



CITY of CALABASAS
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

DATE: APRIL 17, 2023

TO: MEMBERS OF THE CALABASAS CITY COUNCIL

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

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 2023-1850, APPROVING UPDATES TO THE SAFETY ELEMENT, CIRCULATION ELEMENT, AND IMPLEMENTATION CHAPTER OF THE CALABASAS 2030 GENERAL PLAN, AS NECESSARY TO COMPLY WITH CALIFORNIA LAW.

MEETING
DATE: APRIL 26, 2023

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council approve and adopt by resolution (draft Resolution No. 2023 – 1850, Attachment A) updates to the Calabasas 2030 General Plan Circulation Element (Attachment B), the Calabasas 2030 General Plan Safety Element (Attachments C and D), and the Calabasas 2030 General Plan “Implementation” chapter (Attachment E). The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing and reviewed the General Plan updates on January 19, 2023 and recommended approval (see Attachment F - Planning Commission Resolution No. 2023 – 746).

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 seven mandatory elements, including a Housing Element, Circulation Element and

Safety Element. 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 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 25, 2022 HCD certified that the City’s updated Housing Element fully conforms to the statutory requirements for the 2021 – 2029 RHNA cycle.

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 new 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 no longer utilize level of service, and shall only use vehicle miles traveled. The City Public Works Department therefore conducted the necessary analyses and established appropriate VMT thresholds for the City. Accordingly, starting in 2021, all CEQA reviews conducted by the City have consistently adhered to the new VMT requirement. Furthermore, the proposed updates to the Circulation Element, therefore, include added references and policies applicable to VMT, consistent with the new State requirements.

Reviews of the Draft General Plan Updates by City Commissions

Various drafts of the General Plan element updates, as well as a handful of related updates to the "Implementation" chapter of the General Plan, were shared with the members of the Traffic and Transportation Commission, Public Safety Commission, and Planning Commission. Each commission conducted reviews as part of their regular public meetings. Additionally, input was obtained from the general public, the Las Virgenes Municipal Water District, the Los Angeles County Fire Department, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, and the City's own Public Safety and Public Works Departments.

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, and the Public Safety Commission further reviewed the draft Safety Element update on April 25, 2022. Prior to presentation to the Planning Commission, the draft updated

General Plan elements were revised to incorporate the input provided by both Commissions.

As required by California Government Code sections 65353 and 65354, and in accordance with chapter 17.76 of the Calabasas Municipal Code, the Planning Commission must review and consider proposed amendments to the General Plan elements, and then forward a recommendation to the City Council. Accordingly, on July 21, 2022, October 6, 2022, and January 19, 2023 the Planning Commission conducted public hearings to review and consider proposed updates to the General Plan Circulation Element, Safety Element, and Implementation chapter (Chapter XIII).

At the conclusion of the Planning Commission's final public hearing on this topic (January 19, 2023), the Commission approved P. C. Resolution No. 2023-746 recommending to the City Council approval of the proposed General Plan updates. P.C. Resolution No. 2023-746 is attached to this report as Attachment F; note however, the actual final draft updated General Plan elements and Implementation chapter are separately and individually attached to this report (refer to Attachments B, C, D, and E).

California Government Code section 65302.5(b)(1) requires that the final draft Safety Element update (as recommended by the Planning Commission to the City Council) be formally submitted to the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (a.k.a., CAL FIRE) for review and approval, and that City Council adoption of the updated Safety Element shall not occur until after CAL FIRE Board approval. Accordingly, staff submitted the final draft of the updated Safety Element to CAL FIRE immediately following the Planning Commission action on January 19th. The initial review by CAL FIRE staff resulted in several further refinements to the Safety Element, after which the final draft updated Safety Element was placed on the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection agenda for April 4, 2023. The Board of Forestry and Fire Protection approved the City's final draft updated Safety Element with no further changes required (see Attachment G).

CONTENT OF THIS REPORT:

The staff reports for the three Planning Commission hearings discussed above provide in detail the reasons behind the General Plan updates, the planning process employed to prepare the proposed updates, and key components of the proposed updates. Therefore, the detailed information in the Planning Commission reports is not replicated here; rather, this report explains and discusses the basis for the General Plan updates, and summarizes the more substantial updates. Below are the webpage links to the agendas and reports for the July 21, 2022, October 6, 2022, and January 19, 2023 meetings of the Planning Commission (recorded

videos of each meeting may also be accessed here

http://calabasas.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=4):

- <https://www.cityofcalabasas.com/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/4571/135?curm=1&cury=2023> (Go to **Item #4** on the meeting agenda for the applicable hyperlinks)
- <https://www.cityofcalabasas.com/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/2891/135?curm=10&cury=2022> (Go to **Item #2** on the meeting agenda for the applicable hyperlinks)
- <https://www.cityofcalabasas.com/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/2880/135?curm=7&cury=2022> (Go to **Item #3** on the meeting agenda for the applicable hyperlinks)

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

Below is a synopsis of the more substantial updates and revisions to the Circulation Element, Safety Element, and Implementation chapter of the Calabasas 2030 General Plan.

Circulation Element – Summary of Key Updates and Revisions

- The number of individual policy statements in this element have been increased from 27 to 28.
- Updated and added language and terminology regarding vehicle miles traveled (VMT), as necessary to comply with Senate Bill 743;
- Updated roadway classifications and bicycle facilities figures to better reflect existing conditions;
- Updated the lists and descriptions of planned circulation system enhancement projects;
- Added new emergency evacuation analyses and associated 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 (new) 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;”
- Added a detailed explanation of how the City intends to continue using Level of Service (LOS) for evaluation of potential traffic impacts, in addition to the State-mandated Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) traffic impact review thresholds and process;
- Added that the City plans to prepare a new fee study that could result in new and/or updated traffic and transportation impact mitigation fee(s);
- Incorporated examples of how the City can improve traffic operational efficiencies that do not necessitate addition of vehicular lanes; and
- Added language that directs future updates to the Bicycle Master Plan to consider Class I and Class IV bike lanes.

Safety Element – Summary of Key Updates and Revisions

- The number of individual policy statements in this Element have been increased from 27 to 111.
- Added policy statements to address wildfire risk, emergency preparedness, emergency response and evacuations, and post-disaster recovery; and, climate change vulnerability and adaptation;
- Prepared and incorporated into the updated Element a new Wildfire Assessment report, as Appendix D-1;
- Prepared and incorporated into the updated Element a new Emergency Evacuation Traffic Assessment, as Appendix D-2;
- Added and updated figures and map exhibits which depict seismic risk, liquefaction risk, flood risk, wildfire risk, historic fires, radon risk, and single-access neighborhoods;
- Added discussions on the availability of emergency water supplies in case of a natural disaster such as an earthquake or wildfire;
- 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 prepare a bridge preventative maintenance plan and to implement bridge maintenance recommendations;
- 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 encouraging reductions in water demand for residential landscaping;
- Clarified the water storage capacity of the Las Virgenes Reservoir;
- Added a new map that identifies residential neighborhoods and senior living facilities with a single access route;
- Added an acknowledgment that the transportation network could be significantly impacted during an emergency evacuation;
- Added Cal-Adapt temperature and extreme heat climate projection data to correspond to hottest area of Calabasas (eastern area);
- Incorporated NOAA weather station historic temperature data;
- Added a new policy directing the City to prepare a Community Wildfire Protection Plan that aligns with the Los Angeles County Community Wildfire Protection plan by the next revision of the City of Calabasas Safety Element;
- Added a new policy stating that the Los Angeles County Fire Department should evaluate their capacity to adequately suppress wildfire by evaluating both existing and new developed areas;
- Added a new policy requiring coordination with the Las Virgenes Municipal Water District to ensure long-term maintenance and integrity of water supply and water pressure for existing and future developed areas for firefighting purposes;
- Added a new policy directing the City to require for new developments (via building covenants, or homeowner covenants, conditions and restrictions) ongoing maintenance and upkeep of buildings and landscaping;

- Added a new policy directing the City to minimize wildfire risk by increasing resistance of structure to heat, flames, and embers through review of current building code standards and others applicable standards regarding construction;
- Added a new policy indicating that the City will discourage development where wildfire risk mitigation measures would significantly impact biological resources. Where development must be accommodated, the City would implement fuel modification techniques that would not adversely affect significant biological resources, the greatest extent feasible and site structures to maximize low-flammability landscape features to buffer against wildfire spread;
- Added a new policy stating that “Whenever feasible, locate new essential public facilities, including health care facilities, emergency shelters, fire stations, emergency command centers, and emergency communications facilities, in areas of the City that are already developed rather than on properties adjacent to undeveloped lands”;
- Added a new policy indicating that the City will permit new development only within areas that have adequate water resources available, to include water pressure, onsite water storage, or fire flows;
- Added a new policy indicating that the City will limit new development along steep slopes and amidst rugged terrain to limit rapid fire spread and increase accessibility for firefighting;
- Added a new policy indicating that the City will coordinate with Southern California Edison to implement an aggressive electrical undergrounding plan with a focus on critical evacuation roadways and areas with highest wildfire risk; and,
- Added a new policy directing the City to coordinate with telecommunication service entities and the Los Angeles County Cable and Telecommunications Office regarding efforts to fire-harden communications infrastructure.

Implementation Chapter – Summary of Key Revisions

- 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;
- Added water availability and climate projections to the list of topics that require new data as part of Calabasas' Resource Inventory;
- Removed outdated information regarding the Oak Tree Reforestation Fund; and,
- Added a provision stating that Safety Element policies take priority over other General Element policies in situations where policy conflicts occur between the General Plan elements.

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

Planning staff and Rincon Consultants 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 Final EIR analyzed updates to the Land Use, Housing, Safety, and Circulation Elements which were known and under consideration at that time; and the Addendum analyzes the currently proposed updates to the General Plan Safety Element, Circulation Element, and Implementation Chapters. The analysis in the EIR Addendum demonstrates that the proposed project does not require preparation of a subsequent EIR or an EIR Amendment. (The General Plan Update Final EIR Addendum is attached as Attachment H.)

REQUESTED ACTION:

Staff recommends that the City Council approve and adopt by resolution (Attachment A): the proposed updates to the Calabasas 2030 General Plan Circulation Element (Attachment B); the proposed updates to the Calabasas 2030 General Plan Safety Element (Attachments C and D); and, the proposed updates to the Calabasas 2030 General Plan "Implementation" chapter (Attachment E).

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A: City Council Resolution No. 2023-1850 (Draft)

Attachment B: Proposed Update of General Plan Circulation Element

Attachment C: Proposed Update of General Plan Safety Element

Attachment D: Appendices D-1 and D-2 to the Proposed Safety Element Update

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

Attachment F: Planning Commission Resolution No. 2023-746

Attachment G: Report from the California Board of Forestry and Fire Prevention

Attachment H: Addendum to the City of Calabasas General Plan Update Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR)