

ATTACHMENT A: FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL

Case No. 22GPA-00000-00003

1.0 CEQA FINDINGS

1.1 CEQA EXEMPTION

The Board of Supervisors finds 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 Board of Supervisors finds that the proposed element 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 Board of Supervisors finds that the proposed element is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, State planning and zoning laws, and the County Land Use and Development Code (LUDC). The proposed element 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 element is consistent with applicable provisions of the County Land Use and Development Code (LUDC). For example, the proposed element 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 element 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 Board of Supervisors finds that the proposed element is 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 Board of Supervisors finds that the proposed element 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.