate adequate residential sites to meet the future requirements as part of this Draft General Plan 2045, the next Housing Element, which must be adopted in January 2031 and could begin preparation in 2028 or 2029, may need to revisit the General Plan land use map and include a process to identify and change the designations on additional sites to accommodate more future housing.

The Draft EIR provides a conservative analysis of future housing and population growth that aligns with future state housing requirements and reflects the residential capacity that would be available from the land use designations on the Draft General Plan land use map. The City of Livermore is obligated to plan for sufficient housing sites and have policies in place to support housing production, but ultimately market conditions and the decisions of private landowners and project applicants will determine the amount of housing that is built over the next 20 years. The population assumptions used for the Draft EIR are not a target or a forecast and do not commit the City to approving or constructing any specific project.

Actual population growth would likely be lower and determined by market conditions and developer/property owner decisions. To reflect this, staff is also preparing a Fiscal Impact Analysis based on a feasible development scenario, which will guide budgetary planning and fee studies. For the Fiscal Impact Analysis, the estimated net new housing units would be 7,500 through 2045, which follows a similar trend set by the current General Plan. In the 2003 Livermore General Plan cycle, the City planned for approximately 11,800 housing units and produced approximately 5,400 during that period, reflecting an absorption rate of approximately 46%. The population numbers in the Draft General Plan and Draft EIR are based on RHNA driven housing capacity for planning purposes and not targets or commitments to specific levels of growth. (This Fiscal Impact analysis will be presented to City Council as part of the General Plan adoption process scheduled for July).

NEXT STEPS

The role of the Planning Commission is to advise the City Council on the adoption and on-going review of the General Plan and serve as an advisory body to the Council on matters related to city growth and development. Following this Planning Commission meeting, the next steps to finalizing Draft General Plan 2045 include:

- May 2026. City Council will review community, GPAC, and Planning Commission input, and provide direction to staff on the Draft General Plan 2045.
- July 2026. Planning Commission and City Council will hold public hearings to provide recommendations and consider adoption of General Plan 2045 and conforming Livermore Development Code amendments and certification of EIR.
- August 2026. Finalize and publish adopted General Plan 2045 per Council direction.

ATTACHMENTS

1. [Draft General Plan Comments](#)
2. [Draft GPAC General Plan Comments](#)
3. [Proposed Land Use Changes](#)

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