



Planning and Development

Lisa Plowman, Director
Jeff Wilson, Assistant Director
Elise Dale, Assistant Director

TO THE HONORABLE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

PLANNING COMMISSION
HEARING OF NOVEMBER 5, 2025

RE: *Environmental Justice Element of the Comprehensive Plan; 22GPA-000000-00003*

Hearing on the request of the Planning and Development Department (P&D) that the County Planning Commission recommend that the Board of Supervisors adopt a Comprehensive Plan element, Case No. 22GPA-00000-00003, adding the Environmental Justice Element (EJE) to the County Comprehensive Plan as required by Government Code Section 65302(h); and to determine the General Plan Amendment is exempt from CEQA pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3). (Continued from 08/27/25 and 10/08/25)

Dear Honorable Members of the Board of Supervisors:

At the Planning Commission hearing of November 5, 2025, Commissioner Parke moved, seconded by Commissioner Ford and carried by a vote of 3 to 0 (Martinez absent, Reed recused) to:

1. Make the required findings for approval, including CEQA findings, and recommend that the Board of Supervisors make the required findings for approval, including CEQA findings, of the Environmental Justice Element project (Attachment A of the staff memorandum dated October 27, 2025).
2. Recommend that the Board of Supervisors determine that Case No. 22GPA-00000-00003 is exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to 15061(b)(3) of the State Guidelines for the Implementation of CEQA (Attachment B of the staff memorandum dated October 27, 2025); and
3. Adopt a resolution (Attachment C) recommending that the Board of Supervisors adopt the proposed comprehensive plan amendment as revised by the staff memorandum dated October 27, 2025, Case No. 22GPA-00000-00003, adding the Environmental Justice Element into the Comprehensive Plan (Attachment C of the staff report dated October 27, 2025, Exhibit 1), as amended at the November 5, 2025 hearing with the following recommendations.

- a. Direct staff to work with community organizations to conduct additional in-person community outreach and engagement on the policies, objectives, and actions in the Environmental Justice Element,
- b. Direct staff to create and convene a stakeholder advisory group to assist with the community outreach, and monitor and consult on the implementation of the Environmental Justice Element,
- c. Direct staff to develop an implementation plan for the Environmental Justice Element, including adding definitions of key terms, and
- d. Consider the phases assigned to actions in the Environmental Justice Element Implementation Matrix (Appendix A) to reflect priority actions.

Sincerely,



Jeff Wilson
Secretary to the Planning Commission

cc: Alex Tuttle, Deputy Director
Whitney Wilkinson, Supervising Planner
Zoe Carlson, Planner
Danielle Moore, Planner

Attachments: **Attachment A – Findings**
 Attachment C – County Planning Commission Resolution

JW/dmv

ATTACHMENT A: FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL

Case No. 22GPA-00000-00003

1.0 CEQA FINDINGS

1.1 CEQA EXEMPTION

The County Planning Commission finds and recommends that the Board of Supervisors find that the proposed project is exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3). Please see Attachment B, Notice of Exemption, for more details.

2.0 ADMINISTRATIVE FINDINGS

In compliance with Section 35.104.060 of the County Land Use and Development Code, the following findings shall be made by the review authority prior to the approval or conditional approval of an Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan, Development Code, or County Zoning Map:

2.1 **The request is in the interests of the general community welfare.**

The County Planning Commission finds, and recommends that the Board of Supervisors find, that the proposed amendment is in the interest of the general community welfare. Addressing social equity in policy decisions is vital for the County's economy, community health, and well-being. The County affirmed the community benefit of equity and inclusion in the Statement of Equity and Inclusion (Statement), adopted by the Board of Supervisors on January 26, 2021. The Statement says in part, "We believe in the dignity and humanity of all people. We strive for a healthy and prosperous society that promotes all people having equitable access and opportunity."

The EJE helps to bring social equity further into the land use planning, infrastructure improvement, and community engagement processes. The EJE contains goals, policies, objectives, and actions to: 1) promote public facilities, food access, safe and sanitary homes, physical activity, and civic engagement in the public decision-making process; 2) reduce exposure to pollution, including improving air quality in Environmental Justice Communities (EJCs) and reducing unique or compounded health risks in EJCs; and 3) prioritize improvements and programs that address the needs of EJCs. Raising the quality of life for EJC members will positively affect the overall economy, health, environment, and community benefits that are shared by all County residents.

2.2 **The request is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, the requirements of State planning and zoning laws, and this Development Code.**

The County Planning Commission finds, and recommends that the Board of Supervisors find, that the proposed amendment is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, State planning and zoning laws, and the County Land Use and Development Code (LUDC). The

proposed amendment is consistent with the applicable policies of the Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan as discussed in Section 6.3 of the County Planning Commission staff report, dated August 19, 2025, and incorporated herein by reference. Additionally, the proposed amendment is consistent with applicable provisions of the County Land Use and Development Code (LUDC). For example, the proposed amendment would not change any existing text, zones, development standards, or other regulations of the LUDC.

The EJE is consistent with State planning laws. Specifically, the EJE is required by Government Code Section 65302(h). The EJE contains goals, policies, objectives, and actions in accordance with State law requirements.

Therefore, the proposed amendment is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, State planning and zoning laws, and the LUDC.

2.3 The request is consistent with good zoning and planning practices.

The County Planning Commission finds, and recommends that the Board of Supervisors find, that the proposed amendments are consistent with good zoning and planning practices to regulate land uses for the overall protection of the environment and community values. The County believes that equity is a fundamental principle that must be embedded in policies, institutional practices, and systems (Statement, 2021). The California State Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI) General Plan Guidelines includes a chapter on Environmental Justice (Chapter 4) as well as Equitable and Resilient Communities (Chapter 5). The EJE was developed consistent with LCI's guidance and meets the requirements of Government Code Section 65302(h) for preparing Environmental Justice elements. The EJE does not include any changes to zoning regulations or raise environmental or other planning issues.

2.4 The request is deemed to be in the public interest.

The County Planning Commission finds, and recommends that the Board of Supervisors find, that the proposed amendment is deemed to be in the public interest because it strives to improve overall community health and well-being and is developed in accordance with the requirements of state law. The EJE addresses social inequalities through objectives and policies that: 1) prioritize improvements and programs that address the needs of EJs; 2) promote public facilities, food access, safe and sanitary homes, physical activity, and civic engagement in the public decision-making process; and 3) reduce exposure to pollution, including improving air quality in EJs and reducing unique or compounded health risks in EJs. Overall, it is in the public interest to adopt the EJE, as all residents of the County deserve equitable access and opportunity.

Environmental Justice Element
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County Planning Commission
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Attachment A - Page 3

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ATTACHMENT C: COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION

**RESOLUTION OF THE SANTA BARBARA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

IN THE MATTER OF RECOMMENDING TO THE BOARD OF) RESOLUTION NO. 25 - 14
SUPERVISORS THE ADOPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL)
JUSTICE ELEMENT OF THE SANTA BARBARA COUNTY) Case No.: 22GPA-00000-00003
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN)

WITH REFERENCE TO THE FOLLOWING:

- A. Government Code Section 65302, subsection (h), requires all counties and cities with disadvantaged communities to adopt an environmental justice element or related goals, policies, and objectives into the Comprehensive Plan.
- B. County staff identified eight disadvantaged communities within the unincorporated areas of Santa Barbara County.
- C. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65302 subsection (h), the Environmental Justice Element must (A) identify objectives and policies to reduce the unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities by means that include, but are not limited to, the reduction of pollution exposure, including the improvement of air quality, and the promotion of public facilities, food access, safe and sanitary homes, and physical activity; (B) Identify objectives and policies to promote civic engagement in the public decision-making process; and (C) Identify objectives and policies that prioritize improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities.
- D. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65302, subsection (h), each jurisdiction shall adopt or review the environmental justice element upon the adoption or next revision of two or more elements concurrently on or after January 1, 2018.
- E. In accordance with Government Code Section 65302 subsection (h), the proposed Environmental Justice Element includes goals, policies, objectives, and actions to reduce the unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities by means that include, but are not limited to, the reduction of pollution exposure, including the improvement of air quality, and the promotion of public facilities, food access, safe and sanitary homes, and physical activity.
- F. In accordance with Government Code Section 65302 subsection (h), the proposed Environmental Justice Element also includes goals, policies, and objectives to promote civic engagement in the public decision-making process and prioritize improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities.

- G. Citizens, California Native American Indian tribes, public agencies, public utility companies, and civic, education, and other community groups have been provided the opportunity for involvement in compliance with Government Code Section 65351.
- H. The County contacted and offered to consult with California Native American tribes in compliance with Government Code Sections 65352.3 and 65352.4 (Senate Bill 18). No tribes contacted the County requesting further consultation.
- I. The County Planning Commission has held multiple duly noticed public hearings in compliance with Government Code Sections 65353 and 65854 on the proposed amendment, at which hearings the amendment was explained and comments invited from the persons in attendance.
- J. In compliance with Government Code Sections 65354 and 65855, which requires the County Planning Commission's written recommendation on the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment to include the reasons for the recommendation and the relationship of the proposed amendment to applicable general and specific plans, the County Planning Commission has determined that the proposed Environmental Justice Element is consistent with the Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan, including the Land Use Element and Community and Area Plans, and provides the greatest community welfare without compromising community values, environmental quality, or the public health and safety, as included in the findings of the County Planning Commission staff memo dated October 27, 2025, which is incorporated by reference.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED as follows:

1. The above recitations are true and correct.
2. The County Planning Commission now finds that it is in the interest of the orderly development of the County and important to the preservation of the health, safety and general welfare of the residents of the County to recommend that the Board of Supervisors make the required findings for approval, certify the Notice of Exemption, adopt the Resolution, and adopt the Environmental Justice Element, included as Exhibit 1 and as revised by the County Planning Commission staff memorandum dated October 27, 2025, as an element of the Comprehensive Plan for the County of Santa Barbara and consider the following recommendations from the Planning Commission made at the hearing on November 5, 2025:
 - a. Direct staff to work with community organizations to conduct additional in-person community outreach and engagement on the policies, objectives, and actions in the Environmental Justice Element,

- b. Direct staff to create and convene a stakeholder advisory group to assist with the community outreach, and monitor and consult on the implementation of the Environmental Justice Element,
 - c. Direct staff to develop an implementation plan for the Environmental Justice Element, including adding definitions of key terms, and
 - d. Consider the phases assigned to actions in the Environmental Justice Element Implementation Matrix (Appendix A) to reflect priority actions.
3. This County Planning Commission recommends that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Barbara, State of California, following the required noticed public hearings, approve and adopt the above-mentioned recommendation of this County Planning Commission, based on the findings of the County Planning Commission staff memo dated October 27, 2025.
 4. This County Planning Commission endorses and transmits a certified copy of this Resolution to the Board of Supervisors in compliance with Government Code Section 65354 and Section 65855.
 5. The Chair of the County Planning Commission is hereby authorized and directed to sign and certify all documents, and other materials in accordance with this Resolution to show the aforementioned action by the County Planning Commission.

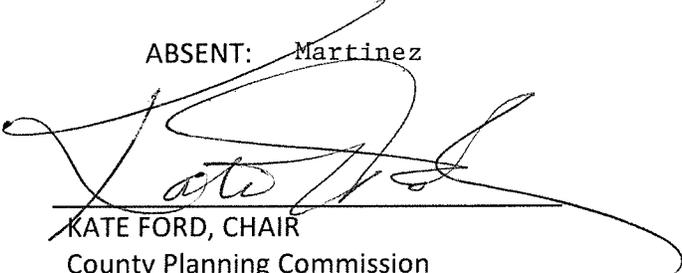
PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the Planning Commission of the County of Santa Barbara, State of California, this 5th day of November, 2025, by the following vote:

AYES: Cooney, Ford, Parke

NOES:

ABSTAIN: Reed (recused)

ABSENT: Martinez



KATE FORD, CHAIR
County Planning Commission

ATTEST:

Environmental Justice Element
Case No. 22GPA-00000-00002
County Planning Commission
Hearing Date: November 5, 2025
Attachment C – Page 2



JEFFREY WILSON
Secretary to the Commission

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

RACHEL VAN MULLEM
County Counsel

By  _____

Deputy County Counsel

EXHIBIT:

1. Board of Supervisors Resolution Adopting the Environmental Justice Element of the Comprehensive Plan (Case No. 22GPA-00000-00003)

Environmental Justice Element
Case No. 22GPA-00000-00002
County Planning Commission
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Attachment C – Page 2

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ATTACHMENT C, EXHIBIT 1: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ELEMENT RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE MATTER OF ADOPTING AN ENVIRONMENTAL) RESOLUTION NO. 25 - _____
JUSTICE ELEMENT OF THE SANTA BARBARA COUNTY)
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN) Case No.: 22GPA-00000-00003

WITH REFERENCE TO THE FOLLOWING:

- A. Government Code Section 65302, subsection (h), requires all counties and cities with disadvantaged communities to adopt an environmental justice element or related goals, policies, and objectives into the Comprehensive Plan.
- B. County staff identified eight disadvantaged communities within the unincorporated areas of Santa Barbara County.
- C. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65302 subsection (h), the Environmental Justice Element must (A) identify objectives and policies to reduce the unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities by means that include, but are not limited to, the reduction of pollution exposure, including the improvement of air quality, and the promotion of public facilities, food access, safe and sanitary homes, and physical activity, (B) Identify objectives and policies to promote civic engagement in the public decision-making process, and (C) Identify objectives and policies that prioritize improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities.
- D. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65302, subsection (h), each jurisdiction shall adopt or review the environmental justice element upon the adoption or next revision of two or more elements concurrently on or after January 1, 2018.
- E. In accordance with Government Code Section 65302 subsection (h), the proposed Environmental Justice Element includes goals, objectives and policies to reduce the unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities by means that include, but are not limited to, the reduction of pollution exposure, including the improvement of air quality, and the promotion of public facilities, food access, safe and sanitary homes, and physical activity.
- F. In accordance with Government Code Section 65302 subsection (h), the proposed Environmental Justice Element also includes goals, objectives, and policies to promote civic

engagement in the public decision-making process and prioritize improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities.

- G. The County provided opportunities for the involvement of public agencies, California Native American Indian Tribes, civic, education, and other community groups, public utility companies, and citizens on said proposed amendments, and opportunities to advise the County Planning Commission on said proposed amendments in a public hearing pursuant to Government Code Section 65351.
- H. The County contacted and offered to conduct consultations with California Native American tribes in compliance with Government Code Sections 65352.3 and 65352.4.
- I. The County Planning Commission held multiple duly noticed public hearings, as required by Government Code Section 65353, on the proposed amendments, at which hearings the amendments were explained and comments invited from the persons in attendance.
- J. The County Planning Commission, after holding multiple duly noticed public hearings on the above-described amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, endorsed and transmitted to the Board of Supervisors said recommended amendments by resolution in compliance with Government Code Section 65354.
- K. The Board of Supervisors received and considered the County Planning Commission's recommended actions and held a duly noticed public hearing, as required by Government Code Section 65353, on the proposed amendments, at which hearing the amendments were explained and comments invited from the persons in attendance.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED as follows:

1. The above recitations are true and correct.
2. The Board of Supervisors now finds, consistent with its authority in Government Code Section 65358, that it is in the public interest to provide orderly development of the county and important to the preservation of the health, safety, and general welfare of the residents of the county to approve and adopt the Environmental Justice Element, as shown in Exhibit 1.
3. The Chair and the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors are hereby authorized and directed to sign and certify all maps, documents, and other materials in accordance with this resolution to reflect the above-described action.
4. Pursuant to the provisions of Government Code Section 65357, the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors is hereby authorized and directed to make the documents amending the Santa

Barbara County Comprehensive Plan, including the text and maps, available to the public for inspection.

5. The Environmental Justice Element, as included as Exhibit 1, is adopted as an element of the Comprehensive Plan for the County of Santa Barbara.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Barbara, State of California, this ____ day of _____, 2025, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

LAURA CAPPS, CHAIR
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

ATTEST:

MONA MIYASATO, COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICER
CLERK OF THE BOARD

By _____
Deputy Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

RACHEL VAN MULLEM
COUNTY COUNSEL

By _____
Deputy County Counsel

Environmental Justice Element
Case No. 22GPA-00000-00003
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Attachment C, Exhibit 1 – Page 4

Exhibit:

1. Environmental Justice Element

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