

# Environmental Justice Element

Case No. 22GPA-00000-00003

Board of Supervisors

March 10, 2026



County of Santa Barbara

Planning and Development

Zoë Carlson and Danielle Moore

# Introduction

**WE  
ARE**

**One County  
with One Future**

**We  
Value**

- ▶ **A**CCOUNTABILITY
- ▶ **C**USTOMER FOCUS
- ▶ **E**QUITY & INCLUSION
- ▶ **I**NNOVATION
- ▶ **T**RUST & ETHICS

County of Santa Barbara

**one**  
**CLIMATE**  
initiative



# Background

- Environmental Justice: “means the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of people of all races, cultures, incomes, and national origins, with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies”  
(Government Code § 65040.12(e)(1))
- SB 1000 (2016): Requires addition of EJ goals, policies and objectives to the County Comprehensive Plan (Government Code § 65302(h))

# Environmental Justice Community (EJC) Definition



## Low Income

- Low-Income Communities  $\leq$  80% of Statewide Median Income (\$78,672)



## Disproportionate Environmental Burdens

- CalEnviroScreen 4.0
- CalEPA Regulated Sites Portal
- CalGEM oil and gas wells

# Santa Barbara County Environmental Justice Communities

- Environmental Justice Community
- Incorporated City
- Unincorporated Urban Area
- Existing Developed Rural Neighborhood



one COUNTY  
one FUTURE



0 5 10 Miles

# Environmental Justice Requirements

- Reduce unique or compounded health risks in Environmental Justice Communities (EJCs) by means that include the reduction of **pollution exposure** and improvement of **air quality**
- Promote access to **public facilities, healthy foods, safe and sanitary homes, and physical activity**
- Promote **civic engagement** in the public decision-making process
- Prioritize improvements and programs that **address the needs of Environmental Justice Communities**



# Community & Stakeholder Engagement



## Equity Advisory & Outreach Committee

Call for Artists

Shared info with key stakeholders

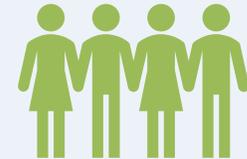


## Community Ambassadors

Community surveys

Community meetings & events

Multi-media community descriptions



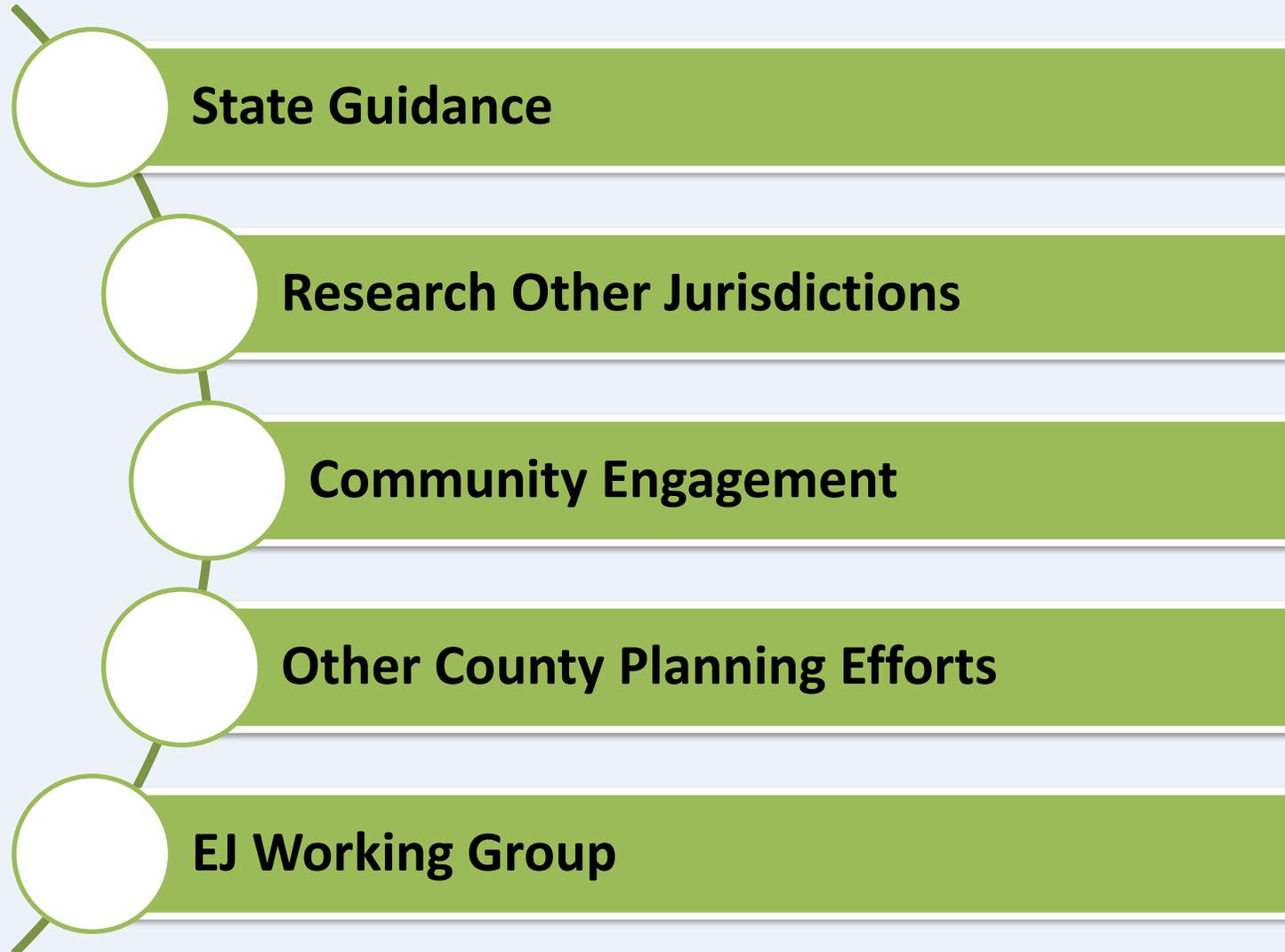
## EJ Element Working Group

15 County Departments

2 Affiliated Agencies



# EJ Element Development



# EJ Element Policies

**Policy 1:** Promote **public facilities** in EJs.

**Policy 2:** Promote access to **healthy and affordable food** in EJs.

**Policy 3:** Promote **physical activity** for community members residing within EJs.

**Policy 4:** Improve **air quality** within EJs.

**Policy 5:** Reduce **exposure to pollution** within EJs.

**Policy 6:** Reduce unique or compounded **health risks** within EJs.

**Policy 7:** Promote **civic engagement** in the public decision-making process among EJ residents.

**Policy 8:** Promote **safe and sanitary homes** within EJs.

**Policy 9:** Prioritize the **needs of EJs**.



# Policy 1: Action 1.2-A

## Policy 1: Promote public facilities in EJs.

No.	Objective	Action	Phase	DA
EJ-1.2	<p><b>Community Siting and Improvement Priorities.</b></p> <p>When considering new or improved public facilities within EJs, prioritize siting, provision of County services, infrastructure, and amenities based on community feedback (e.g., community centers, schools, parks, and open space, and emergency services, and improvements for transportation infrastructure, such as EV charging, road maintenance, bike, and pedestrian facilities, including ADA accessibility).</p>	<p><u>A.</u> Conduct engagement to get feedback on recreational facilities from the community. Ensure consistent maintenance of existing recreational facilities. Prioritize identifying funding mechanisms, including grants and partners, for new recreational facilities (e.g., parks, open space, trails) in underserved EJs.</p>	II	CS

Departmental Acronyms: CS = Community Services Department

# Policy 2: Action 2.2-C

## Policy 2: Promote access to healthy and affordable food in EJs.

No.	Objective	Action	Phase	DA
EJ-2.2	<b>Diet-Related Illness Prevention and Education.</b> Expand partnerships with community-based organizations and EJC residents to amplify efforts of current programs as well as develop additional programs and resources for prevention and education about diet-related illnesses in EJs.	<u>B.</u> Continue to enhance access to healthy foods, particularly in schools, to reduce rates of diabetes, obesity, and diet-related illnesses.	III 	CH, ED

Departmental Acronyms: CH = County Health Department, ED = County Education Office

# Policy 3: Action 3.2-A

## Policy 3: Promote physical activity for community members residing within EJs.

No.	Objective	Action	Phase	DA
EJ-3.2	<b>Increase Access to Parks.</b> Partner with schools, places of worship, state and federal lands, and businesses to expand access to green spaces and recreation areas, especially in EJs with less accessibility to green spaces and recreation areas.	<u>A.</u> Support activities and events where community members build relationships with green spaces and recreation areas (e.g., parks, open space, trails) to expand access within EJs.	I	CS

Departmental Acronyms: CS = Community Services Department

# Policy 4: Action 4.2-B

## Policy 4: Improve air quality within EJs.

No.	Objective	Action	Phase	DA
EJ-4.2	<b>Reduce Wildfire Smoke Exposure within EJs.</b> Provide education and resources, including air quality information, to reduce wildfire smoke exposure for low-income EJC residents who cannot relocate and outdoor workers.	<u>B.</u> Continue to provide education and resources for vegetation fuel reduction efforts (e.g., prescribed burns, prescribed herbivory, mechanical treatments, thinning and reduction with hand crews, etc.) that minimize wildland fire ignitions and the potential for large wildfires.	I 	APCD, <b>FD</b> , OEM

Departmental Acronyms: APCD = Air Pollution Control District, FD = Fire Department, OEM = Office of Emergency Management

# Policy 7 Action 7.1-A

## Policy 7: Promote civic engagement in the public decision-making process among EJC residents.

No.	Objective	Action	Phase	DA
EJ-7.1	<p><b>Culturally Relevant Engagement.</b></p> <p>Partner with appropriate organizations (e.g., community-based, faith-based, advocacy, and service) that have built relationships, trust, and cultural competency within EJCs and with youth, seniors, persons with disabilities, and immigrants to conduct meaningful outreach for relevant initiatives and EJ issues.</p>	<p><u>B.</u> Prepare a communication strategy for each EJC with a specific emphasis on engaging community members who do not speak English and use that strategy for all future project outreach. The County shall continue to share public information across a variety of media, technological, and traditional platforms, and languages based on the demographics of the community.</p>	II	CEO, CS, FF, PD

Departmental Acronyms: CEO = County Executive Office, CS = Community Services, FF = First Five, PD = Planning and Development Department

# PC Recommendations to the BOS

- Work with community organizations to conduct **additional in-person community outreach and engagement** on the policies, objectives, and actions
- Create and convene a **stakeholder advisory group** to assist with the community outreach, and monitor and consult on implementation
- Develop an **implementation plan**, including adding definitions of key terms
- Consider the phases assigned to actions in the Implementation Matrix (Appendix A) to **reflect priority actions**



# Recommendations

- Make the required findings for approval, including the CEQA findings
- Find that the general plan amendment (22GPA-00003) is exempt from the provisions of CEQA
  - 15061(b)(3) – no possibility of significant environmental effect
- Adopt a resolution to approve the proposed general plan amendment (22GPA-00003)

# Thank You



*Artwork by Meiya Sidney*

# Language Modification

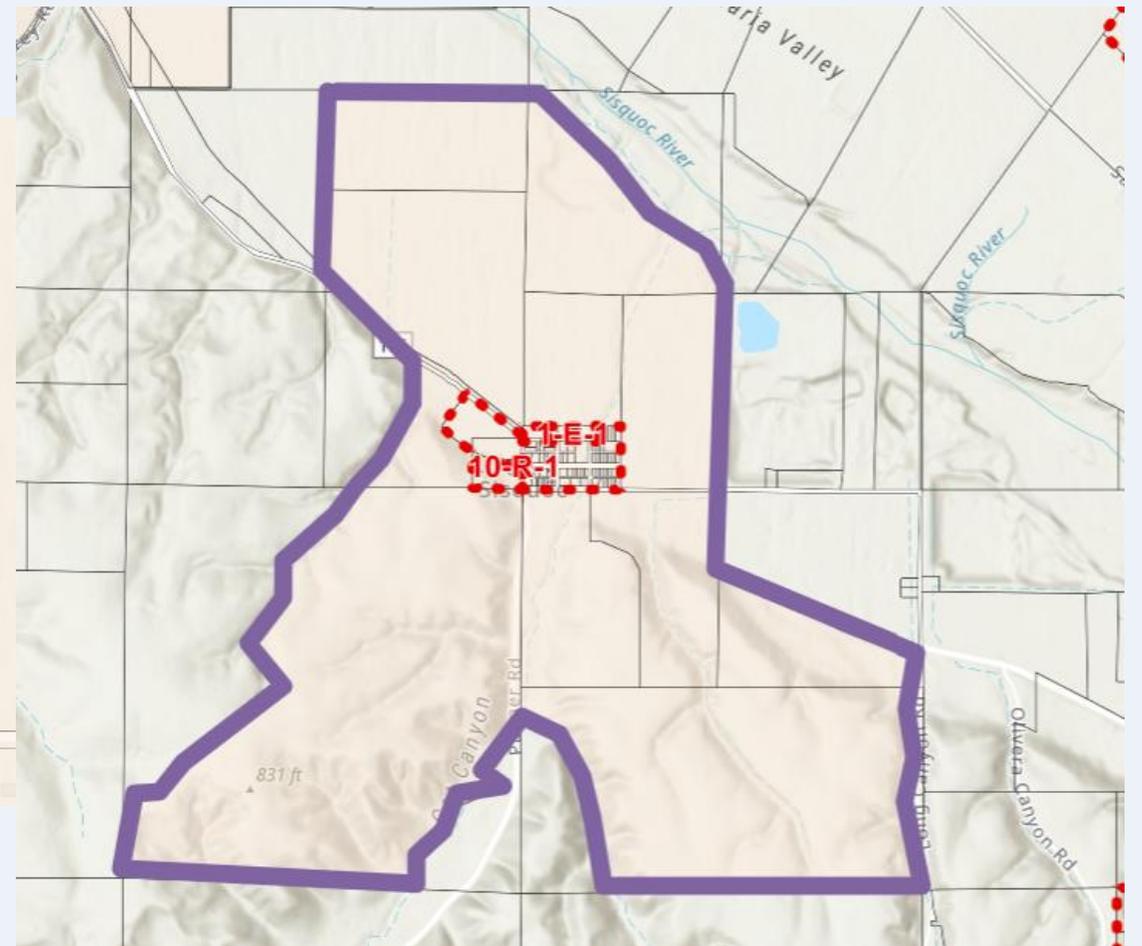
## Garey

- Upon further consideration and public hearing, a determination was made to remove Garey from the list of Environmental Justice Communities. Current income data demonstrates a median household income above 80 percent of the Median Household Income according to 2024 American Community Survey 5- Year estimates. This means that Garey no longer meets the definition of a Disadvantaged Community under Government Code Section 65302h.

## Sisquoc

- Pursuant to Section 65302h4(a) the boundaries of Environmental Justice Communities can be determined by a local jurisdiction based on several factors related to the community characteristics. Based on further review of the areas within Sisquoc that are low income and disproportionately environmentally burdened, and consideration of public comments and following several public hearings, it has been determined that the residential areas, as opposed to the surrounding agricultural zoned areas, best fit the definition of Environmental Justice Communities. The boundary of Sisquoc is therefore modified to include the residential areas within the Census Designated Place as opposed to the entire boundaries of the Census Designated Place for Sisquoc.

# Sisquoc Modifications



# Policy 1: Action 1.2-A

## Policy 1: Promote public facilities in EJs.

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# Policy 3: Action 3.2-A

## Policy 3: Promote physical activity for community members residing within EJs.

No.	Objective	Action	Phase	DA
EJ-3.2	<b>Increase Access to Parks.</b> Partner with schools, places of worship, state and federal lands, and businesses to expand access to green spaces, <b>trails</b> , and recreation areas, especially in EJs with less accessibility to green spaces, <b>trails</b> , and recreation areas.	<u>A.</u> Support activities and events where community members build relationships with green spaces and recreation areas (e.g., parks, open space, trails) to expand access within EJs.	I	CS

Departmental Acronyms: CS = Community Services Department

# Language Modification – EJE Section 4.3

- The County intends for the EJ Actions to change over time as departments complete short-term Objectives and gain a deeper understanding of EJC needs and opportunities to achieve EJ Policies. ~~The Implementation Matrix will be updated periodically, and the current version will be made available to the public.~~ The Implementation Matrix included in [Appendix A](#) contains initial Actions for EJE implementation. Any future updates will involve additional public review and input and action by decision makers.



# Appendix A Language Modification

The Implementation Matrix is designed as the basis for the post-adoption and crucial implementation phase of the Environmental Justice Element (EJE). It is intended to be used as a transparent, guiding action list for the County to track progress and provide accountability. ~~After adoption, the EJE matrix will be updated as needed by staff from each department and made available to the public.~~