



CITY of CALABASAS

Community Development Department
Planning Division
100 Civic Center Way
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Notice of Preparation

DATE: FEBRUARY 8, 2021
TO: RESPONSIBLE AND TRUSTEE AGENCIES AND INTERESTED PARTIES
SUBJECT: NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE 2021-2029 HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of Calabasas will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the 2021-2029 Housing Element update and associated updates to the Land Use, Safety, and Circulation Elements of the General Plan, as described below. This Notice of Preparation has been issued to provide an opportunity for responsible and trustee agencies and interested parties to submit comments on the scope of the EIR, relative to the attached Project Summary. Agencies should comment on such information as it relates to their statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. The City made the determination to prepare an EIR following preliminary review of the project. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15063(a), because an EIR is needed, an initial study has not been prepared. Probable environmental effects of the project are described in the attached Project Summary.

Project Name: City of Calabasas 2021-2029 Housing Element Update EIR

Project Location: City of Calabasas (citywide) in the County of Los Angeles (see Figure 1 attached).

Public Comment Period: The City of Calabasas welcomes and will consider all written comments regarding potential environmental impacts of the project and issues to be addressed in the Draft EIR. The public review period begins on February 8, 2021 and ends on March 9, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. Please direct your comments to:

Mail: Michael Klein, AICP, Senior Planner
Community Development Department
100 Civic Center Way
Calabasas, California 91302

Email: mklein@cityofcalabasas.com

Please include your name, phone number and email or postal address.

Scoping Meeting: The City of Calabasas will host a scoping meeting to solicit input on the content of the environmental analysis that will be included in the Draft EIR.

Date and Time: February 22, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom

Participants using a phone line:

- Phone Numbers: (669) 900-9128 or (346) 248-7799 or (253) 215-8782 or (312) 626-6799 or (646) 558-8656 or (301) 715-8592
- Webinar ID: 882 3778 7957 (Password: 240110)
- To request to speak, press #9

Participants using a computer, tablet or smartphone:

- Access the webinar at this link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88237787957?pwd=Y1M4WmFMaFkrS1R2cHY0N1EwVVh2dz09> (Password 240110)
- To request to speak, select "Raise Hand"

The City of Calabasas, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, requests individuals who require special accommodations to access, attend and/or participate in the City meeting due to disability, to please contact the City Clerk's Office, (818) 224-1600, at least one business day prior to the scheduled meeting to ensure that we may assist you.



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Consulting Firm Retained to Prepare Draft EIR

Firm Name: Rincon Consultants, Inc.
Address: 180 North Ashwood Avenue, Ventura, California 93003
Contact: Reema Shakra, AICP, Senior Planner

Date: February 8, 2021

Signature: 

Michael Klein, AICP

Title: Senior Planner, City of Calabasas

Phone: (818) 224-1710

Project Summary

Project Location and Setting

The project applies to the entire City of Calabasas (citywide). Calabasas is located in western Los Angeles County and is approximately 13.3 square miles in size (see Figure 1). Land uses are regulated under the City of Calabasas' General Plan, which was comprehensively updated in 2008. Existing land uses in the city consist of residential at varying densities, commercial, mixed use, institutional public facilities, and open space. Nearby natural open space areas include Cheseboro and Palo Comado Canyon and Upper Las Virgenes Canyon Open Space Preserve to the north, Summit Valley Edmund D. Edelman Park to the east, and Topanga State Park and Malibu Creek State Park to the south. Adjacent cities include Agoura Hills to the west, Hidden Hills to the north, and Los Angeles to the east. Unincorporated Los Angeles County is located to the south, west and north of Calabasas. Major roadway access to the city is provided by U.S. Highway 101.

Project Description

The project consists of a comprehensive update to the Housing Element and related updates to the Land Use Element and Land Use Map of the City of Calabasas' General Plan. The project also includes updates to the Safety Element and Circulation Element in compliance with new State rules.

Housing Element Update

The City of Calabasas, along with all cities and counties in California, is mandated by California State law to prepare a Housing Element update for State certification every eight years. The Housing Element is a state-mandated part of the City's General Plan and includes goals, policies, programs and objectives to further the development, improvement and preservation of housing in Calabasas in a manner that is aligned with community desires, as well as regional growth objectives and State law. Local governments must adequately plan to meet the existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community. Specifically, State Government Code Section 65583 requires the Housing Element to identify and analyze existing and projected housing needs, and establish goals, policies, and actions to address these housing needs, including adequate provisioning of affordable and special-needs housing (e.g., agricultural workers, homeless people, seniors, single-parent households, large families, and persons with disabilities). State law requires local jurisdictions to identify available sites that have the appropriate land use and zoning to accommodate estimated housing growth projections.

In 2013, the City of Calabasas General Plan was updated to incorporate the 2014-2021 Housing Element as Chapter 5, "2014-2021 Housing Element." It included the provision of sufficient land for the construction of the housing units that the City of Calabasas must accommodate according to the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) by 2021. The 2014-2021 allocation equaled 330 new housing units.

The RHNA quantifies the need for housing in every region throughout the state and is determined by the California Department of Housing and Community Development. The RHNA is mandated by state law and is meant to inform the local planning process by addressing existing and future housing need resulting from estimated growth in population, employment, and households. The Southern California Association of



Governments (SCAG) is responsible for allocating the RHNA to each city and county in its region, which includes Calabasas.

In August 2019, the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) issued its final Regional Housing Need Determination to SCAG, stating that the minimum regional housing need for the SCAG region is 1.34 million new housing units. HCD then directed SCAG to develop a methodology to allocate all 1.34 million units throughout the region, based on statutory guidelines for housing needs and development.

SCAG developed a methodology and distributed a draft RHNA allocation to all the cities and counties in its region, including the City of Calabasas, for the 2021-2029 Housing Element planning period. The City's total draft RHNA for the 2021-2029 planning period is 353 units, allocated to specific income groups as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 City of Calabasas Regional Housing Needs Allocation (Draft)

	Income Category (% of Los Angeles County Area Median Income)				Total RHNA
	Very Low (31-50%)	Low (51-80%)	Moderate (81-120%)	Above Moderate (120% or more)	
Housing units needed	131	70	70	82	353

One of the important steps in the Housing Element update process is to identify sites that can accommodate the housing units assigned to Calabasas per the above RHNA allocation table, at all income levels. Site selection is conducted based on an analysis of site-specific constraints, including zoning, access to utilities, location, development potential, density and whether or not the site is identified in a previous Housing Element. In order to count toward the RHNA allocation, sites must be in a zoning category that meets a minimum residential density standard, have a minimum lot size, and are either vacant or underutilized. Underutilized sites are sites that have not been developed to the maximum capacity allowed by the zoning category and thus provide the potential for more residential homes on a site. When a local jurisdiction cannot demonstrate that there are enough vacant or underutilized sites to adequately meet their RHNA allocation, a 'rezoning program' must be put into place. A rezoning program ensures that there are enough sites with sufficient densities to address the housing need identified through the RHNA.

The 2021 Housing Element Update will also address any changes that have occurred since adoption of the current Housing Element. These changes include updated demographic information, housing needs data, and analysis of any potential housing constraints. The Housing Element map of available housing sites will be updated to identify sites that could accommodate the City's RHNA allocation for the 2021-2029 planning period.

For more information on the Housing Element update, please go to:

<https://www.cityofcalabasas.com/government/community-development/2021-2029-housing-element-update>

Land Use Element

The Land Use Element of the General Plan will be updated to reflect new housing sites identified in the Housing Element. This will include minor changes to the land use table and map to accommodate residential land uses on the sites identified to meet the RHNA allocation.

Safety Element

The Safety Element is also part of the City of Calabasas General Plan and will be updated to include new information about natural and human-related hazards. The Safety Element currently includes policies to address the following types of hazards: geology and seismicity, stormwater management and flooding, fire hazards, radon gas, hazardous materials, and disaster response. The Safety Element update will focus on ensuring alignment with other City plans such as the Las Virgenes-Malibu Council of Governments Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan and addressing new state requirements pertaining to climate change, wildfire risk, and evacuation routes for residential neighborhoods.



Circulation Element

The Circulation Element is another chapter of the City of Calabasas General Plan that will be updated as part of this project. Changes to the Circulation Element will include removing references to adopted level of service thresholds. Level of service is a measure to describe how well roadway intersections and other transportation facilities operate for drivers. Level of service thresholds were used as a metric to evaluate environmental impacts of proposed projects. These thresholds will be replaced with vehicle miles traveled. Vehicle miles traveled evaluates the number of miles traveled by each vehicle. This shift in standard is mandated by the State as part of Senate Bill 375 in keeping with the State's goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, encourage infill development and improve public health through active transportation (e.g., bicycling and walking).

Environmental and Social Justice Policies

Update of the housing, land use, safety, and circulation elements will also consider the addition of environmental and social justice policies that promote fair housing and economic opportunities and avoid discrimination for all socio-economic groups, consistent with the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) requirements under Housing Element Law.

Required Approvals

Actions to be taken by the City include:

- Certification of the EIR prepared for the project;
- Adoption of the General Plan amendments to update the Housing Element
- Adoption of the General Plan Land Use Map to re-designate land uses for certain selected housing sites;
- Adoption of General Plan amendments to the Safety Element; and
- Adoption of General Plan amendments to the Circulation Element.

After adoption, the updated Housing Element will be submitted to the California Department of Housing and Community Development for certification.

Probable Environmental Effects

The EIR will evaluate whether implementing the proposed project would potentially result in one or more significant environmental effects. The following issue areas will be addressed in the EIR:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services and Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire



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Issues Scoped Out from Analysis in the EIR

The City anticipates that the project would have less than significant or no impacts on the following environmental issue areas. These areas will not be discussed in the EIR for the reasons discussed below.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

No forestry resources or timberlands are located within the city, nor does the city (or surrounding communities) contain agricultural land in active production. Therefore, this issue will not be discussed in the EIR.

Mineral Resources

No significant mineral resources have been identified in the city, as stated in the City's General Plan. None of the candidate housing sites are used for mineral extraction, nor are any of the sites designated as an important mineral recovery site. Therefore, there would be no impact on mineral resources and this issue will not be discussed in the EIR.



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Figure 1 City of Calabasas Vicinity Map



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 City of Calabasas



Fig 3 Regional Location