

# County's long-awaited General Plan update close to fruition

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By Nick Baptista

Calaveras County's General Plan update, which began in 2006, "hopefully" will be completed by 2019.

County Planning Director Peter Maurer provided an update on the lengthy process at Thursday's meeting of the Rotary Club of West Calaveras.

The county is close to releasing the draft Environmental Impact Report for the General Plan, Maurer said. That could happen in March or April and the document will go through a 60-day public comment period.

Depending on how long it takes to respond to those comments will influence the timeline, he added.

Maurer said he's "hopeful" hearings on the General Plan update will begin in November or December and completed shortly after.

"If we can't get this done in 2019, it's time for me to retire."

Completion of the General Plan update has been his No. 1 priority since joining the county four years ago, Maurer said, but those efforts had been somewhat sidetracked while the county and his staff dealt with the commercial cannabis issue the past two years.

The General Plan for cities and counties in California is a document providing a long-range plan for development. There are certain requirements under California state law that each general plan must meet; failure to do so could result in suspension of future development.

Each general plan must include the vision, goals, and objectives of the city or county in terms of planning and development within eight different "elements" defined by the state as: land use, housing, circulation, conservation, noise, safety, open space, and environmental justice.

Once completed, the General Plan update is expected to guide development in the county for approximately a 20-year period.

The county has expended more than \$2 million on the process since 2006.