

# Planners envision population limit for Capitola

Preliminary drafts of the Capitola general plan are now available to the public at the city hall.

A public hearing will be held by the city planning commission during their regular meeting on Oct. 15, city planner Eric Boyd said.

The proposed plan has been under development by Concord planning consultant Charles W. Delk and Associates for the last three months.

Commissioned by the city council to update the five-year-old General Plan, the consultants have been working with a citizen's group — appointed by the council and planning commission — to put together the 17-page preliminary report.

"The broad intent of the proposed Capitola general plan is to provide a set of physical, social and economic policy guides for the orderly growth and conservation of the city and its adjoining future sphere of influence over the next five, 10 and 20 years or more," the consultants wrote.

Following approval by the planning commission, the plan then goes to the city council for action. Afterwards, Delk will translate the city's desires into a final report which will be approved by the two governing bodies as the basis for specific zoning and land use decisions.

Over the last decade, Capitola has been going through major changes. Eleven hundred housing units were built, a major regional shopping center started, signaling an end to the dominance of the Village as the city's commercial area. Population increased 155 per cent during the same decade and year-round housing increased by 90 per cent.

Today, the Capitola planning area stretches from Rodeo Creek to New Brighton Beach State Park, south of state Highway 1 and has a population of 13,000 people living in 5,600 dwelling units.

Residents expressed their opinions in a home survey, with these results:

1. Capitola should have a population limit established for the planning area.

2. More than 60 per cent were dissatisfied with the way growth

had occurred over the past five years.

3. Equal numbers totaling 75 per cent of those sampled felt that present zoning should either remain the same or be decreased in density for future population increases in the community.

4. The majority felt that their present home would be adequate for their needs for at least 15 years.

5. Nearly two-thirds envisioned living in single family detached homes ten years from now, while only three per cent envisioned living in apartments.

6. Almost two-thirds favored use of either public or private funds to preserve and enhance an historical landmark theme in the Central Village and Depot Hill areas.

7. About 60 per cent favored expanding the 41st Avenue Shopping District.

8. More than 70 per cent favored development of the Wharf Area for commercial and recreational land uses.

9. Almost 60 per cent would like to see more job opportunities in the planning area in the future with speciality commercial and professional office jobs being preferred.

10. Surprisingly, almost 50 per cent were opposed to breaking up the strip commercial character of 41st Ave. that is emerging from the Bay to the state highway.

11. Slightly more people were opposed to a bond issue to purchase open space, but neither option received a majority of those sampled.

12. Stabilization and enhancement of the waterfront has the highest open space and conservation priority; preservation of Soquel Creek and provision of paths was second; and preservation of public views from coastal bluffs third of nine items considered.

The consultants feel that the citizen's committee favors:

—Controlled growth with relatively low densities.

—Better planned development regulations and architectural control of new development.

—Preservation and enhancement of the Village Center and Depot Hill areas.

—Acquisition of open spaces and parks based on a com-

prehensive plan.

Using their General Plan studies, the planners believe that the Capitola planning area could support an ultimate design capacity of 17,000 to 20,000 people, an increase of 4,000 to 7,000 over today's population.

The number of dwelling units could increase from 5,660 in 1970 to 8,300 when the Planning Area is fully developed. The labor force would grow from today's 4,300 to 5,600 — 6,600 by 1990 or beyond.

"Contrary to the desires of the majority of Capitola residents," the consultants wrote, "pressures for higher residential densities will continue as smaller families, the cost of construction and labor, the cost of money, the small amount of available land all combine to form housing needs for other than single family detached home on 8,000 square foot lots."

"While these pressures will take place primarily in the western half of the planning areas, there are opportunities in the eastern portion around the Village Center and along the Bay to conserve and rehabilitate existing dwellings without resorting to massive redevelopment projects."

"The contrast between the new and old is also expected to be heightened in the two major commercial areas, as conservation and rehabilitation of the Village Center will be contrasted by expansion of the Regional Shopping Center on 41st Ave.

These contrasts between the old and new can be partly integrated by the provision of a comprehensive open space system that can provide both visual, recreational and circulation benefit. In regard to the latter, the community should be looking for alternatives to reliance on the automobile wherever possible rather than creating major new road routes.

In accordance with state law, the Capitola General Plan contains eight separate elements: Land use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Seismic Safety, Noise and Scenic Highway; and an additional Community Design element.

The final report will include community goals, descriptive

text and background information, specific policy statements, timing, and methods of implementation.

## LAND USE

1. Provide identifiable residential areas of varied densities to continue to accommodate the lifestyles of all ages and income groups in Capitola.

—Designate four areas as unique, devise special guidelines for their conservation and development—the Village Center, Soquel Creek area, Waterfront area, and the Regional Shopping Area.

—Expand the regional shopping center north along 41st Ave.

—Conserve and rehabilitate the Village Center.

—Establish an industrial park near the 41st Ave. interchange and upgrade existing industrial areas.

—Reaffirm the need for an elementary school west of Soquel Creek and encourage provision of an open space school-park on the site owned by the school district.

—Conduct a more detailed study of three park sites that have recently been recommended for active and passive recreation programs, and have at least one on either side of Soquel Creek.

## CIRCULATION

—Improve peak hour capacity of the freeway by improving 41st Ave. interchange.

—Improve 41st Ave. as a parkway-expressway, with capacity for six moving lanes with on-street parking, and left-turn storage lanes, free right turn lanes, landscaped median and street trees.

—Make effective use of existing east-west arterials—Capitola Road, Brommer Street and Portola Drive—by eliminating on-street parking and widening to four lanes through capitol improvements as needed.

—Discourage east-west traffic not destined for Capitola by modifying the existing bridge in the Waterfront area (Stockton Avenue) rather than providing an additional crossing of Soquel Creek.

—Reroute traffic between Village and waterfront, build malls in Village and improved

boardwalk opportunities along the waterfront.

—Set up pedestrian and cycling system using combination of streets, railroad right-of-way, natural features and land acquired through planned development.

—Ultimately provide parking on edge of Village Center.

—Provision of small craft harbor in the Waterfront area for use of Capitola residents.

—Develop loop collector system around the Regional Shopping Center to relieve congestion on 41st Ave. and provide separation between the Center and the adjoining neighborhoods.

## HOUSING

—Provide a variety of housing for all age, income and race groups.

—Conserve and rehabilitate existing aging housing by providing protective zoning, encouraging voluntary code enforcement, and forming voluntary improvement associations.

—Limit high density growth primarily to undeveloped areas around Regional Shopping Center.

—Reduce the amount of multiple residential land in the Live Oak area.

—Encourage housing as one of several mixed land uses in Village.

—Provide for long-range conversion of two trailers in Noble Gulch to park use.

## CONSERVATION

—Public beachfront held primarily for use of Capitola residents and secondarily for those drawn to Village Center and tourist housing.

—Soquel Creek and adjoining tree cover included as part of open space plan with cycling and pedestrian trails for public use.

—Coastal bluffs stabilized and preserved without future encroachment by developers.

—Preserve Corcoran Lagoon and Rodeo Gulch in natural states with addition of riding and hiking trails.

—Preserve remainder of Noble Gulch.

—Tall stand of Eucalyptus trees on Park Drive should be only selectively trimmed and thinned; not entirely cut down at

the eastern entrance to the city.

—Heritage buildings and trees recognized in certificate and plaque program to make public aware of positive conservation efforts.

## OPEN SPACE

—Preserve significant natural features in city, including: Soquel Creek and banks, coastal bluffs and waterfront area, the beachfront, Rodeo Gulch and Corcoran Lagoon, Moran Lake, Noble Gulch (conservation and rehabilitation), Eucalyptus groves along Park Avenue, Redwood, Cypress and Pine tree over at eastern end of Escalona Drive.

—Incorporate present and future park and recreation areas into open space system and then connect them with cycling and greenways. These areas include: New Brighton Beach State Park, neighborhood park next to Capitola School, trailer park next to Jade Street school site; vacant land west of Soquel Creek next to freeway; East Cliff sewage treatment plant; mini-parks on bluffs at 41st Ave., adjacent to Soquel Creek and on Depot Hill, and joint use of Capitola School field for recreation programs and future use of Jade Street school site for same purpose.

## SEISMIC SAFETY

The city is not located on near any major fault line areas and there are no indications of major landslide dangers within planning area. There is a hazard from Tsunami (seismic sea waves), according to 1972 report by California Division of Mines and Geology.

Development within the Soquel Creek flood plain should be precluded and development above flood plain by use of revised Planned Development zoning.

## NOISE

Critical noise areas seem to lie within following areas:

—Adjacent to freeway.

—Next to 41st Ave., north of Portola Drive.

Highest noise levels were recorded at intersection of Capitola Road and 41st Ave.

## SCENIC HIGHWAYS

Three roads within the planning area have been designated as scenic highways in the

preliminary general plan, including: the freeway, the Scenic Bypass Loop, and Wharf Road along Soquel Creek.

The combination of these three different levels of scenic highway would provide two major east-west scenic corridors through Capitola and a connecting north-south local link to the heart of the community.

## COMMUNITY DESIGN

A permissive, rather than mandatory element in California General Plans, the community design element takes the circulation and open space elements as a framework and provides identity and three-dimensional guidance.

General principals relating to the major components of community design are:

—Major focal points should have a clear form in contrast with their background to serve as identifiable landmarks within the community: Rispin mansion, The Shadowbrook, railroad trestle, and Capitola Wharf.

—Major centers should dominate over the adjoining area in terms of size, intensity of use, prominence of form and provision of common open space: community centers such as city hall and Capitola School complex, park sites and churches.

—Major entries to the community should be attractive, clearly defined and provide a strong sense of direction.

—Major areas include vacant land, natural settings, single and multiple family neighborhoods, mobile home parks, farming lands, the Village Center, New Brighton Beach State Park, the Regional Shopping Center, strip commercial development, and industrial lands.

—Major vantage points should be accessible to the public from major thoroughfare or trails where sweeping views of the form of the community are revealed.

—Identifiable developed areas should be visually clarified by major man-made paths such as arterial roads and by significant natural features such as creek-ways.

—Open Space Areas should be used to contrast and delineate developed areas.

—Separators should be used to

define the edge of identifiable developed areas.

—Integrators should be used to connect developed areas, centers and focal points.

—Edges of developed areas and open space areas should be clearly defined when a transition from area forms to linear forms occurs.

## Merchants launching ad program

The Capitola Village Association is launching an advertising campaign in two daily county newspapers, designed to entice shoppers into Central Village District and Upper Capitola Avenue shops.

The members — composed of the owners of speciality shops, restaurants, and art galleries — voted last week to support the printed media campaign — the group's second advertising effort since their formation early this summer to fill the gap by the Chamber of Commerce in actively promoting tourism and business in the downtown area of Capitola.

The Association plans to start a shuttle bus service along the Avenue as soon as final details can be worked out and approval obtained from the city Planning Commission.

The group also plans to appear next Monday evening before the commission, asking for consideration of its ideas to beautify Capitola Avenue.

They are also looking for winter promotion ideas that will encompass the entire business area and can be promoted by all members.

All members are urged to attend the meeting tomorrow morning at the Galley restaurant to view the advertising copy and go over proposed articles of incorporation.

A breakfast meeting will be held Sunday morning, 9 a.m., at the restaurant to discuss the Planning Commission proposal.



