

SUMMARY

Visioning Workshop #2 – April 6, 2011

This second Visioning Workshop focused on community health and wellness issues. The workshop was open to the public. Various agencies and organizations that provide health and community wellness services in the area were invited to attend.

Beth Thompson of De Novo Planning Group presented an introduction to the General Plan Update project, including the intent of the General Plan, key steps in the General Plan Update process, and an overview of the opportunities available for public involvement throughout the General Plan Update.

Workshop attendees were invited to participate in the first workshop activity, which involved identifying what community health means in Cotati and recommended community health and wellness areas of focus for the General Plan Update.

Following the activity, Lynn Walton, Healthy Communities Section Manager of the Sonoma County Department of Public Health, provided a presentation focused on factors related to community health. The presentation identified the top causes of death in Sonoma County, a discussion of the significant increase in obesity nationwide, and described how public health relates to the built environment. Ms. Walton described the key risk factors related to poor health outcomes, which include poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, alcohol and tobacco use, unsafe streets, and unsafe neighborhoods.

Abby Young, Bay Area Air Quality Management District, provided an overview of health issues associated with air quality. Ms. Young discussed increases in temperature, greenhouse gases emissions, and toxic air contaminants and the public health impacts of air pollutant emissions. The presentation addressed land use and transportation influences on air quality and described how the General Plan Update provides an opportunity to strengthen air quality measures associated with new and existing development.

The presentations can be viewed on the General Plan Update website at cotati.generalplan.org.

Following the presentations, attendees were asked to consider the factors identified in the first activity as well as the information they had just been presented with regarding healthy communities. A small group exercise followed with each group identifying the top three community health issues that should be addressed by the General Plan Update and strategies for addressing the issues.

De Novo Planning Group then provided a brief overview of the Housing Element of the General Plan, including key components of a Housing Element, the City's regional housing needs allocation numbers, and identification of special population groups that are considered in identifying housing needs. Workshop attendees were then asked to identify specific housing and human services needs.