

Petaluma, CA

Petaluma SmartCode

In June, 2003, Petaluma, California, adopted a precise New Urbanist development code for approximately 400 acres of the central city. Revitalization of the area, a mixture of partly vacant historic buildings, tired strip malls, abandoned car dealerships, riverfront warehouses, and greenfield parcels had been difficult. The existing code was largely designed to produce single-use, auto-oriented, conventional suburban development.

The adopted code is the first example in the nation of implementing Duany Plater-Zyberk's new SmartCode, a New Urbanist code now being distributed by the Municipal Code Corporation, a company which previously had been a leader in spreading conventional suburban zoning codes across the nation. A key element in the code's success proved to be the immediate drastic reduction of parking requirements and, in the code's second phase, the abolition of all minimum parking requirements.

In July 2003, just a month after the code's adoption, the City Council unanimously approved \$75 million in new mixed-use development within the code area, including shops, offices and apartments. The old Victory Chevrolet car dealership was being restored as a 12-screen art deco movie theater, in part due to a determined campaign by seven local high school girls to bring the movies back to their downtown.



Existing Conditions - Looking north from bridge on E Washington



One of many possible buildout scenarios of the Code

Project Duration: 2002-2003

Total Budget: \$15,000

For more information:

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