



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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DIRECTOR

January 24, 2023

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Honorable Board of Supervisors
Marin County Civic Center
San Rafael, CA 94903

SUBJECT: Review the 2023 Safety Element and Amendments to the Countywide Plan

Building and Safety
Environmental Health Services
Planning
Environmental Review
Housing
Sustainability
Code Enforcement
GIS
Federal Grants

Dear Members of the Board:

RECOMMENDATION:

On behalf of the Planning Commission, staff recommends that your Board review the 2023 Safety Element, consider public testimony, and approve the Resolution (Attachment 1) to adopt the 2023 Safety Element and incorporate it into the 2007 Countywide Plan.

www.marincounty.org/cda

SUMMARY:

Over the past two years, the Community Development Agency has updated the Safety Element, an integral part of the Countywide Plan, to incorporate policies focused on responding to potential adverse impacts associated with climate change, as well as specific new State requirements related to flood and fire hazards¹. The update is occurring concurrently with the Housing Element update. An Environmental Impact Report has been prepared for both elements. To meet deadlines established by the State, the Board of Supervisors will need to adopt the Housing Element no later than January 31, 2023, and submit it to the State for final review and certification. State law also requires that the Safety Element be updated upon each revision of the Housing Element and every eight years thereafter².

BACKGROUND:

The draft Safety Element contains new and updated policies and programs for public safety from environmental hazards, especially those related to climate change. At joint workshops on February 1, 2022, and April 19, 2022, your Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission reviewed an assessment of the County's vulnerability to climate change impacts and provided initial policy direction. On June 14, 2022, your Board reviewed and provided direction on the draft Safety Element at a joint workshop with the Planning Commission. The draft Safety Element was circulated for public review on June 1, 2022 and sent to the Board of Forestry for its review and

¹ SB 379, Gov Code §65304(g)(4), SB 99, Gov Code §65302(g)(5)

² SB 1035, Gov Code §65302(g)(6)

approval on June 2, 2022. The Board of Forestry approved the draft Safety Element with revisions on September 22, 2022.

At another joint workshop with the Planning Commission on October 11, 2022, your Board heard public feedback and provided direction on the revised draft Safety Element. On December 12, 2022, the Planning Commission reviewed the Draft Safety Element, heard public testimony, and provided additional feedback. On January 5, 2023, the Planning Commission voted to recommend that your Board adopt the 2023 Marin County Safety Element and incorporate it into the 2007 Marin Countywide Plan. At the same meeting, the Planning Commission voted to recommend that the Board certify the Final EIR for the Housing and Safety Element Update to the Marin Countywide Plan as adequate and complete in compliance with CEQA, the State CEQA Guidelines, and the County Environmental Review Procedures, and as adequate and complete for consideration in making a decision on the merits of the Project.

Public Outreach. In addition to the public meetings with your Board and Planning Commission, extensive public outreach was conducted throughout the development of the 2023 Safety Element. A summary of the public outreach efforts is included as Attachment 2.

DISCUSSION:

With its extensive shoreline and coastline, challenging topography, prevalent wildland-urban interface, and limitations of infrastructure, Marin County is highly susceptible to a variety of emergency conditions which are exacerbated by the effects of climate change. Vulnerable populations are at particular risk of experiencing significant effects from environmental hazards. There are a multitude of agencies and entities charged with taking action to reduce risks, manage response efforts, and address emergency conditions and recovery. The Safety Element does not replicate the work of responsible agencies, but instead complements them by supporting and coordinating these efforts countywide and across various areas of environmental hazard.

The 2023 Safety Element includes goals, policies and implementation programs. Each goal includes a series of policies that set specific objectives to achieve the goal. Policies are supported by programs that indicate how each policy will be implemented. Prior to the Safety Element update process, Marin’s Countywide Plan included goals that address geologic seismicity, flooding, wildfire, and hazard awareness. The 2023 Safety Element expands the hazard awareness goal to include disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. The updates include minor revisions to the geologic and flooding hazards programs. Substantial updates are included in the wildfire policies and programs to comply with new California State requirements and to address increased risks of wildfire hazards with climate change. The 2023 Safety Element also includes new goals that address equity and climate resiliency, including sea level rise, extreme heat, severe weather, and drought.

EQUITY IMPACT:

The County followed the State Adaptation Planning Guide for the Safety Element update, in part, because it provides clear guidance on assessing climate change impacts on vulnerable populations. The Vulnerability Assessment for the Safety Element identified several vulnerable populations that are at greater risk from climate change impacts because they lack adaptive capacity. For example, low-income and

unhoused populations have limited financial resources to evacuate and sustain themselves in an alternate environment during a climate event. The assessment of climate impacts on a range of populations provided the necessary step for considering new policies that address inequities in how different populations are impacted by and able to respond to climate change. A new goal with policies and programs for equitable community safety planning is one of the considerations for the Board and Commission. The Development Code amendments would implement a program in the draft Safety Element related to preparing for sea level rise and provide safer housing.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Safety Element includes a range of project implementation measures, which are listed in Project Implementation Tables along with their level of priority (low, medium or high priority) and timeframe (short-term (1-4 yrs), medium (4-7 yrs), long-term (7+ years), and ongoing (existing programs already in progress where implementation is expected to continue into the foreseeable future). Carrying out the proposed implementation programs is not anticipated to increase net county costs in the short term.

REVIEWED BY:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> County Administrator | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Finance | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County Counsel | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |

SIGNATURES:



Leslie Lacko
Senior Planner
Advance Planning

Approved:



Sarah Jones
Director

Attachments:

1. Resolution to Adopt the 2023 Safety Element
 - a. Exhibit A, 2023 Safety Element
2. Summary of Public Outreach for the Safety Element