



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Planning and
Development (P&D)
Department No.: 053
For Agenda Of: April 2, 2024
Placement: Departmental
Estimated Time: 45 minutes
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from: N/A
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors (Board)

FROM: Department Lisa Plowman, Planning Director, (805) 568-2086
Director(s)
Contact Info: Alex Tuttle, Deputy Director, (805) 568-2072

SUBJECT: Long Range Planning Division (LRP) Fiscal Years (FY) 2024 – 2027 Work Program

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board:

- a) Receive a report on the staff-recommended Long Range Planning FY 2024 – 2027 Work Program;
- b) Provide any direction that the Board would like to make regarding the staff-recommended Long Range Planning FY 2024 – 2027 Work Program; and
- c) Determine that the Board’s action is not a “project” that is subject to environmental review pursuant to the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines [§ 15378(b)(5)].

Background:

This Board letter and attachments provide an update on, and set forth staff’s recommendations regarding, the Planning & Development (P&D) Department’s Long Range Planning Division (LRP) FY 2024 – 2027 Work Program. Staff’s recommendations are based on the following considerations:

- Multi-year projects that staff initiated at the Board’s direction as part of past LRP work programs, that require a continued commitment of resources to complete;

- Existing State mandates, as well as changes in State and federal laws and regulations that affect local land use policies and regulations;
- Projects that advance the goals and programs set forth in the Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan;
- Continued P&D support for County-sponsored projects that have specific deadlines that must be met and/or funding commitments that must be satisfied; and
- Staff availability and budget constraints, given the fiscal priorities of Santa Barbara County and available funding sources.

This will be the fifth, three-year work program that the Board will be considering since converting to a three-year planning timeframe for the work program. The three-year planning timeframe affords the Board the opportunity to prioritize multiyear projects, some of which are interrelated and should be considered together when developing the work plans for them.

1. FY 2023 – 2024 Quarter (Q)1 – Q3 Accomplishments

The following is a list of LRP's accomplishments in the first three quarters of FY 23-24. Attachment 1 to this Board letter includes a more complete summary of these accomplishments to date.

- Housing Element Update (HEU) – LRP staff made substantial progress on the preparation and adoption of the 2023-2031 HEU during the past nine months. Most notably, the Board of Supervisors adopted the HEU in December 2023, and State HCD found the adopted element in substantial compliance with state housing element law in January 2024. Specific accomplishments included the following:
 - Submitted the Draft HEU to State HCD for preliminary review. Completed multiple rounds of review and revisions from June through September 2023.
 - State HCD found the revised Draft HEU in substantial compliance with state housing element law on October 16, 2023.
 - Launched virtual housing simulations that allow users to select a combination of sites to meet the County's North County and South Coast Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) in October 2023.
 - Presented the HEU to the Planning Commission, November 8, 2023.
 - Presented the HEU to the Board of Supervisors for adoption on December 5, 2023. The Board of Supervisors adopted the HEU.
 - State HCD found the adopted HEU in substantial compliance with state housing element law on January 22, 2024.
 - Completed and released the HEU Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for public review and comments from December 20, 2023 through February 9, 2024. Staff received approximately 100 comments letters.
 - Held two public hearings (one in the South Coast and one in the North County) on the HEU Draft Program EIR to receive public comments in mid-January 2024.

- Drafted rezone-related Comprehensive Plan and zoning ordinance amendments to effectuate HEU Programs 1, 2, and 3 in January and February 2024. Prepared Planning Commission staff report.

Staff will present the rezone-related amendments and Program EIR to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors for adoption in spring 2024.

- *Agricultural Enterprise Ordinance (AEO) Amendments* – LRP staff made substantial progress on the preparation and adoption of the AEO amendments project during the past 9 months. Specific accomplishments included the following:
 - Completed and released the AEO Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for public review and comments from August 1, 2023, through September 14, 2023.
 - Prepared draft LUDC and Article II Costal Zoning Ordinance amendments.
 - Drafted AEO-related Uniform Rules amendments for review and recommendation by the County Agricultural Preserve Advisory Committee.
 - Held five Planning Commission hearings between November 2023 and March 2024 to receive public comment and consider Planning Commission recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.
 - Published the AEO Final Program EIR in February 2024.
 - Held eight meetings with the County Agricultural Advisory Committee, AEO sub-committee, between December 2023 and February 2024, to discuss recommended changes to the draft AEO ordinances.

Planning Commission hearings on the AEO project will conclude in FY 2023-2024 (Q4) and staff will present the Planning Commission’s recommendations to the Board of Supervisors for adoption in summer 2024.

- *Housing Bill Implementation Project* – completed amendments to all three zoning ordinances related to State Density Bonus Law, By-Right Supportive Housing, Objective Design Standards for Multi-Family and Mixed-Use Housing, Qualifying Housing Streamlined Review, and Low Barrier Navigation Centers. The amendments were presented to the Montecito Planning Commission on December 20, 2023, County Planning Commission on January 10, 2024, and were adopted by the Board of Supervisors on February 13, 2024.
- *Comprehensive Plan Annual Progress Report (APR)* – completed the 2023 Comprehensive Plan APR in time to file it with the State Housing and Community Development Department by the April 1, 2024, filing deadline.
- *Environmental Justice (EJ) Element* – completed the draft EJ Element, met with staff from 14 other County departments and the CEO’s office to review draft policies and implementation strategies, and continued public outreach and engagement.
- *Responsible Agency Reviews (RARs) / Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) Reportbacks* – processed five RARs and processed two LAFCO reportbacks.
- *Safety Element Update* – (1) prepared draft wildfire-related amendments that were approved by

the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection and adopted by the Board of Supervisors in July of 2023, (2) continued to complete work on evacuation planning requirements for the Safety Element Update funded by a grant received from the Fire Safe Council, and (3) continued preparation of the draft Climate Adaptation Plan, including public review of draft adaptation strategies in spring 2024.

- *Zoning Ordinance and Other Comprehensive Plan Amendments (FY 2022 – 2023 Expansion Project- Modernization of Multi-Family/Commercial Zone Districts; Expand Ministerial Permits)* –initiated process to develop draft amendments, completed one project element (i.e. elimination of Shopping Center zone district), and continued work on other project components. This project is a result of the FY 22 – 23 staff expansion (Supervising Planner/Consultants).
- *Utility Scale Solar Ordinance Amendments* – prepared and circulated a second request for proposal (RFP) after the first RFP received no responses. Selected a consultant and completed project kick-off meeting after confirming availability of funds. Coordinated with consultant to conduct background research and initiated draft amendments.
- *Zoning Ordinance Maintenance and Amendment Packages* – completed the review and publication tasks associated with publishing the zoning ordinances on-line with the County Code. Completed adoption of ADU amendments. This project was able to move forward as a result of the FY 21 – 22 staff expansion (Planner III).
- *2030 Climate Action Plan Update / Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emission CEQA Thresholds of Significance* – drafted the Energy Element amendment and GHG emissions thresholds and presented to the Planning Commission for recommendation to the Board in March 2024.

2. Priorities for Q4 of FY 2023 – 2024

- *Housing Element Update* - For the remainder of FY 2023 – 2024, LRP’s primary goal is completing the environmental document for the HEU and presenting the rezones to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors for adoption.
- *AEO Amendments* – complete the decision-maker hearings during spring and summer 2024.
- *Circulation Element Update* – prepare scope of work and initiate RFP process for consultant selection.
- *EJ Element* – complete preparation of the draft EJ Element and present at decision-maker hearings for consideration during spring and summer 2024.
- *Safety Element Update* – Complete modeling, recommendations, and outreach tool associated with the Evacuation Modeling and Planning Project; complete Climate Adaptation Plan draft adaptation strategies and present to the Board during summer 2024, followed by preparation of a programmatic environmental impact report beginning in fall 2024.
- *Zoning Ordinance and Other Comprehensive Plan Amendments (FY 2022 – 2023 Expansion*

Project) – continue with public outreach, present updated lighting and sign regulations at decision maker hearings, and begin drafting other ordinance amendments.

- *Zoning Ordinance Maintenance and Amendment Packages* – complete drafting zoning ordinance amendments regarding (1) Senate Bill (SB) 9 (2022) (Government Code Sections 66452.6, 65852.21, and 66411.7) ministerial design and approval standards and (2) certain telecommunications regulations.
- *Childcare Facilities Zoning Ordinances Amendments Package* – complete a Local Coastal Program (LCP) Amendment for a package of ordinance amendments that included (1) permitting and development standards for Small and Large Family Day Care facilities to align them with State law (Senate Bill 234, Chapter 244, Statutes of 2019; Health and Safety Code § 1596.72 et al) and (2) permitting requirements for day care homes and centers to: (a) allow smaller day care centers of 50 children or less with a Coastal Development Permit in the Coastal Zone instead of a CUP, and (2) relax certain standards for child care centers located in or at public/quasi-public facilities that are used for assembly uses. This project was able to move forward as a result of the FY 21 – 22 staff expansion (Planner III).
- *2030 Climate Action Plan Update / Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emission CEQA Thresholds of Significance* – along with the Climate Action Plan, present the Energy Element amendment and GHG emissions thresholds to the Board for consideration in spring 2024.

3. Recommendations for Fiscal Year One (FY 2024 – 2025)

Table 1 summarizes staff’s recommended staffing allocations for the services, operations, and on-going projects to be included in Year One of the Work Program. Attachment 1 to this Board letter provides descriptions of the Comprehensive Plan Projects that are listed in Table 1 and discussed further below. Attachment 2 provides a timeline for completion of the projects based on staff’s recommended staffing allocations shown in Table 1.

Table 1 – Staff-Recommended LRP Staffing Allocations

Task / Project	FTEs
Required Services	
Grant Research and Applications	
Ag Preserve Processing and APAC Support	
Regional and Inter-Agency Coordination	
Technical Support to other Departments	
Legislative Review	
General Plan Consistency Review and Maintenance	
Responsible Agency Review and LAFCO Report backs	
CIP Conformity Review	
General Plan Annual Report	
Consultants List Maintenance	
SBCAG Review/Participation	
Required Services Subtotal	1.5

Task / Project	FTEs
Operations	
Budget Development and Implementation Public Information (including Public Records Act requests), Referrals, Website, and Outreach Staff Meetings and Training Process Improvement / Strategic Plan Evaluation and Performance Reviews Division Administration	
Operations Subtotal	4.0
New, On-Going FY 23 – 24, and Delayed Projects from Past Work Programs	
Agricultural Enterprise Ordinance Amendments – Coastal Commission Certification	0.3
Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans (ALUCPs) Consistency Amendments & Coastal Commission Certification (Mandated)	0.3
Circulation Element Update (Mandated)	1.1
Open Space Element Update (Mandated)	1.0
Coastal Resiliency Local Coastal Program Amendment (LCPA) – Potential Delay until FY 25 - 26	0
Climate Action Plan Implementation	0.4
Zoning Ordinance Amendments to Allow Ministerial Development/Uses & Changes to Residential/Commercial Development Standards	0.6
Environmental Justice Element Implementation (Mandated)	0.3
Housing Element Update Implementation (Mandated)	2.5
Recreation Master Plan - Comprehensive Plan Consistency Amendments	0.2
Safety Element Update (Mandated)	1.2
Short-Term Rentals LCPA	0.4
Utility Scale Solar General Plan, Ordinance, Williamson Act Amendments	0.5
Zoning Ordinance Amendments Packages SB 9 Telecommunication Facilities (Small Wireless Facilities and Generators) Oil and Gas Cannabis Odor Requirements Special Events Clean-up Package	0.7
New, On-Going FY 23 – 24, and Delayed Projects from Past Work Programs Subtotal	9.5
LRP WORK PROGRAM TOTAL	
	15.0

3.1 State Mandated, On-Going Projects

State-mandated projects play a significant role in establishing the priorities for the Work Program in the next fiscal year. The Work Program includes the following State-mandated projects.

- *Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans (ALUCP) Comprehensive Plan Consistency Amendments* – The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) adopted updates to the ALUCPs in January 2023 and, consequently staff must (1) prepare amendments to the Comprehensive Plan to achieve consistency with the updated ALUCPs, present the Comprehensive Plan amendments

to decision-makers for consideration of adoption, and obtain Coastal Commission-certification of an LCPA involving changes to the Santa Barbara Airport ALUCP.

- *Circulation Element Update* – This update involves amendments to the Circulation Element and community plans to be consistent with the Public Works Department’s ATP and, more generally, develop policies and programs that facilitate the development of infrastructure designed to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMTs), pursuant to State mandates. The Public Works Department completed the ATP in FY 2023 - 2024. During FY 2024 – 2025, LRP staff will select a consultant and initiate data collection in order to develop the project description and initiate the environmental review for the Circulation Element Update.
- *Environmental Justice Element Implementation* – Once adopted by the Board (scheduled for summer 2024), the EJ Element identifies various implementing actions to be undertaken by different County departments, including Planning & Development.
- *Housing Element Implementation* – The Board-adopted Housing Element Update includes 25 programs that must be implemented, including several identified for the 2024 – 2025 FY.
- *Safety Element Update* – As stated in Sections 1.0 and 2.0 (above), LRP staff will be managing the second and third concurrent phases of the State-mandated Safety Element Update. These phases include completion of the Evacuation Modeling and Planning Project which will inform Safety Element amendments necessary to comply with AB 747 and AB 1409. It also includes continued preparation of the Climate Adaptation Plan which will include development of final adaptation strategies, implementation framework, and additional public outreach. A Programmatic EIR will be also be prepared for the Climate Adaptation Plan during FY 24-25.
- *Open Space Element Update* – SB 1425, signed by the Governor on September 30, 2022, requires every city and county to review and update its open space element by January 1, 2026. The update is to address the following: (1) Access to open space for all residents in a manner that considers social, economic, and racial equity, correlated with the environmental justice element; (2) Climate resilience and other co-benefits of open space, correlated with the safety element; and (3) rewilding opportunities, correlated with the land use element. LRP activities next fiscal year will include conducting appropriate background research, public outreach, contracting with a consultant to assist with preparation of the update and initiating environmental review.

3.2 Non-Mandated, Delayed, and On-Going Projects

There are a number of non-mandated projects that the Board either included or considered including in FY 2023 – 2024 which staff is proposing to continue working on, provided that the Board allocates the budgetary resources to do so. These projects include:

- *AEO Amendments* – As discussed in Sections 1.0 and 2.0 (above), staff will complete the AEO Amendments and present to the Board of Supervisors for adoption during summer 2024, and staff will submit the LCPA application to the CCC to initiate the certification process during fall 2024.
- *Utility-Scale Solar Ordinance Amendments* – Staff will continue to coordinate with the consultant in drafting the ordinance amendments and amendments to the Williamson Act *Uniform Rules*, and initiate environmental review.

- *Coastal Resiliency LCPA* – Staff prepared an LCPA to help mitigate and respond to threats from current and reasonably foreseeable future sea level rise and coastal hazards. In December, 2018, the Board adopted the LCPA and submitted it to the CCC for certification. From 2019 through 2021, County staff consulted and negotiated with CCC staff on CCC staff’s suggested modifications to the LCPA. In September, 2021, the County withdrew the LCPA certification application due to a lack of staff funding and disagreement over a number of CCC staff’s suggested modifications. The Planning Director initiated negotiations with the former Executive Director of the CCC regarding disagreements over the LCPA. In addition, staff will be further researching, and considering applying for, an LCP local assistance grant (up to \$100,000) from the CCC to fund additional work that is required to complete this project. The specific tasks required to complete this project are contingent on County negotiations with Coastal Commission staff. (Recommendation to delay)
- *Short-Term Rentals (STRs) LCPA* – As discussed in Attachment 1, in June 2022, the Board directed staff to delay work on the Coastal Zone STRs LCPA in order to prioritize State-mandated projects. The Board may direct staff to recommence work on the STRs LCPA in FY 2024-2025.
- *Zoning Ordinance Amendment Packages* – As stated above, in FY 23-24, staff completed work on the ADU and JADU ordinance amendments, and began drafting SB 9 (Government Code Sections 66452.6, 65852.21, and 66411.7) objective design standards, permit processing, and subdivision map regulations, and amendments to telecommunication regulations. Staff will complete the SB 9 and telecommunication amendments in FY 24-25, initiate amendments to the oil and gas regulations previously identified by the Board last fiscal year, complete work on a general ordinance clean-up package, and any other new Board priorities.
- *Zoning Ordinance and Other Comprehensive Plan Amendments (FY 2022 – 2023 Expansion Project- Modernization of Multi-Family/Commercial Zone Districts; Expand Ministerial Permits)* – As discussed in Attachment 1, this project involves a number of ordinance amendments that differ with regard to complexity and potential environmental impacts. Therefore, during FY 2024 – 2025 staff will (1) continue to prepare zoning ordinance amendments for relatively non-complex subjects that do not involve preparation of an environmental impact report for decision-makers consideration (e.g. lighting and sign regulations), and (2) conduct outreach and other activities to further develop the project description for the more complicated subjects that likely require preparation of a PEIR. The ordinance amendments for the less complicated subjects are anticipated to be completed during FY 2024 – 2025, followed by completion of the PEIR and decision-maker hearings on the more complicated amendments in FY 2025 – 2026.

In addition, there are two County Community Services Department projects that LRP staff will continue to support and require additional work in the next and/or other future fiscal years:

- *Climate Action Plan Implementation* – Following adoption of the Climate Action Plan, LRP staff will be involved with the implementation of Climate Action Plan programs that affect P&D activities / functions or otherwise require LRP staff’s subject matter expertise.
- *Recreation Master Plan* – In coordination with the Development Review Division of P&D, LRP will provide support and advise on proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments throughout the

preparation of the Recreation Master Plan, in order to align them with certain features of the Agricultural Enterprise Ordinance Amendments.

4. Future Projects

Staff has developed a list of projects that the Board could include in Year Two, Year Three, and/or a future fiscal year, of the Work Program. The projects mostly consist of updates to outdated components of the Comprehensive Plan (e.g., Environmental Resources and Management Element and Conservation Element). Also, as groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) adopt groundwater sustainability plans (GSPs) that govern the groundwater basins that are subject to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) (GC § 65352.5 et al), the Board could consider adopting corresponding amendments to the Comprehensive Plan to align with the governing strategies of the GSPs. Additionally, the Board could consider directing staff to conduct a comprehensive update of the County's *Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual*, as a number of the impact areas (e.g. Groundwater Thresholds) are out of date. Other possible future projects include revisiting the Isla Vista Master Plan. Finally, current projects on which staff is working will constitute much of the work and will be completed in Years Two and Three.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Funding to implement the staff-recommended services, operations, and projects that are included in FY 2024 - 2025 of the FY 2024 - 2027 LRP Work Program will be included in the P&D FY 2024 - 2025 Requested Budget submittal for the Board's consideration during the budget adoption process in June 2024. Funding for subsequent fiscal year work programs will be considered as part of the annual County budget process.

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – LRP FY 2023 – 2024 Work Program Project Status Report
- Attachment 2 – Timeline of Staff-Recommended Projects
- Attachment 3 – Long Range Planning Division Work Assignments

Authored by:

Alex Tuttle