

City of Calabasas



# Updates to the General Plan Circulation and Safety Elements

Planning Commission Meeting, 10-06-2022



# Project Team



- City Departments
  - Planning Division
  - Transportation/Transit Division
  - Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness
- Consultant Team



# Circulation and Safety Elements



- The Circulation and Safety Elements are required chapters of the General Plan
  - Circulation Element establishes policies to achieve and maintain a balanced, safe, and reliable transportation system city-wide
  - Safety Element identifies policies that seek to reduce impacts from hazards (e.g., earthquake, wildfire, hazardous materials)

# Planning Commission Review Process



- Public Hearing on July 21, 2022, to consider proposed updates to the General Plan Circulation Element and Safety Element
- Planning Commissioners' questions and comments provided via emails and letters
- Staff met with Las Virgenes Municipal Water District
- Staff provided updated documents to the LA County Sheriff Department and LA County Fire Department
- Additional input from City's Public Safety and Public Works Departments

# Matrix of Comments & Questions



Exhibit B

#	Commissioner	Comment	City Response
<b>Circulation Element</b>			
1	Byrne	The updated Circulation Element contains a discussion of potential evacuation scenarios for the city. Those computer-generated analyses were prepared by consultants working for the city on the General Plan updates. Based on past experience I find that the results of those analyses are often not representative of actual conditions. The model chosen for the analyses and the assumptions and variables contained in those analyses are not clearly known. Has the city of Calabasas critically reviewed the traffic analyses to determine that the validity of the model and the assumptions used in those analyses?	This comment is noted and is addressed in the Evacuation Report Executive Summary. Public Works has reviewed the findings of the evacuation study. The purpose of the assessment is to identify bottlenecks in the roadway network and inform policy development. The emergency evacuation study does not recreate past evacuation events or predict future evacuation events.
2	Byrne	Despite possible flaws in the study, the study does reveal that the volume of traffic in the Las Virgenes Valley area quickly exceeds the capacity of the roadway(s) when there is an evacuation on the west side of the city. It is my (and my families) personal experience that during even relatively small and isolated incidents gridlock occurs on the freeway and local streets	This comment is noted.
3	Byrne	It is clear from personal experience and from the recent analyses that the Las Virgenes Valley area presently has significant problems with traffic congestion during emergency events. It is further clear that a solution to the problem is not available. The problem will be compounded by allowing additional development in areas where more structures and individuals are at risk from damage and evacuation due to wildfire. For that reason, I believe the City should prohibit expansion of development in hillside areas to avoid placing additional structures and people at the urban/open space interface and increasing the congestion on our already inadequate evacuation routes	The updated Safety Element includes many new policies that are intended to address the evacuation challenges present in Calabasas, including Policy VII-56 which has been added to page VII-32 to encourage voluntary evacuation prior to a wildfire occurring. The City recently received State Housing and Community Development certification of the General Plan Housing Element which stipulates a certain amount of residential unit growth would occur in Calabasas, consistent with state housing laws and programs. Preventing housing development via policies in the Safety Element would be inconsistent with the adopted and certified Housing Element.
4	Byrne	Vehicular Circulation - add "in areas where roadway improvements cannot be implemented"	It is assumed the Commissioner intends for this phrase to be added to this objective: Reduce reliance on the use of automobiles by promoting alternatives such as non-motorized active transportation (bicycle, pedestrian) and the use of public transit. The City does not prioritize vehicular movement over the needs of non-automobile modes of travel (bicyclists, walkers, transit users). The intent of the updated Circulation Element is to balance the needs of all circulation system users.
5	Byrne	In response to goals - How does the city plan to do these things? No ideas are presented here.	The objectives of the Circulation Element establish the City's intent. The steps the City will take to achieve these objectives are articulated on page VI-6 and VI-7 under General Plan Approach, and by implementing the policies in the Element.
6	Byrne	"Thus, the City will take a balanced approach to future transportation improvements" - change improvements to developments	Improvements is a term used here because it can refer to changes to the circulation system that are not physical changes which is how the term 'developments' could be construed. Improvements could include changes to the traffic signal system, for example.
7	Byrne	"Improve the operational efficiency of the existing roadway system consistent with the Circulation Element where it is warranted, feasible, and environmentally prudent to do so" - How? Discuss options/ideas here	See response to Comment #5.
8	Byrne	"provide programs to reduce their contribution to the number of vehicle miles traveled in the community and region" how? And if that cannot be achieved development can be prohibited	The VMT mitigation measures in the Local Transportation Study Guidelines are examples of VMT reduction programs and projects.

- Over 100 individual comments provided by Planning Commissioners
- Response to each comment provided in the matrix
- Revisions were made to Safety, Circulation, and Implementation chapters

# Updated Circulation Element



- Removed redundant language relating to goals and objectives of the Circulation Element.
- Clarified the difference between the Circulation Element objectives and Circulation Element themes.
- Removed language relating to slow moving trucks accessing the County landfill.
- Clarified transportation terms.

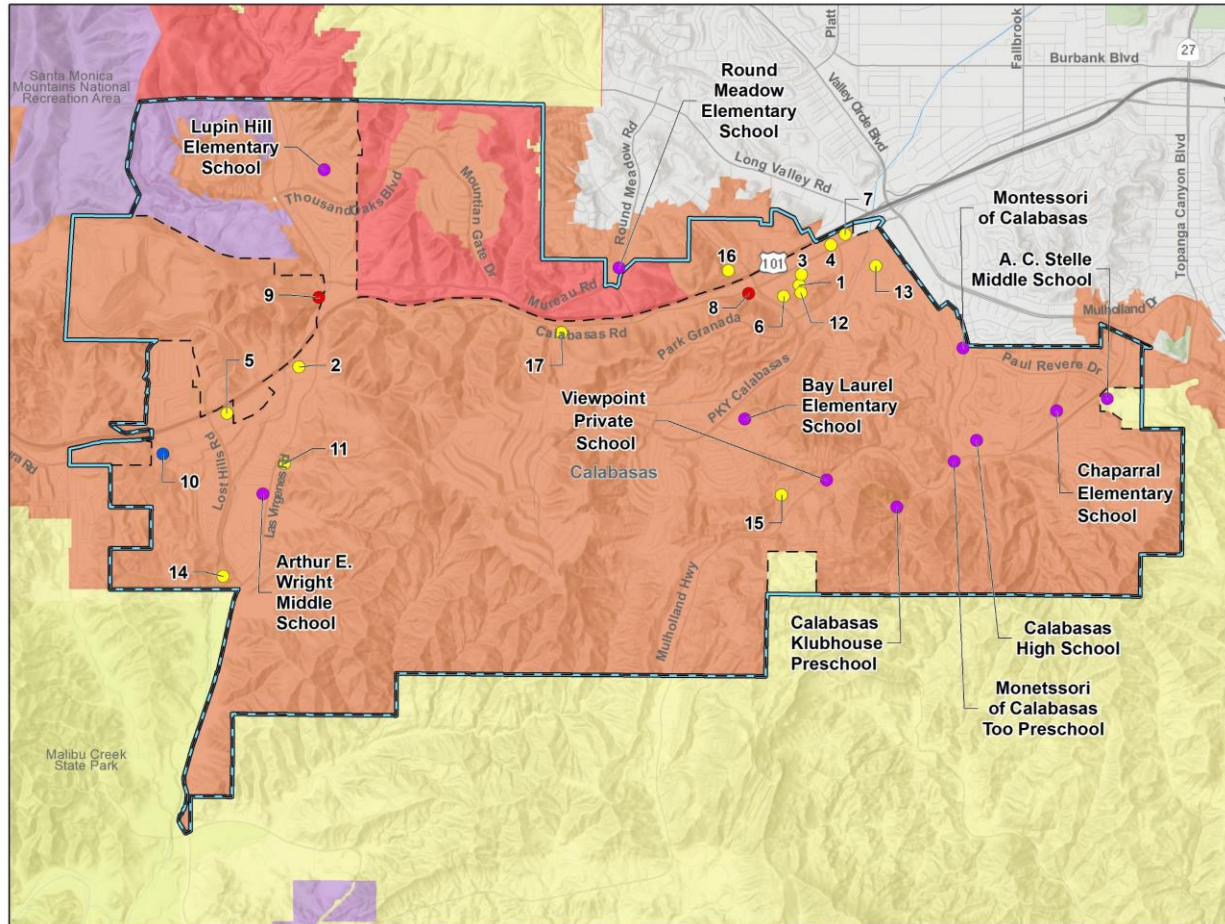
# Updated Safety Element



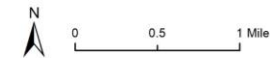
- Added references to the Safety Element appendices at the beginning of the element.
- Updated Appendix D-2 Emergency Evacuation Traffic Assessment to include an Executive Summary.
- Added discussions on the availability of emergency water supplies in case of a natural disaster such as an earthquake or wildfire.
- Added a policy to prepare a bridge preventative maintenance plan and to implement bridge maintenance recommendations. Every two years, City receives Bridge Preventative Maintenance reports from Los Angeles County.
- Reorganized policies under Disaster Response under new headings titled Disaster Response Planning, Disaster Response Coordination, Disaster Response Preparedness, Community Awareness, Single- access Residential Communities, and Emergency Evacuation.
- Added a policy to develop a continuity of operations/government plan to ensure the City has the ability to operate and provide services regardless of an emergency.
- Added a policy for the City to explore issuing voluntary evacuation orders early prior to a wildfire event occurring, such as during exceptionally high fire risk conditions.
- Added a discussion regarding steps the Las Virgenes Municipal Water District is taking to diversify their water supply sources.
- Added two policies to encourage a reduction in water demand for residential landscaping.



# Wildfire and Critical Facilities Map



- Plan Area
  - Calabasas City Limit
  - Local Responsibility Area**
  - Very High Severity Zone
  - State Responsibility Area**
  - Moderate Severity Zone
  - High Severity Zone
  - Very High Severity Zone
  - Federal Responsibility Area**
  - Underdetermined Severity Zone
  - Critical Facilities**
  - Critical Facility
  - LA County Fire Department
  - LA County Sheriff
  - School
1. Calabasas Civic Center
  2. Creekside Village
  3. The Commons at Calabasas
  4. Parkway Calabasas Shopping Center
  5. The Summit at Calabasas
  6. Hilton Garden Inn Calabasas
  7. The Anza A Calabasas Hotel
  8. LA County Fire Dept. Station 68
  9. LA County Fire Dept. Station 125
  10. LA County Sheriff
  11. Las Virgenes Municipal Water District
  12. Calabasas Senior Center
  13. Calabasas Tennis and Swim Center
  14. Juan Bautista de Anza Park
  15. Calabasas Village Mobile Estates
  16. Belmont Village Senior Living Calabasas
  17. Silverado Calabasas Memory Care Community



Source: City of Calabasas, 2018, CalFire 2020, and Rincon Consultants, 2022. Updated February 2022. Basemap provided by ESRI and its licensors © 2022.

Figure VII-4  
 Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone  
 and Critical Facilities  
 CITY of CALABASAS





# Updated Implementation Chapter



- Added water availability and climate projections to the list of topics that require new data as part of Calabasas' Resource Inventory



- The General Plan Update EIR analyzed updates to the Land Use, Housing, Safety and Circulation Elements.
- Further updates to the Safety and Circulation Elements were made which were analyzed in the Addendum (Exhibit F of the July 21<sup>st</sup> staff report).
- There are no substantial changes or substantially important new information that will cause the project to have significant new impacts or substantially increase previously identified significant impacts.

# Recommended Planning Commission Action and Next Steps



1. 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 the staff report.
2. Submit Safety Element to State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection.
3. City Council considers adoption of updated Circulation and Safety Elements.



**Thank you for  
your time!**

Questions or comments?

