



CITY OF SOLEDAD STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Resolution No. 6071, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad Accepting the Vision and Guiding Principles for the 2024 Siempre Soledad General Plan Update Meeting

TO: Honorable Mayor Velazquez and City Council

FROM: Kao Nou Yang, Community and Economic Development Director

THROUGH: Megan Hunter, City Manager

MEETING DATE: May 1, 2024

Recommendation

It is recommended that the City Council Consider and Approve Resolution No. 6071, “A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad, Accepting the Vision and Guiding Principles for the 2045 Siempre Soledad General Plan Update”.

Executive Summary

The City of Soledad is currently in the process of updating its General Plan, known as "2045 Siempre Soledad". This process is estimated to take another 18 to 20 months to complete. The City has concluded the visioning phase, which will set the tone for the plan as it is being developed. Over the last 6 months, the City has engaged with the community, the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC), and the Soledad Planning Commission to gather extensive feedback, which is reflected in the draft Vision and Guiding Principles that is being presented to the City Council for acceptance.

Background

California state law requires each city and county to adopt a general plan “for the physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency’s judgment bears relation to its planning” Gov. Code 65300. As part of California state law, the City is required to update the General Plan every 20 years for long range development and growth of the City. The City of Soledad is in the process of updating the General Plan named “2045 Siempre Soledad.” This update is anticipated to be completed by late 2025.

The process of updating a general plan requires extensive data collection, analysis, and community engagement. The City has contracted with a consultant, “PlaceWorks” to help complete a comprehensive update of the 2005 General Plan. The Existing Conditions Report has been completed and now the visioning process has concluded resulting in draft Vision and Guiding Principles for City Council consideration.

Review & Analysis

The Vision Statement and Guiding Principles act as touchstones to ensure that the goals, policies, and implementation programs align with the overarching vision. The vision statement reflects what the community values most about the City and their aspirations for the future. Its purpose is to inspire and set the direction for the General Plan's goals, policies, and implementation programs.

The draft vision states: *Soledad is a small town with big ideas, celebrating our rich cultural heritage and serving as the gateway to Pinnacles National Park. We are a welcoming and diverse community that is committed to sustainable growth, improving quality of life, supporting businesses, and being a safe and healthy city where everyone thrives.*

Between November 1st, 2023 and February 29, 2024, the City of Soledad conducted extensive community engagement to gather feedback on some of the main issues facing the City. Outreach included community events, such as the El Dia de los Muertos, canvassing, Facebook posts, pop-ups, and interactive surveys. The feedback received is summarized in Attachment 2 and was very important in crafting the Vision and Guiding Principles presented as Exhibit A.

On February 21, 2024, a General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) meeting was held to review the Vision and Guiding Principles. The feedback from the GPAC resulted in changes to specific wording and more inclusive language for people with disabilities and the elderly. On March 14th, 2024, the Vision and Guiding Principles were presented to the Soledad Planning Commission, who agreed on many of GPAC’s recommended revisions. The Planning Commission provided feedback that centered around safety, community spaces, and mobility. The proposed revisions given by the GPAC and the Planning Commission are included in the Final Draft Exhibit A.

Financial Considerations

The City has allocated \$1,169,051.00 for the development of the General Plan, which has been budgeted through the General Fund and various grants. The City has a contract with PlaceWorks for \$1,169,051. The development of the Vision and Guiding Principles are included as part of the PlaceWorks contract.

Alternatives

- Accept the Vision and Guiding Principles as recommended.
- Modify the Vision and Guiding Principles.
- Provide other direction to Staff.

Planning/CEQA

The General Plan Update will undergo environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Accepting the Vision and Guiding Principles as a step in the drafting of the General Plan is not a project as defined under CEQA Section 15378.

Public Notice Requirements

Not required.

Attachment(s):

Resolution No. 6071

Exhibit A- Vision and Guiding Principles- draft

Attachment 2. Key Themes Community Input

Attachment 3. Resolution No. 2024-04 The General Plan Vision and Guiding Principles - signed (002)

Attachment 4. CC Presentation 050124 AM Edits