

January 21 2026, GPUSC-GPAC Joint Agenda Comments

These comments on items on the Newport Beach [General Plan Update Steering Committee](#) and [General Plan Advisory Committee](#) joint meeting [agenda](#) are submitted by: Jim Mosher (jimmosher@yahoo.com), 2210 Private Road, Newport Beach 92660 (949-548-6229)

Item IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

This meeting to make recommendations about concluding the two committees' review of the General Plan seems a fairly important one at which one might think public participation would be encouraged. Yet, curiously, that it is happening is not evident from the [Newport, Together](#) website.

Item V.a. GPAC/GPUSC Meeting Minutes of December 3, 2025

The minutes appear to have been carefully prepared and reviewed, but a couple of minor corrections to the draft joint meeting minutes could be considered:

Page 11, paragraph 9, sentence 1: *"In response to GPAC Member Hayes' inquiry, GPUSC Chair Gardner reported that residents have fought in the past against public restrooms at the ~~wedge~~ **Wedge**."*

Page 12, paragraph 8, sentence 3: *"She added that they depend on staff and consultants to ensure that the GPAC drafts ~~is are~~ consistent with the Housing Element."*

Page 12, paragraph 10: *"GPAC Member Stevens stated that the General Plan includes already approved elements and separating them out from the GPAC's mission does **not** make sense."*

[comment: The video (at around [01:04](#)) confirms this is what was said. However, I believe the intent may have been to observe that removing already-approved elements from the GPAC's mission **does** make sense.]

It might also be noted that the title card for the [video](#) of this meeting says "November 3, 2025," and a banner at the bottom of the screen says the same until about 43 minutes in, when it switches to "December 3, 2025."

Item V.b. Review and Consideration of the Final Draft of the GPAC/GPUSC General Plan Update

Others may have done better, but I have managed to review only a small fraction of the materials provided, and have attempted to submit separately my comments on what little I was able to review.

While many of the recommended policies may be good, one of my major concerns is that, at least during the period in which we were assisted by the consultant, the GPAC was never asked to examine the existing General Plan and suggest how it could be improved. Instead, the consultant selected policies for the subcommittees to review. The many errors I now find in the narrative portions of the draft elements make me question how deeply the consultant

understands our community, and hence whether their policy choices, and particularly their choices of policies to omit, were all wise ones.

I am also concerned with the background reports, which are not being reviewed here, but which we understand will somehow be linked to what *is* being reviewed to provide readers with an opportunity for a “deeper dive” into the issues being addressed. My fear is that without further review, they may be more a source of misinformation than enlightenment.

Item V.c. Review and Consideration of the Draft Implementation Programs and Crosswalk Tool

It seems a bit ironic to me that when a lack of consistent implementation was identified by the GPUSC and GPAC as one of the problems with the existing General Plan, we would be recommending a continuation of the existing Implementation Program, albeit supplemented by a “Crosswalk Tool.”

I think the existing format, which requires fitting each policy to some set of generic implementation programs, is less ideal than developing implementations specific to the policy.

In that regard, at the December 3rd meeting, GPAC member Anders-Ellmore pointed out that during the GPAC’s earlier policy discussions when a refinement to a policy was suggested, the response was frequently something to the effect of “that is too specific for the General Plan, doing that will come in the implementation.” I fear many of those policy-specific implementation suggestions have been lost.

Regarding the Crosswalk Tool, while it will certainly be a helpful guide to the intended policy implementation, it was pointed out at the last meeting that for a policy subject to multiple implementation programs, the responsible department and timeline may be different for each program. Indeed, the way the Implementation Program is written, a single program, as applied to a particular policy could involve more than one department or timeline. Yet, in the spreadsheet’s present form, for a given policy, all implementing actions are confusingly combined on a single Excel row, with multiple programs (and departments) cited in a single cell. Both for the intent to be clear, and for the spreadsheet to be sortable, each applicable program and each variation within it needs to be on a separate row.

It was also pointed out at the last meeting that many agencies indicate how they expect each program to be funded. I do not know if that has been or will be considered.

Item V.d. Considering a Recommendation to City Council on an Ad Hoc General Plan Implementation Committee

In the absence of a staff report, it is difficult to guess, but my understanding is that in this context an “ad hoc” committee would be something that is appointed for a specific purpose and then dissolves once its objective has been accomplished.

From the draft December 3rd GPUSC minutes (at the end of Item V.a on the present agenda) the recommendation to be discussed might be for a “small” committee (it was not clear if it would be a committee of Council members or citizens) to be appointed each year to hold a

single meeting to review and write a report about the state of implementation of “one or two” elements, on a rotating basis.

While that may be helpful, I would think lettin the GPAC spend more time fleshing out the immediate steps needed to implement General Plan goals, and working them into the Implementation Program might also be helpful.

Item V.e. Next Steps and Closing

The most recent document governing the GPAC, City Council [Resolution No. 2025-2](#), sets GPAC’s primary responsibility as reviewing and making recommendations to City staff, consultants and the GPUSC about changes to the goals and policies in the General Plan. But it also says the GPAC exists to ensure there is sufficient stakeholder input regarding the General Plan Update. As such, it says the GPAC continues to exist until the Council actually adopts a revised General Plan, unless dissolved earlier by the Council.

Although there is a note after Item VII in the present agenda saying “*Next Meeting: TBD*,” the announcement of this Item V.e is written in such a way as to strongly suggest there will be no next meeting, as if the GPUSC and GPAC were being asked to self-dissolve at the conclusion of the present meeting. It does not seem to me Resolution No. 2025-2 gives either the committees or the staff the power to do this. Only the Council can prematurely dissolve the committees. And while the resolution sets the current appointments to end on the date of the first Council meeting in February (which will fall on [February 10](#)), and while Council Policy A-2 directs the City Clerk to announce vacancies two months before they occur, which she has not done, appointees normally serve until the appointee’s successors have been named, and no successors have yet been named.

If staff will be asking the Council to dissolve the GPUSC and GPAC on February 10 or before, they will perhaps tell us under this item. However, I think that would be unwise. The General Plan update is not complete until a new plan is adopted, and until a plan is adopted, stakeholder input is still needed.

We have heard, for example, that the end product of the update effort will be an online plan in an as-yet completely unknown format. While the boards, commissions and other committees will presumably be concentrating on goals and policies, the GPAC could be providing input on the format of the online plan as it evolves.

There is also an as-yet to be released Glossary, whose definitions of words may alter the meaning of goals or policies the GPAC has previously reviewed.

There may be recommendations for implementation follow-up that are unlikely to be fully fleshed out at the present meeting.

And there is always the unexpected that could come up during the “final” review by the other boards, commissions and committees, which I think is why Resolution No. 2025-2 is written to retain the GPAC until a revised plan is actually adopted.

In short, I don’t believe the GPAC’s work is done.