



**SPECIAL JOINT MEETING WITH THE MENLO PARK PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES**

Date: 6/20/2023
Time: 5:00 p.m.
Locations: Teleconference,
City Council Chambers
751 Laurel St., Menlo Park, CA 94025 and
Belle Haven Branch Library
413 Ivy Dr., Menlo Park, CA 94025

Special Session

A. Call To Order

Mayor Wolosin called the meeting to order at 5 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Present: Combs (remote – Brown Act and exited at 6:14 p.m.), Doerr, Nash, Taylor, Wolosin (remote – Assembly Bill 2449 Just Cause)

Absent: None

Staff: City Manager Justin I. C. Murphy, Assistant City Manager Stephen Stolte, Acting City Attorney Mary Wagner, Assistant to the City Manager/City Clerk Judi A. Herren

C. Closed Session

- C1. Closed session conference with labor negotiators pursuant to Government Code §54957.6 regarding labor negotiations with the Service Employees International Union Local 521 (SEIU), American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees Local 829 (AFSCME), and Confidential employees

Agency designated representatives: City Manager Justin I.C. Murphy, Administrative Services Director Brittany Mello, Assistant City Manager Stephen Stolte, City Attorney Nira Doherty, Special Counsel Charles Sakai

D. Call To Order

Mayor Wolosin re-called the meeting to order at 6:14 p.m.

E. Roll Call

Present: Doerr, Nash, Taylor, Wolosin (remote – Assembly Bill 2449 Just Cause)

Absent: Combs

Staff: City Manager Justin I. C. Murphy, Assistant City Manager Stephen Stolte, Acting City Attorney Mary Wagner, Assistant to the City Manager/City Clerk Judi A. Herren

Planning Commissioners:

Present: Cynthia Harris, Linh Dan Do, Andrew Barnes, Andrew Ehrich, and Katie Ferrick

Absent: Henry Riggs and Jennifer Schindler

Report from Closed Session

No reportable actions.

F. Study Session

- F1. Receive an overview and provide feedback on the draft General Plan Environmental Justice and Safety Elements and provide direction/confirmation for next steps (Staff Report #23-142-CC) (Informe de Personal #23-142-CC)

Senior Planner Calvin Chan, Assistant Community Development Director Deanna Chow, M-Group representative Asher Kohn, ChangeLab Solutions representative Erik Calloway, and Climate Resilient Communities (CRC) representative Cade Cannedy and made the presentation (Attachment).

- Jenny Michel spoke in support for no cost resources for residents.
- Naomi Goodman spoke on concerns and interest in planning for biosafety levels.
- Katie Rueff spoke in support of environmental justice (EJ) and the need for change.
- Brittani Baxter spoke in support of climate mitigations, EJ, and tenant protections, particularly for the Belle Haven neighborhood.
- Karen Grove spoke in support of tenant protections and habitability, sanitation, and health of homes.
- Adina Levin spoke in support of the implementation of EJ and Safety Elements priorities, particularly for the Belle Haven neighborhood and encouraging seeking funding sources.
- Pam Jones spoke in support of EJ planning, implementation, and completing short-term projects to demonstrate the City's commitment to change.
- Jesus Soto spoke in support of the EJ Element and planning for noise mitigations, particularly from highway.
- Katherine Dumont spoke on concerns related to funding for programs and the need to prioritize funds for implementing the EJ and Safety Elements.

The City Council and Planning Commission received clarification on the sample refinement matrix presented within Attachment Q, stakeholders (e.g., residents) involvement in future document development, Life-Sciences district feedback, tree canopy and planting schedule and resources, use of current and new elements for permitting processes, wellness programs, and staffing for EJ and Safety Element-related initiatives.

The City Council and Planning Commission discussed specific policies and programs under the EJ Element goals, separating resources/staff and costs, community engagement when building the EJ and Safety Elements, methodology and application of refinement framework, implementation plan timeline, high speed on roads and collisions in the Safety Element, protecting the current community from flood and sea-level rise, defining funding sources and funding opportunities, accountability assignments, possible short term projects to be completed within 6-months, and grant writer(s) to assist with funding sources.

The City Council and the Planning Commission took a recess at 8:43 p.m.

The City Council and the Planning Commission reconvened at 8:54 p.m.

The City Council and Planning Commission defined concerns of community members on the healthcare system and how to mitigate through the EJ Element.

The City Council and Planning Commission discussed cooling center open hours and potentially incorporating air quality and noise level minimum decibels reduction in the Safety Element.

The City Council and Planning Commission directed staff to explore planning for biosafety levels (BSL), a dedicated grant seeking and writing position, short term projects to be completed as soon as possible with community input and check-ins, continuing to partner with CRC on community outreach and engagement, leveraging community organizations, defining where new program and policies intersect with current programs and policies, and additional community engagement and outreach.

The City Council requested updating *language* from the staff report, where appropriate, in the future; “The City is committed to advancing equity and addressing *current and future* environmental health risks in Menlo Park” and “The purpose of the Environmental Justice Element (commonly abbreviated as EJ Element) is to identify and address public health risks and environmental justice concerns, as well as foster the wellbeing of Menlo Park residents living in underserved *and/or* disadvantaged communities, discussed below.”


Note, an informational item (Summary of Environmental Justice and Safety Elements feedback from June 20 joint Planning Commission/City Council study session and next steps) is available within the June 11, 2023 City Council meeting agenda (see Item N-4).

G. Adjournment

Mayor Wolosin adjourned the meeting at 9:43 p.m.

Judi A. Herren Assistant to the City Manager/City Clerk

These minutes were approved at the City Council meeting of August 15, 2023.



GENERAL PLAN ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND SAFETY ELEMENTS STUDY SESSION

June 20, 2023





STUDY SESSION PURPOSE

- **Review** the Environmental Justice (EJ) and Safety Elements and their regulatory context
- **Revisit** community outreach completed so far and common feedback received
- **Introduce** a recommended refinement framework
- **Receive** guidance/confirmation from the City Council and Planning Commission regarding the recommended refinement framework
- **Receive** community feedback





GENERAL PLAN BACKGROUND

GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS



The General Plan guides planning decisions across the community

** Housing Element Update Project component*



IMPLEMENTING GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS

Goals

Broad desired results

Policies

Principles or approaches to achieve goals

Programs

Precise actions to implement policies and goals



MAJOR MILESTONES

- **Dec. 2022:** Draft EJ and Safety Elements published
- **Jan. 2023:** Housing Element adopted and SEIR certified
(Upcoming June 27 City Council meeting to review draft revisions to Housing Element)
- **Feb. 2023:** Two community meetings at Belle Haven Branch Library to introduce the draft EJ and Safety Elements
- **June 2023: Study Session 1**
- **Fall 2023:** Study Session 2 will present additional community feedback refinement results and recommended policies, programs, and prioritization with revised Draft EJ and Safety Elements



OVERVIEW: SAFETY ELEMENT



SAFETY ELEMENT UPDATE

- Element purpose: To identify and appraise risks in the community and provide high-level strategies for mitigating risks and ensuring the wellness of the community, city services, and infrastructure
- Last update: 2013
- Current update: Focused update to address new State-required topics
 - Climate change adaptation and resiliency
 - Wildfire hazards and risks
 - Identify residential developments without at least 2 emergency evacuation routes
- Aligned with:
 - San Mateo County Multijurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (2021)
 - City's 2030 Climate Action Plan (CAP)
 - San Mateo County's 2015 Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)



LOCAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

- Collaborative effort:
 - 36 planning partners, including all 20 cities/townships in the county
- Community involvement:
 - Over 2,000 survey responses received
- Contents specific to Menlo Park:
 - Risk and vulnerability assessment
 - Mitigation actions to reduce injury and damage
 - Assessment of capability to implement mitigation actions
 - Hazards risk ranking: 1) flood, 2) earthquake, and 3) sea level rise/climate change



SAFETY ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION

City Code Updates

**Development
Application Review**

**Coordination Across
Organizations
(e.g., Police, Fire)**

**Collaboration with
County and State
Agencies**



SAFETY ELEMENT GOAL: ASSURE A SAFE COMMUNITY

*Safety Element policies cover the topic areas listed below.
Specific implementing programs are associated with these topics.*

- General Safety Policies
 - New Policy: Mitigation and Disaster Recovery Funding
- Geologic and Seismic Safety Policies
- Hazardous Materials Policies
- Flood Control, Tsunami and Dam Safety Policies
- Fire Safety Policies
- Public Safety and Emergency Response Policies
 - New Policies: Public Health; Heat Adaptation
 - New Programs: Senior Outreach; Public Communication; Public Heat Respite; Heat Island Minimization; Emergency Preparedness for Sensitive Populations



OVERVIEW: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ELEMENT





WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE?

The fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

- State of CA Assembly Bill No.1628 (2019)



WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE OF PLANNING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE?

To foster well-being and eliminate unique, unequal, and unfair public health risks in the Menlo Park neighborhoods where those risks are concentrated.



REGULATORY CONTEXT: SENATE BILL 1000 (SB 1000)

Local governments are required to analyze whether they have “**Disadvantaged Communities**” in their jurisdictions and develop an EJ Element if they are present.

Based on community outreach, these neighborhoods are being called “**Underserved Communities**” in Menlo Park.



REGULATORY CONTEXT: GOVERNMENT CODE 65302(H)(1)

EJ Element required topic areas:

1. Prioritize the Needs of Underserved Communities
2. Reduce Pollution Exposure
3. Improve Access to Public Facilities
4. Promote Food Access
5. Promote Safe and Sanitary Housing
6. Promote Physical Activity
7. Promote Civic Engagement



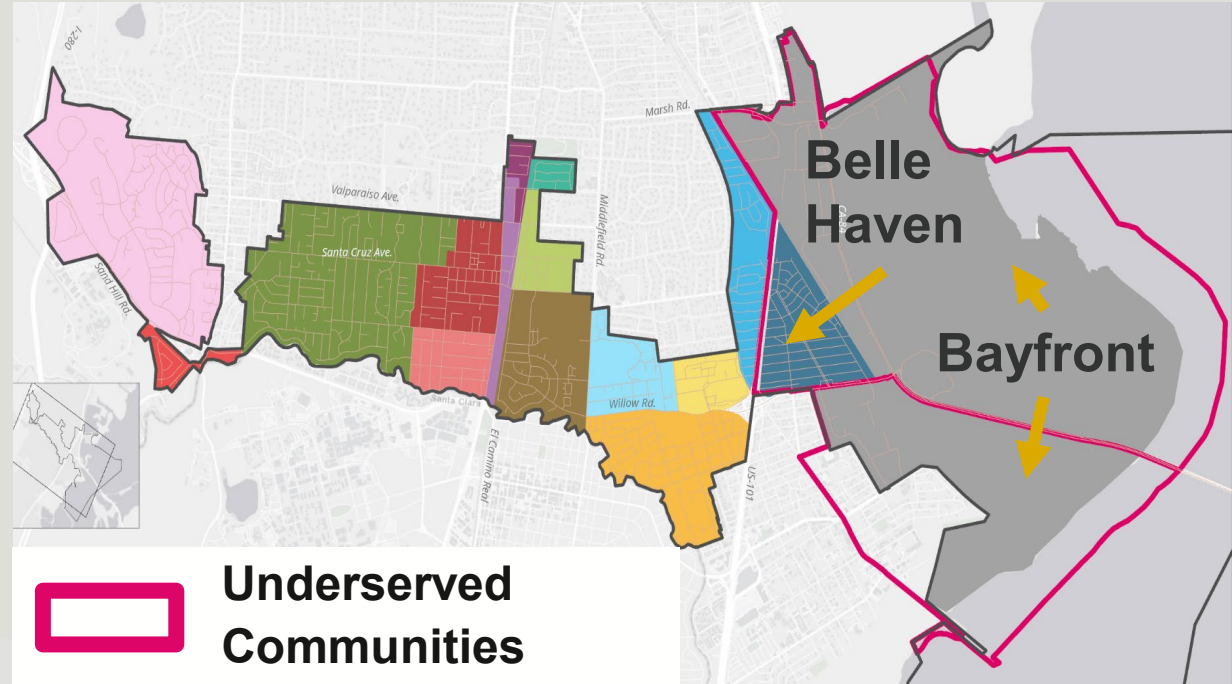
HOW DO WE PLAN FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE?

Menlo Park Neighborhoods



1. LOCATE COMMUNITIES THAT FACE UNIQUE, UNEQUAL, AND UNFAIR HEALTH RISKS

- Allied Arts - Stanford Park
- Bayfront
- Belle Haven
- Central Menlo
- Downtown
- El Camino Real Corridor
- Felton Gables
- Linfield Oaks
- Park Forest - Spruce - San Antonio
- Sharon Heights
- South of Seminary - Vintage Oaks
- Stanford Hills
- Suburban Park - Lorelei Manor - Flood Triangle
- The Willows
- VA Medical District
- West Menlo
- City Boundary





2. TAKE ACTION TO REDUCE THOSE UNIQUE, UNEQUAL, AND UNFAIR HEALTH RISKS



1. Address unique and compounded health risks.



2. Reduce pollution exposure and eliminate environmental inequities.



3. Equitably provide appropriate public facilities to individuals and communities.



4. Promote access to affordable healthy and high-quality foods.



5. Provide safe and sanitary homes for all residents.



6. Encourage physical activity and active transportation.



7. Create equitable civic and community engagement.

**EJ Element Goals align with State-required topic areas*

The background of the slide is a photograph of a street scene. In the foreground, there are green plants with red flowers. In the background, there is a building with a sign that says "harvest" and another sign that says "TABAC". The street is paved and there are trees and other buildings in the distance.

OVERVIEW: COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND FEEDBACK THEMES



COMPLETED OUTREACH AND MILESTONES

March - June 2021
**Countywide LHMP Outreach
Events (12)**

June 2021
**CRC LHMP Community
Event**

July 2021
**Housing Element Update
Project Introduction Webinar**

August 2021
**Community
Housing Element Update
Survey**

August 2021
**Community Meeting:
Housing Equity, Safety, and
Environmental Justice**

August 2021
**Pop-up Meetings:
Downtown Farmers Market (2)
Belle Haven Shopping Center
Mi Tierra Linda**

April 2022
**Neighborhood Profiles
Released**

April 2022
**Community Meeting:
Introduction to Environmental
Justice and Safety**

May 2022
**CRC Outreach Meetings
Belle Haven (3)**

May – July 2022
**Menlo Park Environmental
Justice and Safety Survey**

December 2022
**Draft EJ and Safety
Elements Released**

February 2023
**Community meetings:
Environmental Justice and
Safety Elements (2)**



SAFETY ELEMENT COMMUNITY FEEDBACK THEMES



- **General Safety**

- Develop policies for and manage risks from life sciences and bio-tech industry

- **Geologic and Seismic Safety**

- Acknowledge the presence and regulatory impact of earthquake-related maps prepared by the CA Geological Survey
- Address concerns for the HayWired Scenario and its potential impacts

- **Public Safety and Emergency Response**

- Follow FEMA guidance for a Whole Community Approach to Emergency Management
- Emphasize collaboration following evidence-based practices



EJ ELEMENT GOAL 1: ADDRESS UNIQUE AND COMPOUNDED HEALTH RISKS COMMUNITY FEEDBACK THEMES



- Asthma and other respiratory issues are community concerns due to the increase in construction
- Heat-related health issues are concerns that can be supported with increased access to air-conditioned public spaces
- Danger to pedestrians, particularly children, can be minimized with more school crossing guards



EJ ELEMENT GOAL 2: REDUCE POLLUTION EXPOSURE AND ELIMINATE ENVIRONMENTAL INEQUITIES

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK THEMES



- Rapid development in Belle Haven and Bayfront increases concerns for pollution and traffic congestion
- Address traffic congestion by increasing signage and reevaluating signal light timing
- Address illegal dumping and increase area security
- Noise pollution is a concern, particularly from speeding cars/Highway 101
- Address flooding and pothole issues in Belle Haven and Bayfront
- Interest in incentives and support for air purification tools

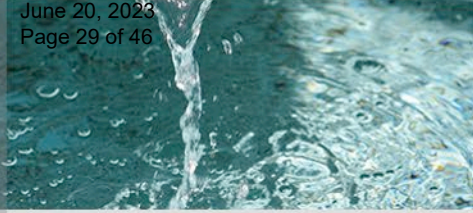


EJ ELEMENT GOAL 3: EQUITABLY PROVIDE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC FACILITIES TO INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK THEMES



- Increase the tree canopy in and around Belle Haven and the Bayfront area
- Menlo Park Community Campus (MPCC) should prioritize affordable educational classes and training programs for the community
- Encourage local hiring for MPCC
- Desire for a health clinic, pharmacy, bank, and an affordable grocery store
- Concerns for less school-access opportunity for Belle Haven students
- Provide animal waste disposal stations, enhanced street cleaning, and more stop signs



EJ ELEMENT GOAL 4: PROMOTE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HEALTHY AND HIGH-QUALITY FOODS

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK THEMES



- Interest for a subsidized farmer's market – near MPCC is desirable
- The relatively high cost and low-quality food provided at schools is a concern
- Stores and services geared toward persons of color and seniors are desirable

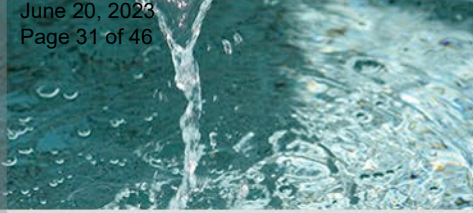


EJ ELEMENT GOAL 5: PROVIDE SAFE AND SANITARY HOMES FOR ALL RESIDENTS

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK THEMES



- Build new housing sensibly and spread-out higher density housing citywide
- Interest in accessory dwelling units (ADUs) but concern about lengthy, complicated, and expensive process
- City should help with pest management
- Concern for the unhoused
- City should explore rent control and/or tax breaks
- City should prioritize anti-displacement measures and affordable housing



EJ ELEMENT GOAL 6: ENCOURAGE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK THEMES



- Repair sidewalks and potholes and increase accessibility
- Increase lighting along streets and at parks (especially important for kids and seniors)
- Increase bike lanes and safe walkways



EJ ELEMENT GOAL 7: CREATE EQUITABLE CIVIC AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMUNITY FEEDBACK THEMES



- Prioritize resources/information for low-income individuals, especially important for persons living with disabilities
- A desire for greater communication by the City regarding upcoming construction projects and their potential impacts
- A desire for greater programs and services to help the communities engage/participate, especially those north of Highway 101
- Hold more public meetings in Belle Haven



EJ ELEMENT: RECOMMENDED REFINEMENT FRAMEWORK



EJ ELEMENT REFINEMENT FRAMEWORK OBJECTIVES

- 1. Translate community feedback into a list of actionable policies and programs that reflect:**
 - Robust community input**
 - City resources, capacity, and authority**
- 2. Practice transparent decision-making**
- 3. Establish accountability processes for EJ Element implementation and tracking over time**



INTEGRATING COMMUNITY FEEDBACK INTO EJ POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Goal	Proposed Policy or Program
------	----------------------------------

**Cross-reference
across other elements
to omit duplicates**



INTEGRATING COMMUNITY FEEDBACK INTO EJ POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Goal	Proposed Policy or Program	Theme
------	----------------------------	-------

**Group proposed policies/programs
by theme/topic**

**Put programs in logical order for
implementation**

**See sample matrix in staff report for more detail*



INTEGRATING COMMUNITY FEEDBACK INTO EJ POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Goal	Proposed Policy or Program	Theme
------	----------------------------	-------

Example: Tree Canopy

1. Map tree canopy gaps in underserved areas
2. Require preservation of mature trees
3. Proactively coordinate with developers to help preserve, replace, and/or transplant trees
4. Focus efforts for planting street trees in Underserved Communities
5. Create an Urban Forest Master Plan

**See sample matrix in staff report for more detail*



INTEGRATING COMMUNITY FEEDBACK INTO EJ POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Goal	Proposed Policy or Program	Theme	Timeframe
------	----------------------------	-------	-----------

1. Short Term

2. Medium term

3. Long Term

Include specific time horizons

**See sample matrix in staff report for more detail*



INTEGRATING COMMUNITY FEEDBACK INTO EJ POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Goal	Proposed Policy or Program	Theme	Timeframe	Urgency	
------	----------------------------	-------	-----------	---------	--

Score programs

***Including community-identified
needs/levels of urgency***



INTEGRATING COMMUNITY FEEDBACK INTO EJ POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Goal	Proposed Policy or Program	Theme	Timeframe	Urgency	Effort/Cost	
------	----------------------------	-------	-----------	---------	-------------	--

Score programs



INTEGRATING COMMUNITY FEEDBACK INTO EJ POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Goal	Proposed Policy or Program	Theme	Timeframe	Urgency	Effort/Cost	Impact
------	----------------------------	-------	-----------	---------	-------------	--------

Score programs

Highest priorities =
high need
low cost
high impact



REFINEMENT FRAMEWORK CONSIDERATIONS

- Prioritize policies/programs that directly shape City decision-making processes to ensure Underserved Communities in Menlo Park are being prioritized in program implementation and across City functions
- Policies/programs with highest urgency and/or that require less effort or less funds should be prioritized as short-term
- Long-term and/or high-cost policies/programs can be a high priority if they are high impact. These programs may require phased implementation
- Some community-identified needs may require long term policies/programs to allow time for the thinking, collaboration, and outreach that is needed to determine how to best address those needs through actionable programs



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN MAY INCLUDE:

- Departments Responsible for Implementation
- Potential Partners
- Funding Sources
- Metrics for Tracking Progress
- Reporting Processes



EJ AND SAFETY ELEMENTS STUDY SESSION FEEDBACK PROMPTS

Is the recommended refinement framework for the EJ Element appropriate?

What community feedback themes, topic areas, or policies and programs have the greatest urgency/highest prioritization?



NEXT STEPS

- Study Session 1 feedback will help inform the revision of the draft EJ and Safety Elements
- Study Session 2 (tentatively fall 2023)
 - Present revised draft EJ and Safety Elements, which would further incorporate the community, City Council, and Planning Commission feedback, including recommended policies and programs and prioritization
 - Following Study Session 2, additional refinements, as needed, would be made to the EJ and Safety Elements
- Planning Commission recommendation and City Council action (tentatively winter 2023/2024)
 - Planning Commission would make a recommendation regarding adoption of the elements to the City Council and the City Council would be the final reviewing/approving body



THANK YOU

