



# County of Monterey Planning Commission

**Item No.7**

Board of Supervisors  
Chambers  
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor  
Salinas, CA 93901

## Agenda Item No. 7

November 09, 2022

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### **REF220004 - GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS UPDATES**

Receive a presentation on the status of updates to the Housing Element and Safety Element, and a new Environmental Justice Element.

**Project Location:** Unincorporated County of Monterey

**Proposed CEQA Action:** Statutory Exemption pursuant to Section 15262 of the CEQA Guidelines.

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission:

- a. Receive a staff presentation on the status of the General Plan Elements Updates; and
- b. Provide direction to staff.

#### SUMMARY:

The County Board of Supervisors approved a professional services agreement on September 27, 2022, for Harris & Associates to provide consultant services supporting efforts to amend General Plan Elements including the Sixth Cycle Update to the Housing Element, update to the Safety Element, and preparation of a new Environmental Justice Element. These elements are applicable throughout unincorporated County of Monterey; however, the Environmental Justice Element is applicable in areas of the County identified as a disadvantaged community, per state and local criteria. The consultant is tentatively planning to provide an introductory workshop to the Planning Commission mid-December 2022 and to the Board of Supervisors early January 2023.

#### DISCUSSION:

County staff is working with its consultant to prepare the Sixth Cycle Update (2023-31) to the General Plan Housing Element pursuant to California Gov. Code §65581. The Housing Element must be certified by State Housing and Community Development (CA HCD) and adopted by the County of Monterey Board of Supervisors by December 31, 2023. As part of the Sixth Cycle Update to the Housing Element, the County is required to identify sites and zoning designations that can accommodate a Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) of 3,326 housing units distributed across four Income levels (1,070 Very Low, 700 Low, 420 Moderate, and 1,136 Above Moderate). Along with facilitating the County's RHNA, the update to the Housing Element must identify and analyze significant disparities in access to opportunity (AB 686 - Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) Act). The AFFH Act requires the Housing Element promote inclusive communities and further housing choice through government programs, policies, and operations that recognize racial and economic disparities and remediate these disparities. Analysis of the disparities should include discussion of patterns, policies, practices, and investments over time, that affect access to opportunity. Sites and zoning, identified in the Housing Element to accommodate at least 2,190 RHNA units (1,070

Very Low, 700 Low, 420 Moderate), are required to be located in areas that transform racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity.

To avoid penalty for non-compliance with state law, the County is on a timeline for preparing the Housing Element Sixth Cycle Update by December 31, 2023, for Board of Supervisors adoption. Staff expects to return to the Planning Commission with analysis and outcomes of Housing Element outreach by early Spring 2023, with subsequent initiation of outreach for the Safety and Environmental Justice Elements to occur shortly thereafter.

Tentative timeline for the Housing Element Sixth Cycle Update:

- Nov/December 2022 - Public meetings/Workshops/Focus Groups
- Winter 2022-23 - Focus Groups, develop Draft, and provide a project briefing to the Planning Commission (late March)
- April/May 2023 - Project briefing to the Board of Supervisors (early April) and 30 days Public Review + 10 days for Revisions
- June 1, 2023 - 90 days CA HCD review begins
- Aug/Sep 2023 - Make CA HCD revisions to Draft and provide project briefing to the Planning Commission
- October 1, 2023 - Draft Housing Element to CA HCD for 60 days
- December 6, 2023 - Board adopt Housing Element Sixth Cycle Update

*Safety Element and (New) Environmental Justice Element*

State law (Gov. Code §65302) requires review of fire and flood impacts in the Safety Element concurrent with each update of the Housing Element. Therefore, staff is working with its consultant to prepare an update to the Safety Element along with the Sixth Cycle Update to the Housing Element. Along with incorporating new information regarding flood and fire hazards and climate adaptation and resiliency into the Safety Element, the County is required to evaluate evacuation routes under a range of hazard scenarios (AB 747) and identify areas with fewer than two points of egress for evacuation (SB 99). On July 12, 2022, the Board of Supervisors adopted the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJHMP) prepared by the County Office of Emergency Services (OES). Pursuant to AB 2140, the County may incorporate, by reference, Annex A of the MJHMP into the Safety Element which would make the County eligible for consideration of post-disaster state funding.

In accordance with the requirements of Gov. Code §65302, a local jurisdiction that has identified disadvantaged communities shall prepare an Environmental Justice Element upon adoption or revision of two or more elements concurrently on or after January 1, 2018. Therefore, staff will be working with its consultant to prepare a new Environmental Justice Element along with the concurrent updates to the Housing and Safety Elements and having identified disadvantaged communities per state and local criteria. Initial observation of the criteria indicate all or portions of the following areas in unincorporated County as disadvantaged: Pajaro, Pajaro/North Moss Landing, Moss Landing/Route 1 North, West Boronda, North Marina, Castroville, South Salinas, Salinas River east to County line, Chualar-Gonzales, area outside Greenfield, area outside King City. Within the identified disadvantaged communities, the Environmental Justice Element is required to include objectives and policies that reduce unique or compounded health risks through reduction of pollution or hazard exposure, improvement of air quality, and promotion of public facilities and services, food access, safe

and sanitary homes, and physical activity.

Tentative timeline for the Safety Element Update and preparation of the Environmental Justice Element:

- Spring and Autumn/Winter 2023 - Technical Committees/Public meetings/Workshops/Focus Groups
- Winter/Spring 2024 - Develop Administrative Drafts + Prepare Initial Study
- Spring 2024 - Circulate Initial Study for 30 days Public Review
- Summer 2024 - Planning Commission hearing
- Autumn 2024 - Adoption at Board of Supervisors hearing

Although the Sixth Cycle Update of the Housing Element is on a more aggressive schedule than the other two elements, policies across the elements will be developed to interact cohesively to support intended outcomes.

### *Community Engagement*

The consultant proposes a Community Engagement Plan that includes workshops with diverse groups of citizens and residents in the County, efforts to promote participation from underrepresented segments of the community, stakeholder focus groups, a community survey, and informational messaging. Spanish language translation for public meetings will be available. County staff will augment the consultant portion of the Community Engagement Plan with boots-on-the-ground outreach efforts to community-based organizations and targeted pop-ups at strategic locations within areas of the community identified as hubs for those unable to participate in conventional forms of civic engagement and the policymaking process.

Monterey County is developing a list of interested parties and compiling comments and feedback for these efforts. Interested parties will receive notice of engagement opportunities and public meetings upon request. Written comments and questions about the effort will also be accepted. Requests for notice or any comments and questions should be directed to Jaime Guthrie at [GuthrieJS@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:GuthrieJS@co.monterey.ca.us) <<mailto:GuthrieJS@co.monterey.ca.us>> or by phone at (831) 796-6414.

### ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

This presentation can be Statutorily Exempt pursuant to Section 15262 of the CEQA Guidelines as an early discussion on possible future actions that do not involve a commitment to a project. The General Plan amendments will require a CEQA determination prior to adoption.

### OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The following Departments or Agencies have been involved:

- Office of County Counsel
- Bureau of Environmental Health
- Office of Emergency Services
- Civil Rights Office
- Public Works, Facilities, and Parks
- Office of Community Engagement and Strategic Advocacy
- Office of Sustainability

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