



Meeting Summary  
January 20, 2009

Suisun Valley Strategic Plan  
*Implementing the Solano County General Plan*

## **SUISUN VALLEY STRATEGIC PLAN WORKSHOP #1**

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This initial public meeting was designed to provide an overview of planning processes that will be used in implementing the 2008 Solano County General Plan recommendations for Suisun Valley. The strategic plan development process will be based on information from UC Davis' Solano County Agricultural Futures Project, a study by the American Farmland Trust, and the Suisun Valley Agricultural Marketing Plan. Staff and consultants asked participants in the workshop to build on these recommendations and findings to refine the general concepts for Suisun Valley, and to provide direction regarding more precise planning tools applicable to the project area. Key components of the Strategic Plan will include the following:

- ✓ Rural Roadway Prototypes
- ✓ Required Infrastructure Services
- ✓ Agricultural Tourist Center Locations, Scope and Allowed Uses
- ✓ Zoning and Development Standards
- ✓ Development Fee Program and Improvement Fund
- ✓ Marketing and Branding Strategy

## **INTRODUCTION**

Over 50 people attended the first workshop to discuss the direction of the Suisun Valley Strategic Plan. The agenda included:

- ✓ a short presentation by Jim Louie on the background of the general plan process;
- ✓ a short presentation and a priority setting exercise by Jeff Henderson of EDAW, the strategic plan consultant;
- ✓ a group exercise and discussion;
- ✓ a presentation on the potential elements of the strategic plan; and
- ✓ a town-hall forum discussion on the future direction for Suisun Valley.

# PRIORITY SETTING EXERCISE

Jeff Henderson presented and led a priority setting exercise. He asked people to gather in groups of three to five and discuss their priorities for the strategic plan. Groups were asked to decide on their top two priorities and state these to the group at large. Each group's votes were tallied as shown in the parentheses below as "group" priorities. Following the group exercise, each individual was given two stickers and asked to put them by the priority or priorities they felt were the most important. This tally is also shown in the parentheses below as "individual" priorities.

Five priorities were provided from the general plan, as shown below:

- ✓ Maintain agricultural character (4 groups, 28 individuals)
- ✓ Improve farm production and income (2 groups, 8 individuals)
- ✓ Create agri-tourism serving centers (3 groups, 23 individuals)
- ✓ Provide infrastructure to support expanded use of Suisun Valley (4 groups, 8 individuals)
- ✓ Enable value-added agriculture (8 groups, 26 individuals)

An additional two priorities were suggested through the group presentation:

- ✓ Maintain flexibility for future enterprises (1 group, 1 individual)
- ✓ Make unfarmable properties available for other uses (1 group, 3 individuals)

Several people submitted comments on cards and provided the following additional priority:

- ✓ Better exposure from I-80 (2 individuals)

## DISCUSSION

After the exercise, Mr. Henderson presented the County's direction for the strategic plan, including descriptions of the types of planning tools and strategies that would be considered. After this presentation, he asked if there were any comments or questions. The following input was received:

- ✓ Connect cities with the agricultural spaces surrounding them
- ✓ Share the cost of keeping Suisun Valley viable with the cities (recognize the valley as an urban amenity)
- ✓ Include flexibility within the plan (e.g.: administrative permits rather than CUPs)
- ✓ Deal with the flooding issues and the drainage problems on Abernathy Road
- ✓ Utility poles are located dangerously close to the roadways. Investigate undergrounding them.
- ✓ Find funding/grants and provide matching funding opportunities
- ✓ Continue the legacy of the Suisun Valley fund once it expires
- ✓ A concern was raised over the development fee topic. The commenter felt that it is important to explore other funding sources.
- ✓ Is the number of acres in the Agricultural/Tourist Centers set? Must it be 75 acres?

- Mr. Henderson replied that the number of acres used for these centers was set at a maximum in the general plan process. Fewer than 75 acres could be developed but if property owners wanted to develop more than 75 acres, the general plan would have to be amended.
- ✓ Will the County be working with the State on Williamson Act requirements?
  - Birgitta Corsello replied that the County has already worked to relax their own rules and the Board may continue to work toward State-level legislative action, following further studies and discussion.
- ✓ Are the 75 acres first-come/first-serve?
  - Mr. Henderson replied that the issue of how the 75 acres would be divided would be a subject of the strategic plan.
- ✓ How can people get involved and remain connected to the strategic planning process?
  - Mr. Louie replied that attendees should sign-in and leave their contact information. The County will send out regular updates and alerts regarding how people can get involved. He stated that the County expected that many stakeholder groups would be involved in the next few months and the contact information would be vital to allowing the County to alert people regarding upcoming meetings.

## NEXT STEPS

Mr. Louie announced that the County would be sending out notices and meeting with stakeholder groups in coming weeks. He emphasized the importance of attendees providing contact information. The next community-wide meeting is planned for April 2009. At that time, the County will present draft components of the strategic plan and ask the community to review and ensure that it sets an appropriate direction.

For additional information, please contact:

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Or visit the Strategic Plan website:

[http://www.solanocounty.com/depts/resource\\_mgmt/planning\\_services/suisun\\_valley\\_strategic\\_plan.asp](http://www.solanocounty.com/depts/resource_mgmt/planning_services/suisun_valley_strategic_plan.asp)



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SUISUN VALLEY STRATEGIC PLAN  
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DISCUSSION

- > CONNECT CITIES W/AG
- > SHARED \$ W/CITIES (URBAN AMENITY)
- > KEEP IT FLEXIBLE! (USE PERMIT PROC., ETC)
- > FLOOD/DRAINAGE CONT ORK/ABERNATHY
- > DANGEROUS UTIL POLES

- > GO AFTER FUNDS/GRANTS MATCHING FUNDS
- > CONT. LEGACY OF SV FUND

- > CAN 75 ACRES BE CHANGED?
- > WILL CO. BE WORKING W/STATE OR WILL ACT?

- > IS 75 AC FIRST-COME?
- > UNDERSTANDING DEV FEE EXPLORING OTHER SOURCES

PRIORITIES

MANTAIN AGRIC CHARACTER

IMPROVE FARM PRODUCTION/INCOME

CREATE AGRI-TOURISM CENTERS

PROVIDE INFRASTRUCTURE

ENABLE VALUE-ADDED AG

MAINTAINING FLEXIBILITY FOR FUTURE

MAKE UNFARMABLE PREP AVAIL FOR OTHER USES

WHAT CONDITIONS?

HOW WILL BE CONNECTED? STAKEHOLDER GROUPS