



PLANNING COMMISSION

Agenda Item No.: H.1
Date: February 22, 2022

PROJECT NUMBER / NAME: 2022 General Plan Amendment

REQUEST: Community Outreach and Engagement Plan for the 2022 General Plan Amendment (Community Protection Chapter Update and New Environmental Justice Element)

LOCATION: CityWide

APN / APNS: N/A

GENERAL PLAN / ZONING: N/A

APPLICANT: City of Escondido

PRIMARY REPRESENTATIVE:
Veronica Morones, Senior Planner

DISCRETIONARY ACTIONS REQUESTED: General Plan Amendment

PREVIOUS ACTIONS: None

PROJECT PLANNER: Veronica Morones, Senior Planner

CEQA RECOMMENDATION: Exempt (CEQA Guidelines section 15306 – Information Collection)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: None

REQUESTED ACTION: Receive report and presentation

CITY COUNCIL HEARING REQUIRED: YES NO

REPORT APPROVALS:

Adam Finestone, AICP
Interim Director of Community Development

A. BACKGROUND:

On December 14, 2021, planning staff provided the Planning Commission with an update on the 6th cycle draft housing element, required update to the Community Protection chapter of the General Plan, and creation of a new environmental justice element, along with a general timeline for this concurrent work effort. An updated timeline is provided Attachment 1 with changes in **bold**.

Staff formally kicked off this concurrent work effort in November 2021. As part of the 2022 General Plan Amendment, which entails an update to the Community Protection chapter and a new Environmental Justice Element, staff has prepared a draft community outreach and engagement plan (“Plan”). The Plan is included on the 2022 GPA webpage, which is accessible via the link below.

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

The 2022 General Plan Amendment is a policy document and does not involve any construction-related activities. Updates to the City’s General Plan, as described below, would occur at a CityWide level, including within the City’s sphere of influence.

1) Community Protection Chapter (Safety Element) Update

A safety element is one of nine elements of a general plan required by Government Code section 65302. The update to the Community Protection chapter of the General Plan, which serves as the City of Escondido’s Safety Element, is required pursuant to Government Code section 65302(g) and will address topics related to fire hazards, climate adaptation and resiliency strategies, and evacuation routes.

2) Creation of an Environmental Justice Element

This project would overhaul the existing Community Health and Services chapter of the City’s General Plan, which is an optional element (i.e., it is not a required element pursuant to Government Code section 65302). The chapter would be re-dedicated to environmental justice policies, goals, and objectives. The creation of an environmental justice element is required pursuant to Government Code section 65302(h) and will include the identification of disadvantaged communities (Gov’t Code § 65302(h)(1)) within the City of Escondido, as well as topics including reduction in pollution exposure, the promotion of public facilities, food access, safe and sanitary homes, physical activity, and civic engagement in the public decision-making process.

This project would utilize the City’s Community Health and Services chapter of the General Plan as a basis for the Environmental Justice Element because the Community Health and Services chapter currently addresses certain topics required of an environmental justice element, pursuant to Government Code section 65302(h). Including all policies, goals, and objectives related to environmental justice within one chapter of the City’s General Plan will ensure consistency and simplify implementation. Existing topics within the Community Health and Services chapter that

are not explicitly required by Government Code section 65302(h) would remain within this revised element.

C. FISCAL ANALYSIS:

Aside from dedication of staff time, there is no fiscal impact associated with preparation and implementation of the Plan.

D. ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS:

Consideration of this request is categorically exempt from additional environmental review pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines section 15306 (Information Collection), as information and data will be collected to assist with the necessary General Plan element tasks as outlined above. The actual update to the Community Protection chapter (Safety Element) and creation of the Environmental Justice Element will be subject to further environmental review in the context of an appropriate environmental review document in compliance with CEQA requirements.

E. PUBLIC INPUT:

The goal of the Plan is to solicit public input on the proposed 2022 General Plan Amendment. Staff has already consulted with numerous individuals and community organizations as part of the engagement effort to date. Additional outreach and engagement will occur as described in the attached Plan.

F. CONCLUSION:

Staff is requesting input from the Planning Commission and public on the Plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Project Timeline
2. Draft Community Outreach and Engagement Plan for the 2022 General Plan Amendment



Attachment 1

CITY OF ESCONDIDO
 PLANNING DIVISION
 201 NORTH BROADWAY
 ESCONDIDO, CA 92025-2798
 (760) 839-4671

Draft Schedule

Phase	Action/Task	Target Date
1	Kickoff	November 2021 – January 2022
2	Draft community outreach and engagement plan	February 2022
3	RFP for environmental review (<i>Community Protection and Environmental Justice only</i>)	March/April 2022
4	Community outreach and engagement	Ongoing
5	Revise Housing Element and submit to HCD	Spring 2022
6	Revised Housing Element environmental review	Spring 2022
7	Adopt final Housing Element	Late Spring 2022
8	Update Community Protection Chapter and draft Environmental Justice Element	Late Spring- Summer 2022
9	Environmental review (<i>Community Protection and Environmental Justice only</i>)	Late Summer 2022
10	Public review	Late Fall 2022
11	Prepare final documents and adopt	Winter 2022/ 2023

Bold text indicates changes to the project schedule from that presented in December, 2021.