



CITY *of* CALABASAS

PLANNING COMMISSION

AGENDA REPORT

DATE: JULY 12, 2022

TO: MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

**FROM: MICHAEL KLEIN, AICP, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
TOM BARTLETT, AICP, CITY PLANNER**

**SUBJECT: GENERAL PLAN UPDATES – SAFETY ELEMENT AND CIRCULATION
ELEMENT**

MEETING

DATE: JULY 21, 2022

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve and adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 2022 – 746 (Exhibit A) recommending to the City Council approval of the proposed updates to the Calabasas 2030 General Plan Safety Element and Circulation Element.

BACKGROUND:

Every city and county in California must prepare, adopt and implement a General Plan, which establishes overall goals and policies for future growth of the jurisdiction. As set out in the California Government Code, a city's General Plan must include a Housing Element, Circulation Element and Safety Element among seven mandatory elements. For Cities located within the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) area, the Housing Element is required to be updated every eight years to address regional housing needs.

On October 13, 2021, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 2021-1755 updating the Housing Element and Land Use Element of the 2030 General Plan, as necessary to comply with the most recent State-determined housing update cycle; and, on March 30, 2022 the City Council adopted Resolution 2022 – 1778, re-adopting the 2021 – 2029 Housing Element with four revisions to address concerns raised by the California Department of Housing and Development (HCD). Subsequently, on April 25th HCD certified that the City’s updated Housing Element fully conforms to the statutory requirements for the 2021 – 2029 RHNA cycle. Incidentally, of 197 local entities in the SCAG region, Calabasas was only the thirteenth local jurisdiction to obtain HCD approval and certification of its 2021 – 2029 Housing Element.

In accordance with State law, the Safety Element of the General Plan must be updated when the Housing Element is updated. The proposed Safety Element update incorporates new policies based on updated local and regional data, as necessary to address the requirements of the following recently adopted and chaptered State laws:

- **Senate Bill (SB) 99** requires jurisdictions, upon the next revision of the Housing Element on or after January 1, 2020, to review and update the safety element to include information identifying residential developments in hazard areas that do not have at least two emergency evacuation routes. The Safety Element Update therefore includes information about residential developments in hazard areas that do not have at least two emergency evacuation routes, as well as an assessment of residential emergency evacuation routes.
- **Senate Bill 379** requires Safety Elements to include a climate change vulnerability assessment, measures to address vulnerabilities, and a comprehensive hazard mitigation and emergency response strategy. In addition, **Senate Bill 1035** requires cities and counties to update their safety element during a housing element or local hazard mitigation plan update cycle, but not less than once every eight years, if new information on flood hazards, fire hazards, or climate adaptation or resilience is available that was not available during the previous revision of the safety element. The Safety Element Update therefore identifies populations vulnerable to climate change, presents climate change projection information, and includes new goals, policies and implementation programs addressing climate change.
- **Senate Bill 1241** requires review and update of the Safety Element, upon the next revision of the housing element on or after January 1, 2014, as necessary to address the risk of fire in state responsibility areas and very high fire hazard severity zones. Accordingly, the Safety Element update includes new goals, policies and programs related to fire hazard planning and preparedness consistent with CAL FIRE requirements.

- **Assembly Bill (AB) 747** requires each jurisdiction to review and update as necessary the Safety Element to identify evacuation routes and capacity, safety, and viability under a range of emergency scenarios. The Safety Element Update therefore identifies emergency scenarios and goals, policies, and implementation programs to mitigate potential impacts associated with emergency evacuation.

Regarding the General Plan Circulation Element, **Senate Bill 743** mandates that the City update its Circulation Element to incorporate traffic and transportation policies, thresholds, and methodologies based on vehicle miles traveled (VMT) instead of reliance upon and references to level of service. (Level of service is a measure to describe how well roadway intersections and other transportation facilities operate for drivers, while vehicle miles traveled evaluates the number of miles traveled by each vehicle.) **Senate Bill 743** also mandated that starting in 2021 environmental impact evaluations use vehicle miles traveled. The City Public Works Department therefore conducted the necessary analyses and established appropriate VMT thresholds for the City (see Exhibit G). And, accordingly, all CEQA reviews conducted by the City have consistently adhered to the new VMT requirement; and, updates to the Circulation Element therefore include added references to vehicle miles traveled in place of level of service, consistent with the new State requirements.

The Safety Element update was prepared with substantial input from, and in coordination with, the Los Angeles County Fire Department and CalFIRE. On July 29, 2021 Planning staff and the consultant team met with Los Angeles County Fire Department personnel to discuss and review the draft Safety Element update, and on December 14, 2021 a revised draft of the Safety Element update was submitted to the Los Angeles County Fire Department for agency review with a second review meeting occurring on January 10, 2022. Also, on August 12, 2021 Planning staff and the consultant team submitted a draft Safety Element update to Cal FIRE and the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection for preliminary agency review, and on August 26, 2021 staff and the consultant team met with CalFIRE staff to discuss agency comments. California Government Code section 65302.5(b)(1) requires that the final draft Safety Element update (as will be recommended by the Planning Commission to the City Council) be formally submitted to the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection for approval, and that City Council adoption of the updated Safety Element shall not occur until after Board approval. Accordingly, staff will submit the final draft of the updated Safety Element to CalFIRE immediately following Planning Commission action.

On February 28, 2022, the Public Safety Commission and the Traffic and Transportation Commission held a joint public meeting to discuss the proposed updates to the Circulation and Safety Elements of the 2030 General Plan. After a presentation provided by the General Plan Update team, Commissioners asked

questions and provided comments to staff. Both draft General Plan elements were further revised in response to the input provided by both commissions. Furthermore, to address additional written comments received from the Public Safety Commission members, staff made additional revisions to the draft updated Safety Element and presented the revised draft updated Element to the Public Safety Commission on April 25, 2022.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

Having obtained input from the Los Angeles County Fire Department, CalFIRE, and both the Public Safety Commission and Traffic and Transportation Commission, the final draft Circulation Element and final draft Safety Element are now before the Planning Commission for review and consideration, as required by California Government Code sections 65353 and 65354, and in accordance with chapter 17.76 of the Calabasas Municipal Code. The role of the Planning Commission is to recommend approval (or denial) of the proposed amended General Plan elements to the City Council. The City Council is responsible for final consideration and adoption.

Updated Circulation Element – Summary of Key Amendments

- Updated language and terminology regarding vehicle miles traveled as necessary to comply with Senate Bill 743 (already summarized above);
- Updated roadway classifications and bicycle facilities figures to better reflect existing conditions;
- Updated planned circulation enhancement projects;
- Added new emergency evacuation analyses and policies;
- Revised analyses and policies to address complete street concepts and updated proposed circulation enhancements for critical intersections and roadway corridors;
- Added Agoura Road and Mureau Road as roadway segments affected by freeway diversion, along with the Parkway Calabasas freeway interchange;
- Added the following new policy: "**POLICY VI-13** - develop sample roadway cross sections to reference as best practice treatments for flexible roadway design, such as for bicycle facilities or shoulder treatments, that can accommodate vehicle travel or emergency vehicle access during an emergency evacuation.

Updated Safety Element – Summary of Key Amendments

- Updates as necessary to comply with recently enacted State legislation (as already summarized above);
- Added forty-eight new or amended policy statements to address wildfire risk, emergency preparedness, emergency response and evacuations, and post-disaster recovery; and, climate change vulnerability and adaptation;
- Prepared a new Wildfire Assessment report (Appendix D-1 to the updated Element);
- Prepared a new Emergency Evacuation Traffic Assessment (Appendix D-2 to the updated Element);
- Updated figures depicting seismic risk, liquefaction risk, flood risk, wildfire risk, historic fires, radon risk, and single-access neighborhoods.

Updated Implementation Chapter – Summary of Key Amendments

- Added coordination with the Las Virgenes Unified School District on emergency preparedness, response and recovery;
- Added coordination with local, regional, state and federal entities to implement wildfire reduction strategies;
- Added review of funding opportunities to facilitate implementation of disaster preparedness policies.

REVIEW OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA):

Planning staff and Rincon Consultants have prepared an Addendum to the *City of Calabasas General Plan Update Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR)* (State Clearinghouse #2021020150), which was certified by the City of Calabasas City Council on October 13, 2021. The General Plan Update EIR analyzed updates to the Land Use, Housing, Safety, and Circulation Elements. However, after the General Plan Update EIR was approved and certified, further updates to the Safety and Circulation Elements were made. The EIR Addendum, in conjunction with the previously certified EIR, addresses the proposed updates to the Calabasas General Plan Circulation Element and Safety Element, as herein discussed and presented (see Exhibit F.)

In accordance with Section 15164 of the CEQA Guidelines (Sections 15000 et seq. of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations), a lead agency must prepare an

addendum to a previously certified EIR if some changes or additions are necessary but none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for preparation of a subsequent EIR have occurred. Under Section 15162(a), where an EIR has been certified for a project, no subsequent EIR shall be prepared for the project unless the lead agency determines, on the basis of substantial evidence in light of the whole record, that there are substantial changes in the project or circumstances or substantially important new information that will cause the project to have significant new impacts or substantially increase previously identified significant impacts. The EIR addendum does not need to be circulated for public review but can be included in or attached to the final EIR (Section 15164(c)). The decision-making body must consider the addendum with the final EIR prior to making a decision on the project (Section 15164(d)). An explanation of the decision not to prepare a subsequent EIR pursuant to Section 15162, supported by substantial evidence, is included in Section 4 of the EIR Addendum. The analysis in the EIR Addendum demonstrates that the proposed project does not require the preparation of a subsequent EIR.

REQUESTED ACTION:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve and adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 2022 – 746, recommending to the City Council approval of the proposed updates to the Calabasas 2030 General Plan Safety Element, Circulation Element, and Implementation Chapter, as described in this report.

ATTACHMENTS:

Exhibit A: Planning Commission Resolution No. 2022-746

Exhibit B: Proposed Update of the General Plan Circulation Element

Exhibit C: Proposed Update of the General Plan Safety Element

Exhibit D: Appendices to the Proposed Safety Element Update

Exhibit E: Proposed Update of General Plan Chapter XIII (Implementation)

Exhibit F: Addendum to Adopted and Certified EIR

(NOTE: the *City of Calabasas General Plan Update Final Environmental Impact Report* can be viewed online:

<https://www.cityofcalabasas.com/home/showpublisheddocument/22193/637685883332400000>)

Exhibit G: *City of Calabasas Local Transportation Study Guidelines* (VMT Thresholds Document)