

North Fair Oaks Community Plan – Summary and Information

WHAT IS THE NORTH FAIR OAKS COMMUNITY PLAN?

The North Fair Oaks Community Plan is part of the San Mateo County General Plan, and establishes policies for land use and physical development in North Fair Oaks. The Plan describes goals for the development of North Fair Oaks (NFO) over the next 30 years, and includes a range of policies and programs to meet those goals. As a land use Plan, the Plan focuses primarily on physical development (types and amounts of housing, commercial, industrial and other uses; improvements to infrastructure, such as streets and sewers; the types of physical amenities needed, such as parks and playgrounds; and a variety of other development policies), but also includes policies intended to address the broader needs of the community.

The North Fair Oaks Community Plan is one of several specific area plans included in the County's General Plan; other area plans include Emerald Lake Hills, the Skyline Area, the County's Local Coastal Program, and others. The current Community Plan was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in November, 2011, replacing the former North Fair Oaks Community Plan, which was adopted in 1979. The Community Plan, and the County's other area plans, can be viewed [here](#).

KEY COMPONENTS AND GOALS OF THE PLAN

The North Fair Oaks Plan addresses land use, circulation, parking, parks and recreation, infrastructure, health and wellness, housing, and economic development. Overall, the Plan envisions North Fair Oaks as a complete, vibrant community where residents of all types can live and work safely and comfortably, with ready access to a broad range of transportation, recreation, housing, jobs, and services. Key goals of the Plan include:

- Encouraging a diverse, vibrant mix of land uses in appropriate areas, including housing, commercial, industrial, recreational, and other uses.
- Revitalizing vacant and underutilized land in key locations.
- Preserving and strengthening neighborhood and community character.
- Making all local streets safe and accessible for all types of transportation, including walking, bicycling, and automobiles.
- Creating sufficient safe, healthy, and affordable housing for all residents.
- Encouraging new development around main public transit routes and hubs.
- Improving the transportation network and connectivity within North Fair Oaks, and increasing connections to other parts of the region.
- Improving and increasing recreational opportunities.
- Improving infrastructure, including streets, water, sewer, and drainage.
- Enhancing overall community health and wellness.
- Providing easy access to necessary goods and services for all residents.
- Addressing code violations, unsafe housing, illegal dumping, and similar issues.

COMMUNITY PLAN CHAPTER SUMMARIES

1. Introduction

The first chapter of the Plan presents basic information on North Fair Oaks, including the community's location, its physical and social makeup, and a brief history of the area. The Introduction also describes the purpose of the Community Plan, and briefly summarizes the structure of the Plan document.

2. Land Use Designations

The second chapter includes the General Plan land use designations and General Plan land use maps for North Fair Oaks. The land use designations establish the basic regulations on the types, densities, and intensities of land use allowed in all areas of North Fair Oaks. These designations are intended to encourage a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, recreational and other uses in appropriate areas throughout North Fair Oaks, allowing greater intensities of development and a broader mix of uses in some areas, while maintaining existing uses and densities throughout the majority of the community.

3. Circulation and Parking

This Chapter addresses all types of transportation, including automobiles, bicycles, pedestrians, and public transit. The overall intent of the policies in this section is to increase the diversity, accessibility and safety of all modes of transit, with particular emphasis on the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. The policies also seek to enhance the connections between various transit modes, ensuring that travel within North Fair Oaks, and travel from North Fair Oaks to other destinations, is readily accessible to all residents, by all types of transportation. The Plan also includes policies to address parking issues in residential and non-residential areas throughout North Fair Oaks.

4. Infrastructure

The Infrastructure chapter covers infrastructure needs and goals for infrastructure improvement. In particular, infrastructure policies focus on improvements to the water system, including eventual implementation of recycled/dual water systems, ways to address flooding issues, and improvements to sanitary sewer systems.

5. Health and Wellness

Health and Wellness covers a broad range of policies aimed at creating a healthy community. These include creating more opportunities for walking and bicycling, creating more recreational and open space, addressing access to a range of healthy food options, addressing external pollutants, and providing ready access to necessary goods and services, including medical services.

6. Housing

This chapter focuses on incentivizing the creation of housing of a variety of types, at various price levels, to meet the needs of the entire range of North Fair Oaks residents, of all income levels, ages, and family types. While many sections of the Plan are relevant to housing, the Housing chapter is intended to recapitulate and expand on those other sections, and also includes policies intended to provide direction

for existing County housing programs in North Fair Oaks, and provide specific guidance to approval authorities in making decisions on proposed projects that might create or remove housing.

7. Design Standards and Guidelines

This chapter incorporates standards for design of the public realm, which includes streets, sidewalks, and other public spaces, and design standards for the private realm, which includes developments on private property. The guidelines for the public realm are intended to: enhance the quality of public spaces; enhance the quality of multimodal transportation routes, with a focus on design that is appropriate to bicycle and pedestrian use; and support the community's identity through the application of consistent, high quality design standards for the public realm throughout the community. The standards for the private realm are also intended to ensure high quality design, and address overarching design standards for North Fair Oaks, including building orientations, setbacks and stepbacks, massing, scale, and building character.

8. Economic Development

The Economic Development chapter of the Plan focuses on ways to support, maintain, and facilitate employment and business opportunities in North Fair Oaks. The key goals of this chapter are:

- to provide guidance to approval authorities in making decisions on proposed development projects, proposed regulatory changes, and other actions that might impact economic development;
- to complement the range of other policies throughout the Plan that directly or indirectly impact economic development;
- and to guide future creation of new economic development programs and policies.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How was the Community Plan created?

Over approximately three years, the County Planning and Building Department, Health Department, Housing Department, and Public Works Department worked with a variety of partners in the North Fair Oaks community to identify the community's needs and goals, and to create appropriate policies to meet them. With the assistance of a consultant team, and direction from a Steering Committee made up of community members with investment, experience, and commitment to North Fair Oaks, the County crafted the Community Plan to respond to North Fair Oaks' current and future needs.

Was there public participation in the Plan Update?

Creation of the Community Plan was based on significant public participation and input. Over the three years of plan creation and adoption, participation included: multiple community workshops; interviews with local stakeholders; outreach and input from neighborhood groups; outreach to existing community and neighborhood forums; guidance from a Steering Committee which included North Fair Oaks residents, representatives of North Fair Oaks organizations, and other stakeholders; briefings at the North Fair Oaks Community Council; multiple hearings at the County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors; and other participation opportunities. Public input received from every source was integrated into the final Plan.

What are the next steps in the Plan process?

Adoption of the Community Plan by the Board of Supervisors was the final step in the creation of the Community Plan itself. The adopted Plan is now part of the County General Plan, and is the formal, legally binding land use document for the North Fair Oaks Community. However, there are a number of additional steps related to implementation of the policies and programs incorporated in the Plan. Implementation will be an ongoing process; some steps will be long term, and will not begin immediately, while some implementation actions are already underway. Current implementation steps include:

Zoning Amendments

In order to fully implement the new land use designations incorporated in the Plan, the zoning regulations for these areas must also be amended. This process requires drafting new zoning regulations, which must be consistent with the Community Plan, followed by Planning Commission review of the zoning regulations, and Board of Supervisors review and adoption. The County is currently working on zoning amendments, with the participation of community residents and other stakeholders.

Parking Changes

North Fair Oaks has significant parking issues in most commercial, industrial, and residential areas, and the Plan commits the County to work to address those issues. The County has completed a Parking Study for the area, and will be exploring various parking options, including residential parking permit districts, through a public process.

Park Analysis and Park Creation

The Community Plan identified a significant shortfall of park and recreational space in North Fair Oaks, and a clear desire on the part of residents for new parks. The County is working with a consultant team, through a community-driven process, to identify new park opportunities, funding sources, and ways to expand, create, and maintain park, recreational and open space throughout North Fair Oaks, particularly in those areas identified in the Plan as areas of highest need.

Middlefield Road Streetscape Improvements

The County will be undertaking improvements to Middlefield Road, including resurfacing, undergrounding of utilities (electric, phone, and cable lines), changes to parking configuration, and improvements to amenities (sidewalks, trees, and other elements). These improvements can take many forms, and the design of the improved Middlefield Corridor has not been determined. The County Public Works Department, Planning and Building Department, County Manager's Office, and other partners will be working with the community to determine the most feasible and appropriate configuration of Middlefield Road, the best mix of amenities, and the desired form of overall improvements.

The implementation of the Plan is only one part of the County's broader effort to address issues in North Fair Oaks; the overall effort is North Fair Oaks Forward, a multi-agency, multi-partner focus on a broad range of issues affecting the community, some of which are directly relevant to the Plan, some of which are not related. More information on the entire range of North Fair Oaks issues and efforts can be found here: www.NFOForward.org

Are there Opportunities for Ongoing Participation?

There will be a number of ongoing opportunities for public participation and input in all aspects of Plan implementation. These include:

Public Workshops

Public Workshops will be held throughout the implementation process. The schedule of public workshops will be listed on www.NFOForward.org as they are scheduled.

Public Hearings

There will be public hearings on implementation at the North Fair Oaks Community Council, Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors prior to adoption of new implementation elements. The public hearing schedule can be found at www.NFOForward.org as well as on the [County Planning Commission website](#), and [Board of Supervisors website](#).

Workgroups

The implementation projects described above will be carried out in coordination with a number of Workgroups that have been formed to guide and support implementation of the Plan. There are currently four Workgroups, each charged with different aspects of implementation: Zoning/Parking, Parks, Public Art and Communications. Workgroup membership includes community residents, business owners, nonprofit organizations, Community Council members, and other stakeholders. The workgroups are described below.

Zoning/Parking Workgroup

The objective of the Zoning/Parking Workgroup is to craft and adopt the zoning amendments required to implement the land use designations in the adopted Plan and continue the mission of the Parking Workgroup. The Zoning/Parking Workgroup is currently working on draft zoning amendments, in two phases: an initial phase focused primarily on the Neighborhood Mixed-Use zoning areas Middlefield

Avenue, and a subsequent phase addressing other locations in North Fair Oaks. The first phase is targeted for completion by December 2014, and the second phase by December 2015. The Zoning/Parking Workgroup is facilitated by Senior Planner, Lisa Aozasa, LAozasa@smcgov.org

The Parking Workgroup was merged with the Zoning Workgroup early in 2014. The objective of the Parking Workgroup during the year that it functioned as a workgroup was to complete an area-wide Parking Study, and to adopt implementing policies and/or regulations to address parking issues throughout North Fair Oaks. The Parking Study has been completed, and the Parking Workgroup reviewed the findings, and assessed policies and programs for potential adoption. The Parking Workgroup and the Zoning Workgroup initially focused on the Middlefield Road corridor, and subsequently will address other areas of the community. The Parking Workgroup is facilitated by William Gibson, Planner, (650) 363-1816, wgibson@smcgov.org.

Parks Workgroup

The Parks Workgroup completed the first phase of work, assessing the existing park inventory and creating a vision for parks in North Fair Oaks with the help of the Trust for Public Land, a national nonprofit organization specializing in parks and green space development. With the leadership of the San Mateo County Parks Department, future efforts may focus on funding and creating new parks on specific sites, adopting new park policies, identifying park creation and maintenance funding sources, and other related efforts.

Public Art Workgroup

The North Fair Oaks Public Art Workgroup formed to identify opportunities for installing public art throughout North Fair Oaks. After gathering community input at community meetings held in April 2014, the workgroup prepared and submitted to the Board of Supervisors a proposal to fund three public art projects, a living wall project, a mural project that would involve local artists, and an art project in the new Health Center parking lot. The workgroup is composed of individuals from the North Fair Oaks community, the North Fair Oaks Community Council, the San Mateo Arts Commission, and a non-profit, MMAP. The workgroup is facilitated by Ellie Dallman, North Fair Oaks Outreach Coordinator, (650) 363-4084, edallman@smcgov.org.

Outreach and Community Engagement Workgroup

The objective of the Outreach and Community Engagement Workgroup is to ensure that North Fair Oaks residents and other stakeholders are fully informed about the Plan implementation process, and are able to engage in the process and provide input. The Workgroup is also tasked with ensuring that work between the various workgroups and various County departments and other organizations focused on Plan implementation is coordinated, and that information is shared between the various participants. The Outreach and Engagement Workgroup is facilitated by North Fair Oaks Forward consultant Pat Brown, (650) 823-5952, brownpcrc@gmail.com.

The full schedule of workgroup activities is available at www.NFOForward.org

Workgroup meetings are informal, working sessions intended to provide advice and input on aspects of Plan implementation. They are open to the public, and are also open to new members who are interested in and willing to commit to working on the specific aspects of implementation that are the focus of each group. Anyone interested in joining an existing workgroup should contact the workgroup facilitator listed above.

For any additional information on the North Fair Oaks Community Plan, Plan implementation, workgroup activities, or other information, please contact:

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