

General Plan Discussion

**City Council and Planning Commission
Joint Session**

June 1, 2015

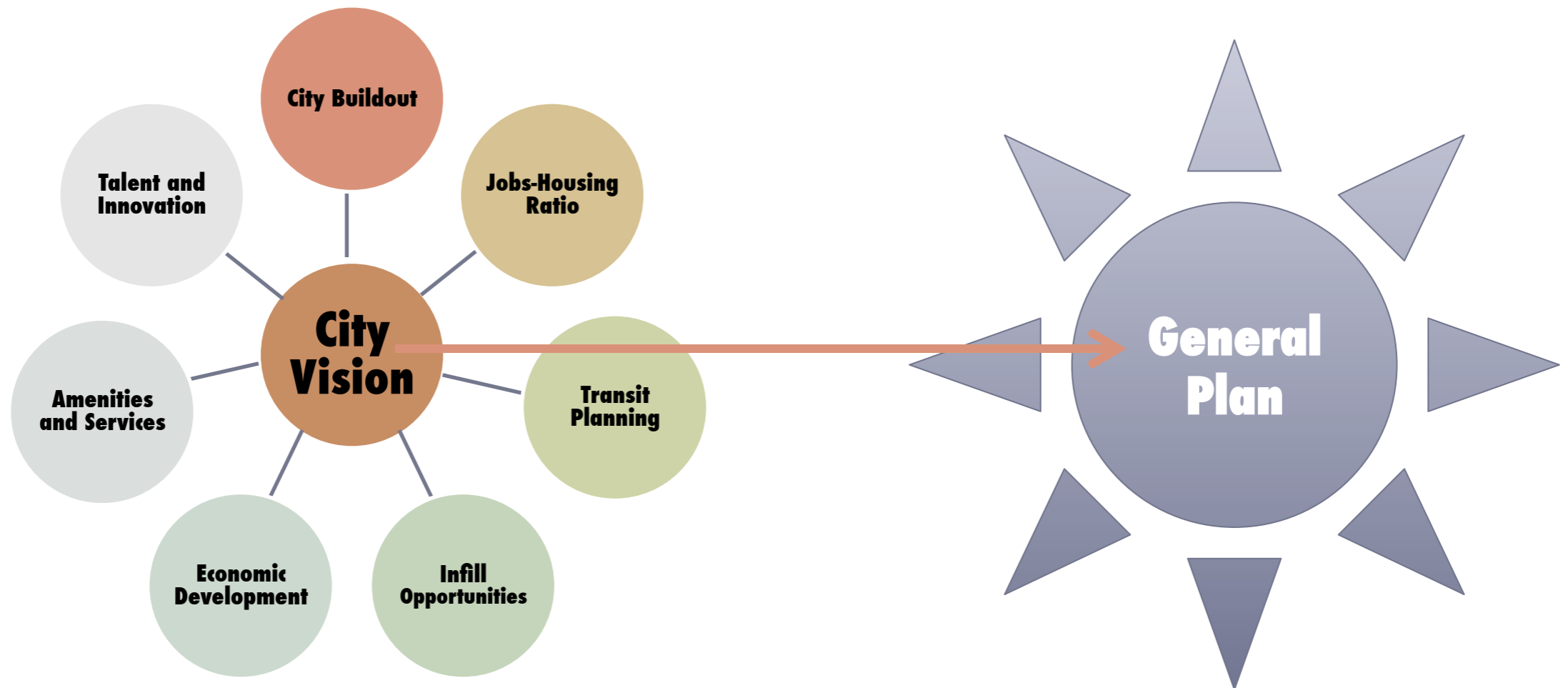


Agenda

- **Why update the General Plan now?**
- **What are the key issues we need to address?**
- **What is the process for completing a plan?**
- **How will the community participate in the process?**
- **Public comment period**



Local Issues



What Is the General Plan?

- **Overarching policy document**
- **Guides City actions**
- **Identifies expectations – the Vision**
- **Implemented through both private development and public projects**
- **Living document**



City's General Plan History

- **Adopted November 2003**
- **Numerous developer and City-initiated amendments**
 - **Laguna Ridge (2004)**
 - **Safety Element (2005)**
 - **Laguna West (2005)**
 - **Housing Element (2009, 2014)**
 - **Sustainability Element (2013)**
 - **SEPA (2014)**



Upcoming General Plan Amendments

- **Safety Element: 200-year floodplain**
- **Sports Complex**



State Law Changes Since 2003

- **Complete streets**
- **200-year floodplain**
- **Climate change**



The Vision

- **Today's meeting**
- **Community discussion**
- **Reaffirmation (?)**
- **Defines the next 15+ years for Elk Grove**
 - **Where we go**
 - **What we do**
 - **How we do it**



Key Issues and Opportunities



The Community

Key Issues and Opportunities



Economic Vitality

Maximize the potential of Elk Grove's social capital and physical infrastructure to attract employers and create economic destinations.



Rural Area

Affirm or enhance the City's policy to maintain the character of Elk Grove's rural areas as a foundation for the plan.



Regional Goals and Influences

Consider and describe Elk Grove's role in achieving regional growth, economic opportunities, and sustainability goals while protecting the ability to grow or evolve as we choose.

This plan presents an opportunity for the City to tell its story to the community and to the region, and to define its values and hopes for the future.

Infill Development and Outward Expansion

Identify appropriate infill strategies and plan for future growth in expansion areas outside the current city limits.

- **Infill strategies such as innovative land use; physical, legal, and market constraints; and transportation options**
- **Past and future attempts to expand the SOI**
- **City response to applications**



Neighborhood, District, and Community Identity

Create a stronger sense of place.

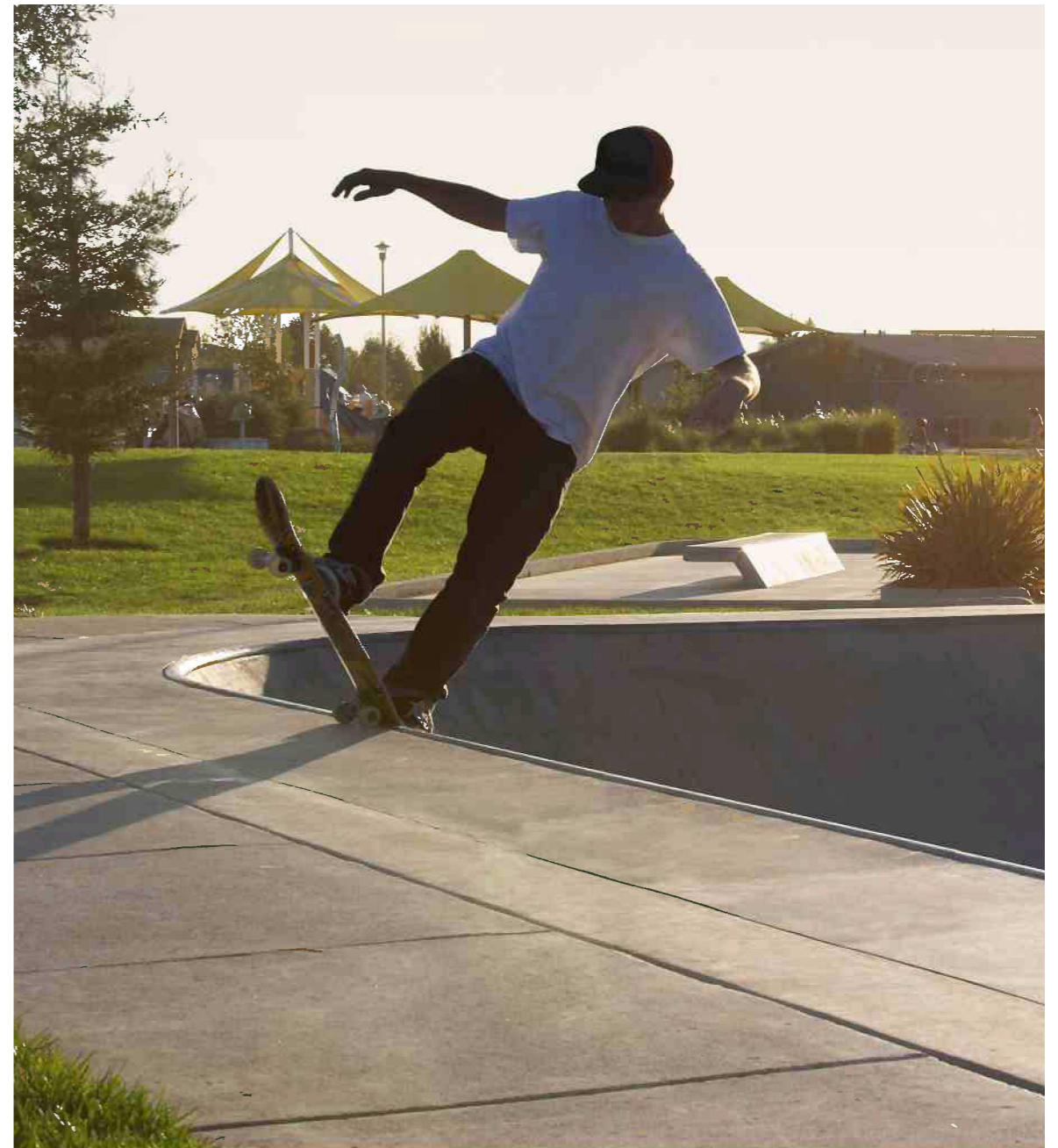
Preserve and enhance neighborhoods.

Design dynamic places for social and cultural activities and connect them to neighborhoods, districts, and employment centers with distinct identities.



Multimodal and Active Transportation

Plan for a long-term transportation system that provides multiple ways to get around within the community and the region while supporting economic growth and community health.



Sustainable and Healthy Community

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions, adapt to a changing climate, and improve community health.



Coordinated Services, Technology, and Infrastructure

Consider relationships with service providers and the City's future role in providing community services and infrastructure.

Leverage technology to improve infrastructure, City services, and economic development.



Open Space and Resource Management

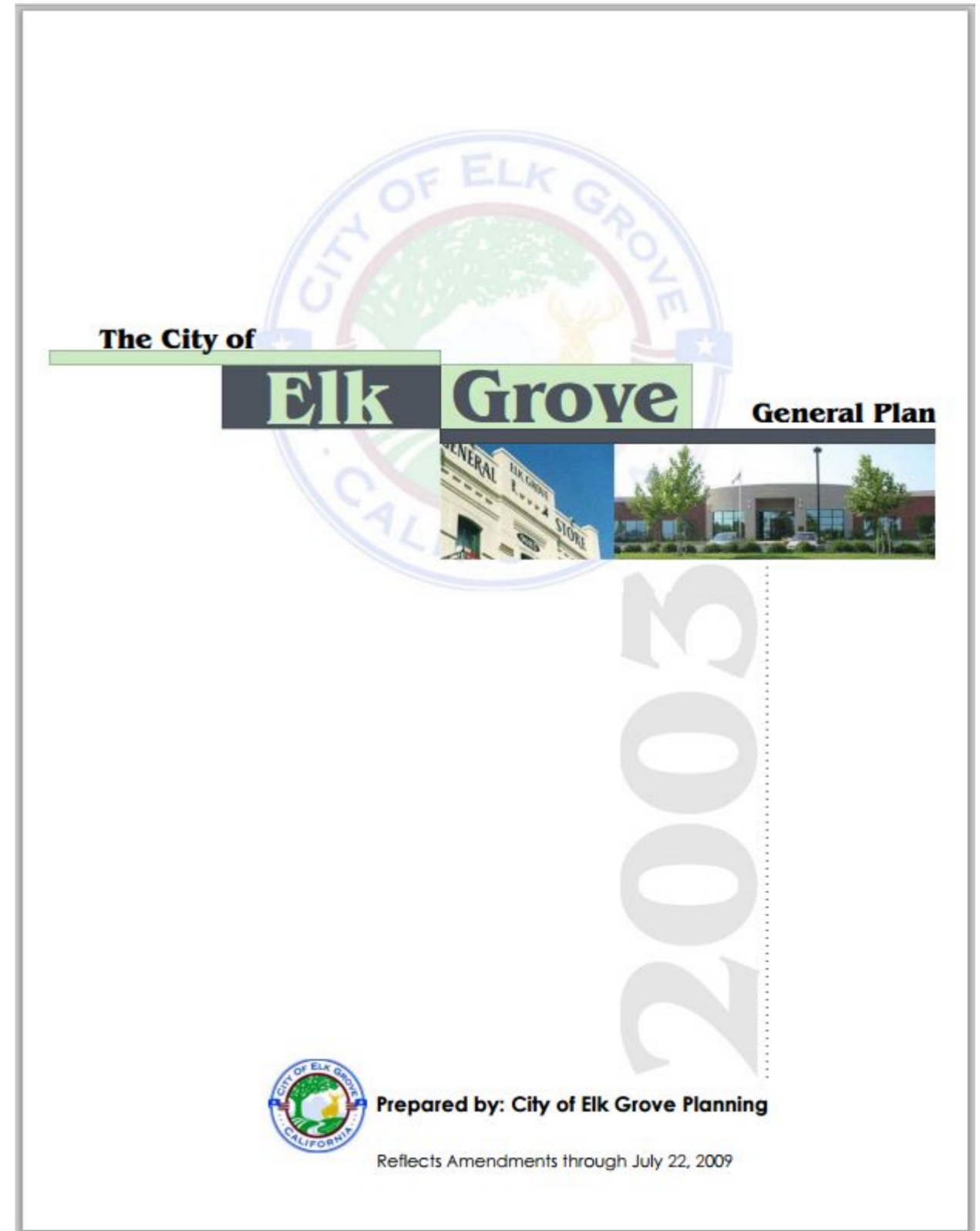
Expand and categorize open spaces and manage changing habitat, energy, and water resources.

- **Innovative strategies to conserve important trees, Swainson's hawk habitat, and agricultural lands**
- **Strategies describing how Elk Grove will conserve energy and adapt to a future with less water**



The General Plan

Key Issues and Opportunities



Up-to-Date, Forward-Thinking Plan

Update and refresh the community vision to address changed conditions and chart a long-range course for the future.

- **Where the city will go**
- **What it will do**
- **How it will do it**

Accessible and Usable Format

The plan layout and style should prioritize readability, graphic communication, easy updating, and access for all users.

- **Online access**
- **Landscape format**
- **Graphic data interpretation**

Clarity and Flexibility

The plan should provide both clarity and flexibility to withstand future economic, environmental, and political changes.

- **Measurable goals**
- **Five-year action plan**

Active and Engaged Community

Unify the community around shared opportunities and solutions. Include those who traditionally interact with the City as well as those typically absent from the public process; include key economic, environmental, and social stakeholders.

- **Differing attitudes, wants, needs, and perspectives within the community**
- **Entire community plan vs. separate neighborhood plans**
- **Online public participation**

The General Plan should both unify the community and celebrate its differences.

Engaged City Staff and Decision-Makers

Leverage experience and perspective of City staff, and check in with decision-makers at key points in the update process.

- **Department head meetings**
- **Fireside chats**
- **Project transition meetings**
- **Joint study sessions**

Fiscally Viable Plan

Prioritize and select policies and programs that can be supported by existing and foreseeable funding.

Priorities should be set that limit the content of the resulting plan to those policies and programs which directly advance the vision and can be funded and accomplished within the plan's time frame.

General Plan Key Issues and Opportunities

- **Up-to-date, forward-thinking plan**
- **Accessible and usable format**
- **Clarity and flexibility**
- **Active and engaged community**
- **Engaged City staff and decision-makers**
- **Fiscally viable plan**

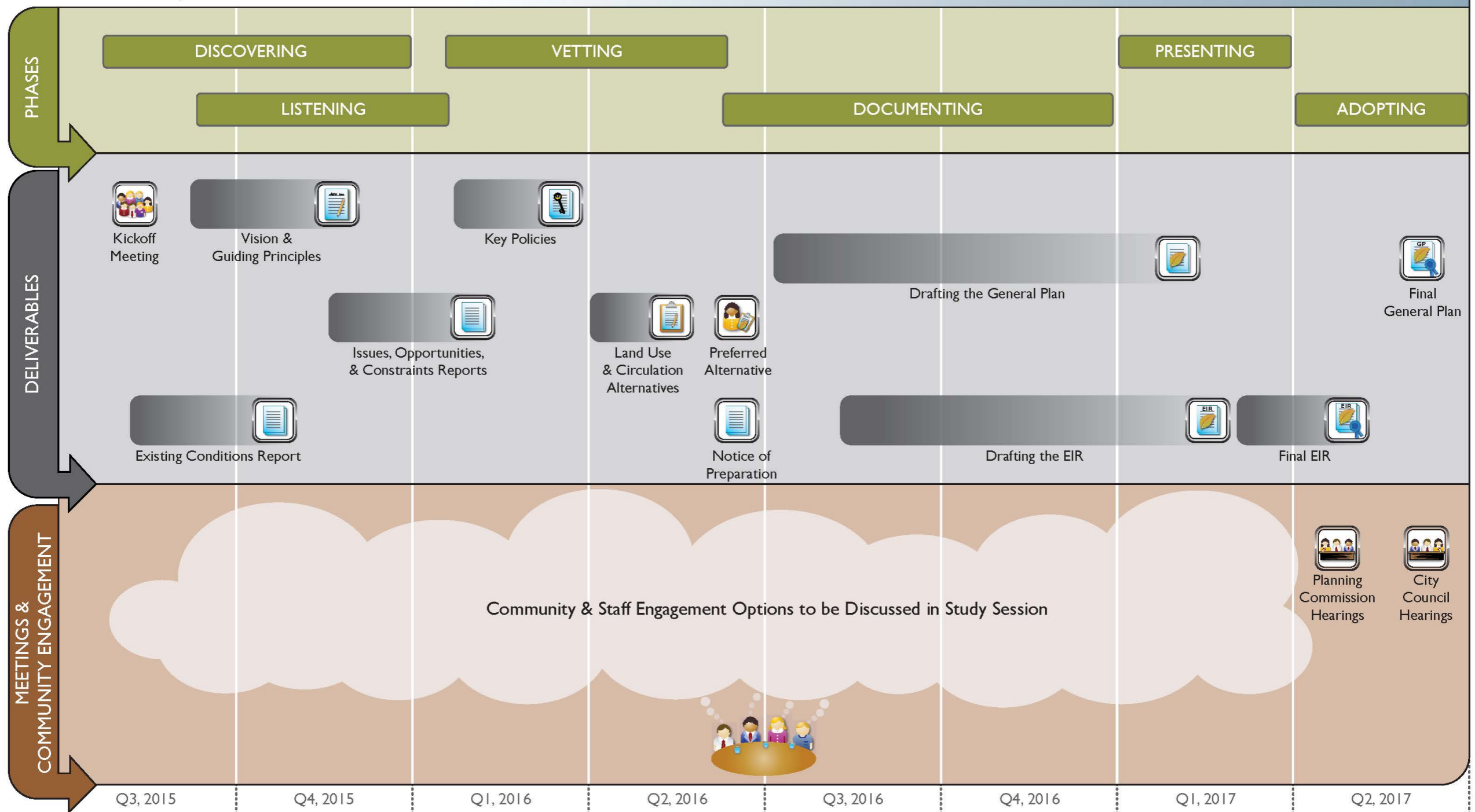


The General Plan Process



GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

Draft Process Diagram



Public Participation



“ ‘Public participation’ means to involve those who are affected by a decision in the decision-making process. It promotes sustainable decisions by providing participants with the information they need to be involved in a meaningful way, and it communicates to participants how their input affects the decision.”

– International Association for Public Participation

Meaningful engagement requires planning

- What do we do?
- When do we do it?
- Where?
- Who is involved?



What is the right approach for Elk Grove? How do we decide?

- **Past processes and stakeholder input**
- **Lessons learned**
- **Assessment of assets and opportunities**
- **Knowledge of public participation tools, techniques, and technology**
- **Legal requirements for public participation**

What do we know about Elk Grove's culture of participation?

Assets

- **High level of interest and involvement**
- **Community members willing to volunteer and be leaders**
- **Familiarity with public process and involvement techniques**



Challenges

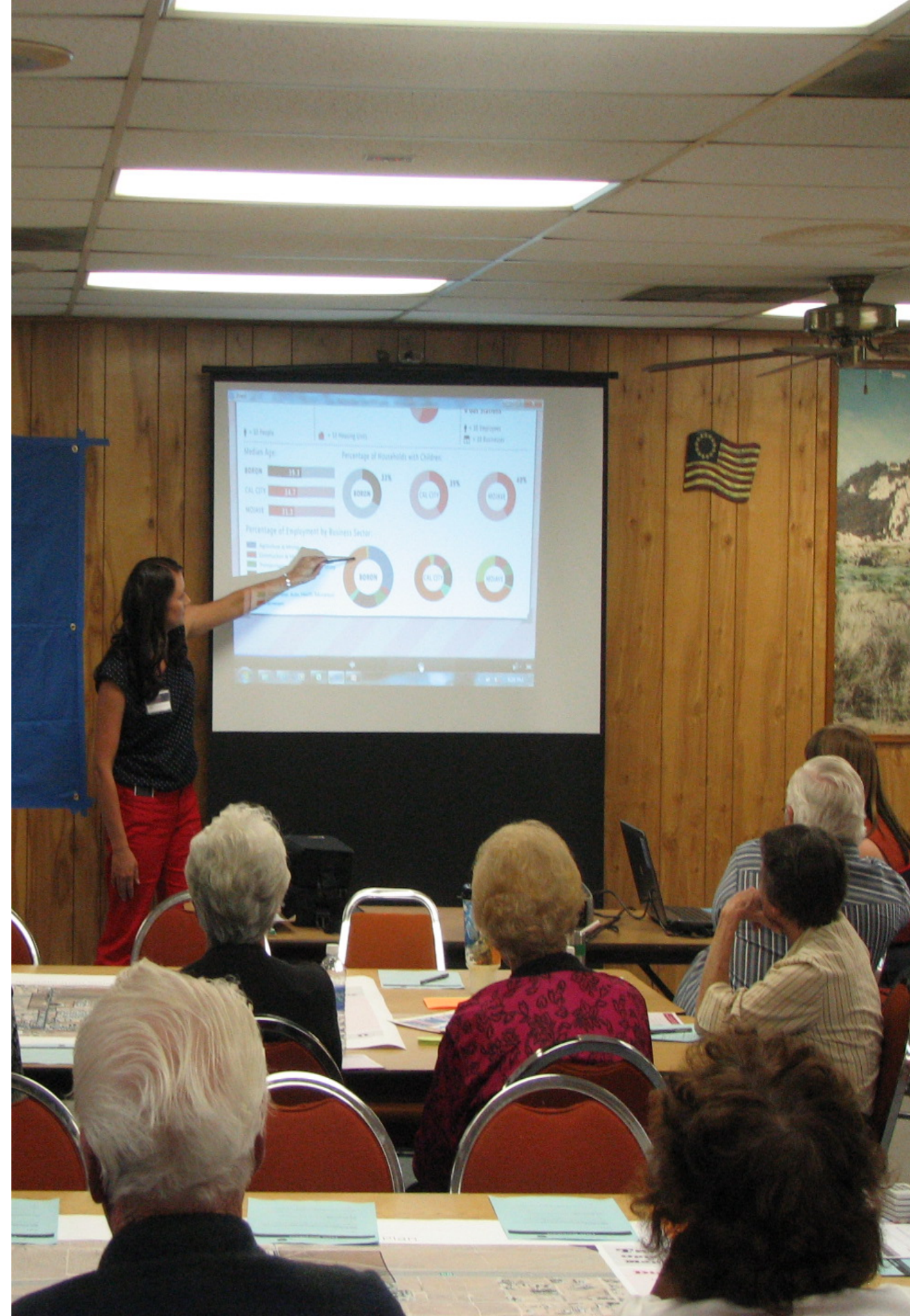
- **Geographic divisions between east and west, old and new**
- **Distinct cultures of participation in unique neighborhoods**
- **Different visions for more rural and less rural areas**
- **Different tools needed to reach different areas**
- **Risk of burnout in areas with high levels of existing involvement**
- **Potential for “silent majority” of yet uninvolved residents**



Realities of Public Participation

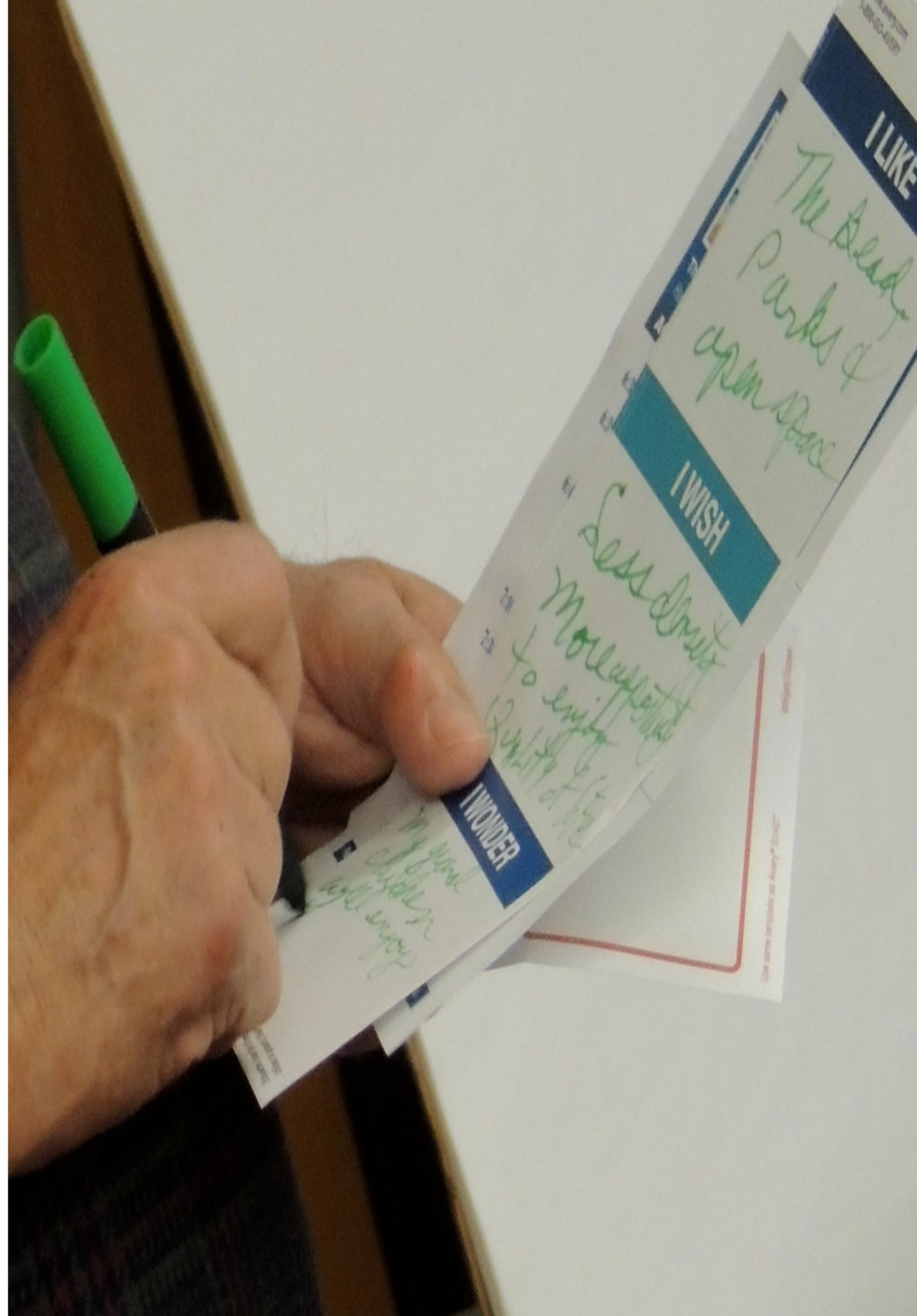
It is resource intensive

It requires staff time and financial resources to reach out and engage community members.



It is unpredictable

Asking for input sometimes means getting answers you didn't anticipate and needing to adjust your trajectory, which can take time.



It is challenging

Difficult conversations should be expected when a community is grappling with questions about who they are and where they are going and weighing the costs and consequences of tough policy decisions.



How can we provide guidance today?

Key considerations for the General Plan update participation process are presented. Your input and discussion is your contribution today.

Do we need the community to come to one shared vision for the entire city? Or should each area or neighborhood have its own vision?

Is time spent involving a select group of representative stakeholders more important than time spent providing opportunities for general involvement to a larger portion of the city's population?

Do you feel that some formats for feedback or input are more worthwhile than others?

**How interested do you believe the community
will be in this project?**

**Are decision-maker and community
expectations for the level of participation
aligned?**

How does your community like to participate?

**How do they like to receive and share
information?**

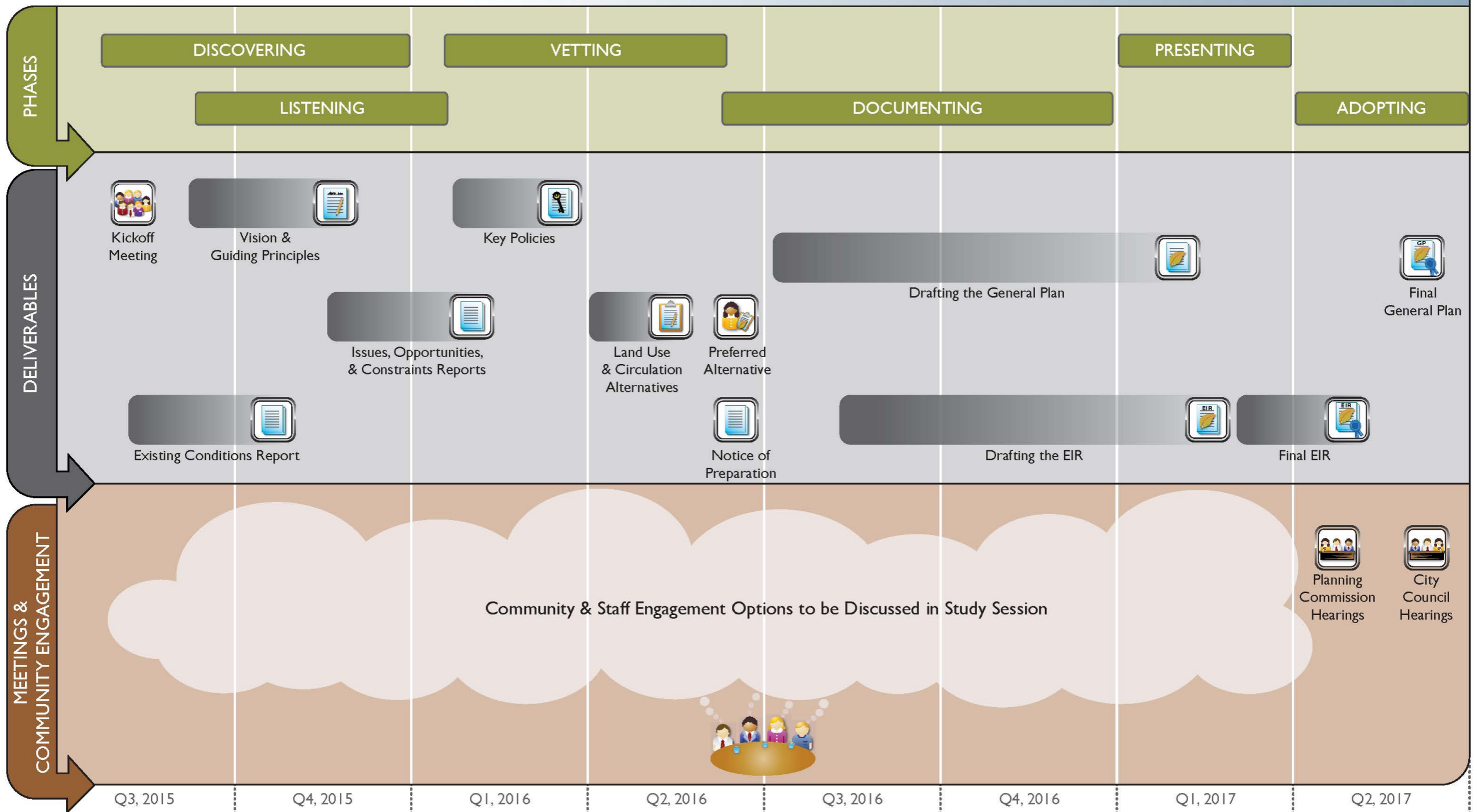
Are there community resources available to support public participation?

Next Steps



GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

Draft Process Diagram



Public Comment

