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MONTEREY COUNTY

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Erik V. Lundquist AICP, Director



HOUSING | PLANNING | BUILDING | ENGINEERING | ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

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MEMORANDUM

Date: February 27, 2023

To: Environmental Justice Community Advisory Committee (EJCAC) Invitees

From: Erik V. Lundquist, AICP, Housing and Community Development (HCD) Director

Subject: Invitee interest in commitment to serve on the EJCAC in an advisory capacity to County staff for development of the new Environmental Justice Element of the County of Monterey General Plan

Cc: Melanie Beretti AICP, Principal Planner – HCD Advanced Planning; Darin Neufeld AICP, Harris & Associates Environmental Planning + Compliance Director; and Sydnie Margallo, Harris & Associates Environmental Planning + Compliance Deputy Project Manager

Attachment: Purpose, Expectations, and Protocols for participation in the EJCAC

Greetings from the County of Monterey!

The County of Monterey (County) Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) is preparing a new Environmental Justice Element as part of its General Plan in accordance with State legislation! The purpose of an Environmental Justice Element is to address the environmental hazards and health impacts experienced by certain communities. The policies that are included in an Environmental Justice Element are drafted to ensure that all residents have the right to live, work, and play in a safe and healthy community.

Engaging the community in the planning process and incorporating feedback is essential to ensuring that the Environmental Justice Element reflects the priorities of the community it serves and that the strategies for achieving those goals are feasible, equitable, and can be implemented efficiently with support from the community. **To ensure all residents, businesses, community-based organizations, and public agencies have meaningful input on how best to improve their communities, the County HCD is establishing an Environmental Justice Community Advisory Committee (EJCAC).**

The County HCD invites you to participate in the environmental justice planning process as a part of the EJCAC. The purpose of establishing an EJCAC is to involve members of the community who do not traditionally participate in local decision-making processes that affect their environment and quality of life. The EJCAC will play a key role in helping maximize involvement in the planning process. Please review the attachment to this memorandum, which describes the purpose and intent of the EJCAC, criteria for EJCAC participants, roles and expectations of EJCAC members, and protocols for EJCAC meetings. EJCAC members commit to participation in **three (3)** EJCAC meetings throughout the planning period to identify existing environmental injustices and review feasible policy and/or strategy recommendations for the Environmental Justice Element.

Thank you for your consideration in helping to improve the quality of life for people in your community! Please respond to this email with your decision for involvement in the EJCAC **no later than March 8, 2023.**

ATTACHMENT

This attachment establishes the purpose and intent for, and statement of roles and expectations of, the Environmental Justice Community Advisory Committee (EJCAC). Protocols for EJCAC meetings are included, herein.

Purpose and Intent of the EJCAC:

The overall purpose of the EJCAC is to provide targeted preliminary input for key information used to develop the draft Environmental Justice Element, prior to broader public input.

- Provide input on the content of the Community Survey for the Environmental Justice Element and ideas/considerations for community outreach in general (e.g., what groups should be targeted, how to involve them)
- Review the results of the Existing Conditions Report¹ and provide input on (“groundtruth”) the following issue areas within the unincorporated area of Monterey County:
 - Pollution exposure,
 - Access to Public Facilities and Services,
 - Access to Healthy Food,
 - Access to Physical Activity and Recreational Opportunities,
 - Access to Safe and Sanitary Homes, and
 - Unique or Compounded Health Risks (Climate Change).
- Provide input on the draft goals and policies for the Environmental Justice Element, given participant’s knowledge of the community and issues of concern.

Criteria for Participants on the EJCAC:

The County seeks to ensure it has participants on the EJCAC that can speak to the following priority environmental justice issues and areas. In doing so, the County has identified community representatives, members, and activists; community-based organizations; public health officials, and other groups that have a history of under-representation in civic proceedings to participate in the EJCAC.

- Participant organizations have direct experience working to address the following issues and can provide informed feedback from the communities/members that they serve:
 - Pollution Exposure
 - Access to Public Facilities and Services
 - Access to Healthy Food
 - Access to Physical Activity or Recreational Opportunities
 - Access to Safe and Sanitary Homes
 - Climate Change

¹ The Existing Conditions Report is a supporting document of the Environmental Justice Element that provides an overview of environmental justice conditions in the region and guides development of environmental justice goals and policies.

- Organizations are part of the communities in which they serve, **ensuring that there is representation from all areas across the County.**

Statement of Roles and Expectations of the EJCAC:

1. The EJCAC shall be comprised of people with local experience and knowledge about the community and environmental challenges.
2. The EJCAC shall consist of approximately 20 committee members. The EJCAC is limited to a manageable advisory committee size while ensuring participants bring experience with a broad range of environmental justice issues from across the County.
3. The EJCAC members agree to provide feedback on draft materials and make recommendations based on respectful debate and consensus-seeking.
4. The EJCAC agrees to meet three times throughout the planning period to identify and review existing environmental injustices and feasible policy and/or strategy recommendations.
5. EJCAC members will provide feedback on environmental justice objectives and policies from recommendations provided by the County team, which will be developed from existing plans and documents and input from private citizens and community organizations. If necessary, EJCAC members will recommend additional policies and strategies that address inequities identified during the planning process.
6. The EJCAC will identify potential and existing constraints to implement selected policies and strategies.
7. EJCAC members are invited to serve at the discretion of the County Housing and Community Development Director. EJCAC members agree to exhibit respectful behavior that contributes productively and maintains the positive decorum of a meeting.

Each EJCAC member needs to acknowledge and accept these terms via written correspondence prior to becoming an EJCAC member.

Protocols for EJCAC Meetings:

Preparation for the EJCAC meetings will be a shared responsibility of the County.

- The County will prepare and distribute meeting agenda and materials prior to each of the three EJCAC meetings;
- Meetings may be held in a hybrid format, allowing participation in person and remotely through virtual meetings;
- Meetings will be facilitated by the County team and will prompt participants to engage in focused discussions.

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