

**UNOFFICIAL MINUTES  
OF THE  
SALINAS PLANNING COMMISSION  
September 17, 2025**

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. in the City Council Chamber Rotunda.

Chairperson McKelvey Daye requested a moment of silence for Salinas Fire Engineer and International Association of Fire Fighters Local 1270 President, Joshua Hostetter.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL**

**WELCOME AND STAFF INTRODUCTIONS**

**PRESENT:** Chairperson McKelvey Daye and Commissioners Meeks, Rocamora and Wruck

**ABSENT:** Commissioners Almanza-Larios, Gutierrez and Purnell

**STAFF:** Community Development Director, Lisa Brinton; Planning Manager, Courtney Grossman; Planning Manager, Grant Leonard; Senior Planner, Jonathan Moore; Senior Planner, Son Pham-Gallardo; Management Analyst, Kirsten Zehring; and Administrative Aide, Maira Robles

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

Chairperson McKelvey Daye opened for public comment at 4:04 p.m.

Peter Salai expressed concerns regarding transparency about the roles and responsibilities of standing committees and ad hoc committees as they review and consider zoning and land use items.

Chairperson McKelvey Daye closed for public comment at 4:05 p.m.

**CONSENT**

**ID#25-400 Approval of the Minutes: September 3, 2025**

Upon motion by Commissioner Meeks, and a second by Commissioner Wruck, the minutes of September 3, 2025 were approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES: Chairperson McKelvey Daye and Commissioners Meeks, Rocamora and Wruck  
NOES: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
ABSENT: Commissioners Almanza-Larios, Gutierrez and Purnell

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

### **ID#25-403 Administrative Report on the General Plan Update, Zoning Code Update, and Future Growth Area Tentative Map Applications**

Planning Manager, Courtney Grossman, introduced the purpose of the administrative report and requested direction from the Planning Commission regarding future study sessions and training topics.

Received presentation from Senior Planner, Jonathan Moore, and Senior Planner Son Pham-Gallardo regarding an update on the status of the General Plan Update/Visión Salinas 2040, Zoning Code Update, and Future Growth Area Tentative Map application processing. Ms. Gallardo informed that a total of 3,962 units are planned for development in the Future Growth Area and include the following unit types: single family dwellings, town homes, condominiums and duplexes.

Based on research, Chairperson McKelvey Daye shared the following summary of the responsibilities of the Planning Commission:

- Develops/updates the General Plan;
- Implements zoning and land-use policies;
- Guides growth and development;
- Facilitates public engagement;
- Advises City Council; and
- Coordinates with other agencies.

Chairperson McKelvey Daye emphasized that study session topics should align with the aforementioned responsibilities.

Commissioner comments and discussion included the following:

- Emphasized the role of a Planning Commissioner as public representative;
- Raised concerns about sewage infrastructure as a barrier to new housing development;
- Urged for better communication with residents;
- Noted that other jurisdictions grant more authority to their Planning Commissions;
- Expressed concerns about limited authority and permits issued at the discretion of staff;

- Requested clarification on PlaceWorks;
- Requested additional information on the potential impact to Tentative Map applications as a result of the updates proposed to guiding documents;
- Requested clarification on Zoning Code audit; and
- Inquired if estimated completion dates of the General Plan Update as well as the Zoning Code Update will impact Tentative Map processing timelines.

Response from City staff included the following information:

- The majority of incomplete Tentative Map applications have been resubmitted and are under review;
- Tentative Map applications will proceed under existing Specific Plans;
- The Zoning Code audit will ensure legal compliance with state and federal law; and
- Updates are phased to minimize inconsistency over time.

Going forward, Commissioners would like to have regularly scheduled study sessions, as well as a detailed training calendar and expressed interest in the following:

- Training on laws like California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Subdivision Map Act; and
- Clear understanding of inter-committee roles and responsibilities.

Response from City staff included the following information:

- Staff will meet on Sept 18, 2025 to draft a calendar with training scheduled through the end of the year; and
- A study session will also be scheduled in which staff would like to gather Planning Commission input regarding the Zoning Code Update and housing laws.

Chairperson McKelvey Daye questioned the delay in receiving the minutes from the joint City Council and Planning Commission study session of June 10, 2025.

Mr. Grossman indicated that staff reached out the Office of the City Clerk and were informed that the City Clerk will be contacting Chairperson McKelvey Daye with an update.

Chairperson McKelvey Daye requested that Mr. Grossman provide information on permit streamline procedures and legislative changes.

Mr. Grossman informed that there have been a number of legislative bills as a result of the Housing Crisis Act of 2019 that have gone through state legislature. One of the more common ones that applies to the processing of Tentative Map applications, is Senate Bill (SB) 330:

- This senate bill has changed how Tentative Map applications are processed (e.g., pre-app required, fixed timelines);
- Changes at the state-level have removed some of the local policy discretion during initial processing phases; and
- Projects in the East Area are more complex due to lack of an adopted Specific Plan.

Chairperson McKelvey Daye stressed the importance of commissioners understanding that many changes come from state legislation, and not city policy and shared the following:

- Provided an example from Salinas' Sister City, Guanajuato, Mexico, to emphasize the importance of understanding community needs through engagement; and
- Requested a study session on why Planning Commission does not have a role in making important determinations impacting the community or the opportunity to provide input on topics, such as the issues with rental stabilization.

Response from City staff included the following information:

- Explained that local regulations, legislative changes and laws like SB 330 affect commission's involvement; and
- Noted more involvement is planned through community engagement meetings and stakeholder committees.

Chairperson McKelvey Daye opened for Public Comment at 4:52 p.m.

Peter Salai expressed concern about state-level changes reducing CEQA consideration and asked how the Planning Commission encourages infill/high-density development.

Peter Kasavan, Salinas Planning and Research Corporation (SPARC) President, highlighted the Economic Development Element (EDE) of the General Plan as a model for robust community engagement. Mr. Kasavan requested that the Commission support retention of the EDE and replicate its outreach model in the General Plan and Zoning Code updates.

Denise Estrada submitted written public comment requesting a formal study session to allow shareholders sufficient time to present the details of the work that has been undertaken to update the EDE.

Public Comments received via email were distributed to the Planning Commission ahead of the meeting and are part of the record.

Chairperson McKelvey Daye closed for public comment at 4:57 p.m.

Commissioners provided the following closing comments:

- Chairperson McKelvey Daye called for more collaboration, transparency, and staff involvement in equipping the Commission;
- Commissioner Wruck requested regular inter-committee reports to understand citywide initiatives; and
- Commissioner Meeks suggested that the Planning Commission create a mission statement.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

No public hearings were presented.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **General Plan Steering Committee Update**

Community Development Director, Lisa Brinton, indicated that there are no updates to report from the steering committee. Staff anticipates that a final public review draft document will be available soon. The committee will then reconvene to review and reengage the community.

## **FOLLOW-UP REPORTS**

Chairperson McKelvey Daye indicated that the request for the minutes of the joint City Council and Planning Commission meeting held on June 10, 2025 should remain on the agenda until the item is resolved.

Commissioner Rocamora requested an update on the filling of job vacancies previously reported for the Community Development Department and the overall permit processing timeframes.

Ms. Brinton indicated that 11 of the previously reported vacancies have been filled and staff has made progress; however, continues to rely on consultants given the volume and complexity of some of the permits. Ms. Brinton added that the Code Enforcement division will be fully staffed in the upcoming week.

Commissioner Meeks requested information on the recordkeeping of Planning Commissioners' attendance.

Staff informed that Planning Commissioner attendance records are kept in accordance with the established bylaws and submitted quarterly, at a minimum, to the Office of the City Clerk for review by the City Council.

## **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Mr. Grossman informed that there are no projects scheduled for presentation to the Planning Commission at this time, staff will meet to discuss future training and study session opportunities.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairperson McKelvey Daye reviewed for quorum for the Planning Commission meeting scheduled for October 1, 2025 and adjourned the meeting at 5:05 p.m.

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LORISA MCKELVEY DAYE  
Chairperson

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COURTNEY GROSSMAN  
Executive Secretary