



AGENDA REPORT

TO: Edward D. Reiskin
City Administrator

FROM: William Gilchrist
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Building Department

SUBJECT: Study Session On The General Plan
Update: Safety Element Update, and
Environmental Justice Element

DATE: September 12, 2022

City Administrator Approval

Date: Sep 27, 2022

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Conduct A Study Session And Receive An Informational Report As Follows: (A) Safety Element Framework and Key Safety Issues in Oakland; (B) Environmental Justice Element Requirements and Key Environmental Justice Issues in Oakland; And (C) Provide Feedback to Staff On Key Goals Needed To Address Environmental Justice Issues And Advance Equitable Processes For Integrating Climate Resilience And Public Safety Strategies.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Oakland (City) is undertaking an update of its General Plan – its “constitution for development”. The current General Plan was adopted over 20 years ago, and the City and the broader context have changed dramatically since. The 2045 General Plan Update (GPU) is an opportunity for all Oaklanders to work together to create a visionary blueprint for the future of the City over the next two decades. As a start, the City must acknowledge the burden of past practices on today’s Oakland, particularly on communities of color. This is an opportunity to begin the work to eliminate the root causes of inequity and undo the harms of the past.

The 2045 GPU is being undertaken in two phases. Phase 1 focuses on the Housing Element and Safety Element update, as well as the preparation of a new Environmental Justice Element, Industrial Lands Policy, Environmental Impact Report, and zoning code and map update. Phase 1 is slated to be completed by early 2023.

Phase 2 will update the Land Use and Transportation Element (LUTE); Estuary Policy Plan (the Land Use Element for much of the land below Interstate 880 along the Oakland Estuary); Open Space, Conservation and Recreation (OSCAR) Element; Noise Element; and preparation of a new Infrastructure and Facilities Element. Phase 2 of the GPU is slated to be completed in 2025. A Racial Equity Impact Analysis (REIA) conducted before and during the GPU process will help ensure that policies, programs, and actions will prioritize historically marginalized communities and maximize equitable outcomes.

This informational report provides the relevant background information for the scheduled study session on the 2045 GPU process on the Safety Element Update and Environmental Justice (EJ) Element. It also summarizes EJ and Safety Element requirements from the State, outlines key environmental justice and safety issues in Oakland and provides updates on ongoing community engagement.

With this GPU, the City has the opportunity to advance its commitment to create a "fair and just" city and undo past harms and inequities through the creation of more robust and equitable General Plan goals, policies, and actions. This means working to identify and understand the barriers to achieving greater equity and strengths of communities; and working with communities to develop solutions for long-term and systemic changes that eliminate the root causes of inequity.

The GPU process includes a robust and multi-pronged strategy for community engagement, including workshops, discussion groups, pop-up outreach, cultural events, youth engagement, online engagement methods, decision maker meetings, and more. The GPU process places particular emphasis on engaging communities historically underrepresented and excluded from traditional planning processes and often most negatively impacted by City policies.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

All California cities and counties are required to adopt comprehensive, long-term general plans to serve as the "constitution" for future development. California Law requires specific topics, also called "Elements," to be covered in a city's general plan. Required General Plan topics include:

- Land use
- Circulation
- Housing
- Conservation
- Open space
- Noise
- Safety
- Environmental justice (or related goals and policies integrated in other elements).

Requirements for each element are provided in California Government Code Section 65302.

On July 19, 2022, the Oakland City Council adopted [Resolution No. 89345 C.M.S.](#) recognizing the disproportionate impacts of climate change on Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) and low-income communities in Oakland and directing the City Administrator to engage in an equitable process for integrating climate resilience and mitigation strategies and policies into the General Plan. The City Council's direction is consistent with Senate Bill (SB) 1035 and SB 379, which require all cities to address climate change adaptation and resilience in their general plan safety element.

Senate Bill 1000, passed in 2016, requires that cities and counties with disadvantaged communities (*referred to as Environmental Justice Communities or EJ Communities in Oakland*), adopt EJ policies or an EJ Element. These must include objectives and policies to

reduce health risks in disadvantaged communities, promote civic engagement in the public decision-making process, and prioritize programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities. Under SB 1000, Oakland is required to adopt an EJ Element, either standalone or interwoven with other Elements, at the same time that the Housing and Safety Elements are updated.

Reports presented to the Planning Commission on [May 18, 2022](#), and to the Community and Economic Development (CED) Committee on [February 22, 2022](#), and [May 24, 2022](#), provided detailed information on the City of Oakland's GPU process including key background information provided in the [Map Atlas](#), [Environmental Justice and Racial Equity Baseline](#), and EJ Screening Analysis to identify potential EJ Communities (**Attachment A** shows the updated EJ Communities Map), and community engagement and outreach. Staff also solicited feedback from the CED Committee on issues and priorities for the Safety Element Update and the new EJ Element. Staff also presented the Draft Equity Framework to the City Council on [July 26, 2022](#).

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

The Oakland 2045 GPU advances the following Citywide priorities:

- 1) **Holistic Community Safety:** The new EJ element and Safety Element Update will further policies that integrate environmental justice considerations into planning elements and address historic disenfranchisement of and disinvestment in EJ communities, preparing for and minimizing the impacts of natural and human-made disasters and climate stressors.
- 2) **Housing, Economic, and Cultural Security:** The 2023-2031 Housing Element Update and associated zoning code amendments will identify sites and areas in the City that demonstrate the capability of being developed with affordable housing and will identify strategies and measurable outcomes to "Protect, Preserve, and Produce" affordable homes.
- 3) **Vibrant, Sustainable Infrastructure:** an updated Land Use and Transportation Element (LUTE) and Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation (OSCAR) Element in Phase 2 of the GPU will help to develop and sustain a vibrant economy in Oakland that generates opportunity for all. Phase 2 of the GPU will also include a new General Plan Infrastructure and Facilities Element that will help create a long-term plan for necessary capital improvement investments for the city that will support the overall local economy.
- 4) **Responsive, Trustworthy Government:** The GPU process will promote meaningful civil engagement in public decision-making processes and identify objectives and policies that address the most pressing needs in the community, particularly where social and racial inequity is most prevalent.

The following sections summarize the Safety and EJ Element requirements from the State, outline key environmental justice and safety issues in Oakland, and provide updates on ongoing community engagement.

1. SAFETY ELEMENT

The Safety Element identifies a community's natural, geological, and human-caused hazards, and risks and policies to safeguard the community against those risks and their impacts to people and property. Identified hazards should also have corresponding mitigation strategies to help guide decision-makers in land use planning and preparing for climate change. The [2021-2026 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan \(LHMP\)](#) and Vulnerability Assessment are two city planning documents that are critical to informing the policies and programs that will form the Safety Element. The Vulnerability Assessment will be conducted as part of the Safety Element update and is anticipated to be available in January 2023 as part of the public review draft of the Safety Element.

Safety Element Requirements

At a minimum, the Safety Element must include the following topics related to geological and natural hazards:

- Slope instability and landslides
- Seismic Risks: Ground shaking and ground failure, dam failure, subsidence, and liquefaction. Mapping of these known geologic hazards must address evacuation routes, military installations, peakload water supply requirements, and minimum road widths and clearances
- Flooding: Identification of flood hazard zones and including Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood insurance maps, dam failure maps, and areas subject to inundation. Historic flood information and identification of areas with existing and planned development in hazard areas.
- Wildfire: Identification of policies that protect Oakland from risks associated with wildland and urban fires. Areas identified by CALFire and the United States Geological Survey (USGS) as High Fire Hazard Severity Zones and Very High Fire Severity Zones (VHFSZ) must be mapped as well as existing and planned development in these areas.
- Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience: Address climate change and its impacts to property and people, especially on individuals and groups who are particularly vulnerable. Individuals and groups who are socially vulnerable include young children and elderly people, homeless people, people with disabilities, and BIPOC communities.

The Safety Element is required to include a Vulnerability Assessment that identifies the risks due to the impacts of climate change and resiliency strategies using a variety of tools, planning guides, and data from local, regional, state, and federal agencies as well as feasible implementation measures to minimize its impacts. The Vulnerability Assessment will be conducted as part of the Safety Element update and is anticipated to be available in January 2023 as part of the public review draft of the Safety Element. Implementation measures could include land use planning programs that locate new essential public facilities outside of areas of risk, guidelines for inter-agency cooperation, and programs to restore or preserve ecological infrastructure and processes such as preserving wetlands or requiring green stormwater infrastructure for some projects.

The key safety issues or hazards that most widely affect Oakland, its people and property are wildfire, seismic risks, flooding because of flash floods and/or dam failure, and the impacts of climate change. While it is not a natural hazard, another key issue is public safety, defined as protection for all groups and individuals from violent crime, property crime, white collar crime, and all dangers and threats to the general welfare through provision of police, fire, and emergency response services.

A public survey was distributed for the [2021-2026 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan](#) asking respondents to rank their level of concern for natural hazards. Results (See [Appendix A: of 2021-2026 LHMP](#)) revealed that wildfire and earthquakes are the hazards that respondents are most concerned about. While this is not surprising given how California has experienced devastating wildfires in recent years combined with many smaller earthquakes that some experience throughout the region, there are also other hazards for which Oakland should be prepared. On June 15, 2021, the City of Oakland adopted the 2021-2026 LHMP and this was the first step in updating the Safety Element. Community engagement continues to be a key component in helping the GPU team gather feedback from the community and evaluate proposed community solutions to prepare for and respond to hazard events as well as prepare for and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Staff convened two focus group discussions in early Summer 2022 focusing on the Safety Element update. See also Section on Community Engagement and Outreach Summary for a summary of feedback received.

Table 1 summarizes the key takeaways from these focused community discussions. Additional focus groups will be held in Fall 2022. **Table 3** provides a summary of public feedback focused on Safety from Popup and Community Hub Events. See also Section on Community Engagement and Outreach Summary for a summary of feedback received.

Table 1: Key Takeaways from Focused Discussions on the Safety Element

Concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none">There are gaps in the LHMP regarding city facilities that can support emergency response and many facilities don't have air conditioning or high-capacity HVAC air filtering systems nor are many facilities located where they are neededExtreme heat events can disproportionately affect unhoused populations, people who live in housing with poor ventilation, and home-bound individualsNeed to expand emergency response facility capacityConcern about preemptive emergency response training model that is inclusive and that reaches more diverse audiencesAction items in the current Safety Element were established before the Oakland Department of Transportation (OakDOT) was established. Policies should make sure people have affordable housing, think about where housing already exists and how to access the waterfront, open spaces and natural areas that we do haveNeed to carefully understand unintended consequences of policies
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ECAP describes networks of mutual aid - instead of mutual aid and community networks being separate from city facilities and services; this presents a challenge that deserves greater attention
Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain an equity lens throughout the entire update process Prioritize collaborating with frontline communities Address hazards from wildfire smoke and ensure adequate facilities for relief during wildfire smoke emergencies Decisions related to disaster risk should be made within a disability-centered context; as populations age, people will develop more disabilities and so important to address these issues in terms of an aging population Consider equitable nature-based adaptation and urban greening that protects against sea level rise, urban flooding, and urban heat Consider requiring new buildings to accommodate increase in sea level rise Consider policies that enforce groundwater monitoring Consider policies that take into account the cost of maintenance

2. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ELEMENT

Many of Oakland's BIPOC and low-income communities are disproportionately burdened by pollution and environmental stressors due to legacies of racialized zoning and policymaking. In order to properly address this undue burden, the City is creating its first EJ Element for the 2045 GPU.

SB 1000, the Planning for Healthy Communities Act, requires California cities and counties to: "Identify objectives and policies to reduce the unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities." Proactive and meaningful community engagement from the start of a planning process to the implementation of goals and policies is critical to building healthy and equitable communities.

What is Environmental Justice?

The United States Environmental Protection Agency defines environmental justice as: "The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies."

In practice, environmental justice is often better understood through the lived experience of communities most impacted by environmental injustices. Due to legacies of racist and discriminatory housing and land use policies, including redlining, urban renewal, and more, BIPOC communities are disproportionately exposed to toxic air pollutants, contaminated water, and other environmental hazards.

Inequitable exposure, in turn, leads to health inequities such as higher rates of pediatric asthma, stroke, and cancer among low-income communities of color. Health inequities are the result of a long history of systemic racism and environmental & social injustices that continue to have lasting effects on vulnerable populations. Environmental justice seeks to rectify these issues by improving the environmental health of those most harmed by pollution burdens and intentionally

investing in these communities to create opportunities that will allow its residents to live long, healthy lives.

What are “Unique and Compounded Health Risks”?

A "health risk" is a hazard to human health. Some hazards (such as lead, asbestos, floods, and heat waves) may be dangerous enough to harm human health on their own. Other hazards may not be so dangerous that they are harmful to health by themselves, but when considered with other health risks to a community, they are indeed harmful. This is a compounded health risk.

Today, people are often exposed to multiple health risks, such as asbestos and air pollutants, while experiencing poverty and living in neighborhoods with poor access to fresh and affordable foods. These conditions are experienced more often by EJ Communities. The inequitable distribution of resources that promote health coupled with the concentration of environmental pollution and other hazards that harm health is what Senate Bill 1000 refers to as the unique or compounded health risks that impact an environmental justice community.

Environmental Justice Element Requirements

SB 1000 requires that an EJ Element identify “disadvantaged communities” within the area covered by the general plan, and include goals, policies, and objectives to reduce the unique or compounded health risks in “disadvantaged communities” by means that include, but are not limited to the seven topic areas listed below:

1. Reduction of pollution exposure, including the improvement of air quality.
2. Promoting safe and sanitary homes.
3. Promoting food access.
4. Promoting physical activity.
5. Promotion of public facilities.
6. Promote civic engagement in the public decision-making process.
7. Prioritizing improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities.

SB 1000 defines a “Disadvantaged Community” as: “An area identified by the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) or an area that is a low-income area that is disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation.” Further, SB 1000 further defines “low-income area” as an area with a median household income at or below 80 percent of the statewide median income, or as an area that meets the “low-income” threshold per the Department of Housing and Community Development Department’s State Income Limits.

While State law uses the term “disadvantaged communities,” the City of Oakland has opted to use the term “Environmental Justice (EJ) Communities”. This is based on the recognition that environmental justice calls for identifying the cumulative burdens that unfairly impact or disadvantage a neighborhood, the root causes that results in unfair impacts, and the solutions that will provide equitable access to environmental benefits, investments, and other resources.

Identifying Environmental Justice Communities

The first step in the development of the EJ Element is to identify low-income communities disproportionately impacted by environmental pollution and health inequities. This will require proactive outreach to community members, early identification of environmental justice issues, and timely preparation of policies to address them. The next step of the process is to develop specific goals, policies, and implementation programs that respond to and prioritize the needs of these communities.

To identify EJ Communities, SB 1000 prioritizes the use of the California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool (“CalEnviroScreen”), a data tool developed by CalEPA with the purpose of providing statewide data to identify communities disproportionately impacted by, or vulnerable to, environmental pollution and contaminants. However, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) also encourages community-focused processes to identify EJ Communities by taking into consideration local impacts, concerns, and priorities.

To tailor State requirements for the development of an EJ Element that works best for Oakland, the City has chosen to use a customized “screening” method to identify areas in the city that are disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation. This method uses locally specific indicators in addition to the statewide indicators from CalEnviroScreen. The result is an Oakland-specific Map of Potential Environmental Justice (EJ) Communities. **Attachment A** shows the updated EJ Communities Map.

Once EJ Communities are identified, Environmental Justice goals and policies must be developed to reduce the unique or compounded health risks in EJ Communities by means that include but are not limited to the seven topic areas listed in **Table 1** below.

Staff along with the Deeply Rooted Collaborative, EJ Solutions, and Dyett and Bhatia also convened focused environmental justice discussions with EJ advocates and organizations.

Table 2 provides a summary of the required EJ Element topic areas and potential outcomes from the focused discussions. **Table 3** provides a summary of community feedback focused on Environmental Justice from Popup and Community Hub Events.

Table 2: Required EJ Element Topic Areas and Potential Outcomes from a Review of Existing Plans and Community Feedback

SB1000 – Required Topics	Potential Outcomes from Focused Discussions
1. Reducing Pollution Exposure, Improving Air Quality People may be exposed to pollution daily in virtually every community when people come into direct contact with air, food, water, and soil contaminants that are often the results of incompatible land uses. However, some people may be more severely impacted by pollution exposure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Reducing and mitigating pollution from industrial uses, freeway traffic, and other mobile sources of pollution in West and East Oakland.Address and prevent the health impacts of illegal dumping in Environmental Justice Communities.Adapt to climate change in project design and development.

SB1000 – Required Topics	Potential Outcomes from Focused Discussions
<p>because of their age or health, or due to socioeconomic conditions that may increase people's stress or make healthy living difficult.</p> <p>Many EJ Communities in Oakland are burdened by multiple sources of pollution, such as proximity to freeways and industrial sites. These communities are also on the front lines facing the challenges associated with adapting to the impacts of climate change. It is important to identify the sources, types, and quantities of pollution to determine the best solutions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Separating pollution sources from sensitive land uses, such as homes, schools, hospitals, libraries, etc.Addressing the impacts of goods movement, including truck impacts, and the transportation of hazardous material.Preventing development of new sources of pollution in overburdened areas, or including policies to reduce impacts (planning and permitting to address health; including buffers, overlay zones, and performance standards)Cleaning up and protecting residents from existing pollution (cross-reference with Safety Element and address toxics exposures, hazardous materials transport, and brownfields)Implementation of the City of Oakland 2030 Equitable Climate Action Plan (ECAP) measures to reduce greenhouse gases (GHG)Equitable planning/preparedness, response, and resilience/recovery in vulnerable and frontline communities for climate change-related hazards
<p>2. Promote Safe and Healthy Homes</p> <p>Improving housing conditions, housing affordability, as well its compatibility with surrounding land uses, can significantly improve both individual and community health.</p> <p>Many homes in Oakland's aging housing stock, particularly in lower income areas where renovations have either not occurred or are substandard, are likely to contain lead-based paint, mold, mildew, asbestos and other toxic materials. These conditions put adults and children at risk of lead poisoning and asbestosis, which can result in lifelong detrimental health impacts. For many low-income families, the only housing option is to move into substandard housing with this and other structural and environmental hazards. The location of housing is also important: proximity to pollution sources impacts the indoor housing conditions, in addition, some housing may not have adequate access to economic opportunity, or public services and facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Address the ongoing impacts of redlining by permitting more housing variety across all of Oakland.Provide ongoing support for, and address root causes of, homelessness – in particular, the disproportionate impact of homelessness on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.Facilitate development without displacement by:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Intentionally encouraging development that benefits existing residents of Environmental Justice Communities.Enhancing access to affordable housing, particularly for vulnerable populations.Preserving existing affordable housing and protect residents from involuntary displacement.Address unsafe and unhealthy housing conditions by reducing exposure to mold, asbestos, lead, and other toxic substances.

SB1000 – Required Topics	Potential Outcomes from Focused Discussions
<p>3. Promote Healthy Food Access</p> <p>Food access refers to a person's ability to access nutritionally adequate, culturally appropriate, and affordable food. Having sufficient income to purchase healthy food, as well as the proximity and ability to travel to a food source that offers nutritionally adequate, culturally appropriate, and affordable food are important elements of equitable access.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identifying gaps in healthy food access.Supporting local agriculture and equitable food production, for example by promoting community gardens.Increasing health and nutrition.Expanding access to local healthy food and reduce food insecurity.Protect, maintain, and reuse existing community spaces.Address the overconcentration of unhealthy retail (liquor stores, tobacco retailers).Develop food-related programs, coordination, and management.
<p>4. Promoting Physical Activity</p> <p>Without safe and well-maintained places to walk, play, and exercise, many communities in Oakland experience a range of adverse health outcomes. It is important that environmental justice policies that promote physical activity address the equitable distribution of active transportation (i.e., pedestrian and bicycling) networks as well as the distribution of parks, open spaces, and urban green spaces.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increasing opportunities for active transportation by enhancing walking, bicycling, and transit infrastructure and promoting safety.Expanding access to safe, high-quality open space and increasing opportunities for physical activity and recreation.Expand access to Oakland's shoreline for Environmental Justice Communities.Expanding and protecting tree canopy cover in underrepresented areas of East and West Oakland, in order to provide shade, reduce urban heat island impacts, and reduce exposure to air pollution emissions.Implementing the Urban Forest Master Plan, a comprehensive, area-wide urban canopy and vegetation plan that identifies locations that trees can be added and maintained, such as parks, streets, Caltrans' rights-of-way and develop a plan to protect existing trees.
<p>5. Promoting Public Facilities</p> <p>Many EJ Communities in Oakland do not have adequate access to a wide range of necessary facilities such as libraries, health centers, or parks. If the facilities exist, they may be in dilapidated or poor condition – which creates safety hazards. SB 1000 refers to “public facilities” as “public improvements, public services, and community amenities.” This may include</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensure equitable access to safe, reliable transportation options.Bringing street/sidewalk and parks maintenance, tree canopies, trash collection and other services in Environmental Justice Communities up to par with others and acknowledge that areas of higher need require additional services to maintain equitable levels of habitability.

SB1000 – Required Topics	Potential Outcomes from Focused Discussions
transit facilities, parks, open spaces, health centers and clinics, schools, daycare centers, libraries, museums, community centers, community facilities, and recreational facilities (such as senior or youth centers).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing an equitable distribution of safe and well-designed parks and playgrounds, libraries, schools, childcare centers, public restrooms, and other public facilities.• Ensuring that EJ Communities have affordable, accessible, reliable, and safe transportation options (such as bus transit, bicycle infrastructure, and attractive sidewalks) to these and other community services and facilities.• Implement the City's 2018 cultural plan "Belonging In Oakland: A Cultural Development Plan" by promoting the value of "placemaking," "Place and Identity," and the "Civic Commons".• Encourage public land stewardship.
<p>6. Civic Engagement/ Reducing Barriers to Inclusive Engagement and Participation</p> <p>Ensuring that all members of a community – especially those who are most impacted by environmental pollution and other hazards - can meaningfully participate in any civic decision-making process is key to planning for environmental justice.</p> <p>Creating accessible and culturally appropriate opportunities for low-income, underrepresented, and linguistically isolated stakeholders to engage in local decision-making will help ensure that EJ issues are identified and resolved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eliminating cultural and language barriers.• Promoting broad and balanced participation and increasing representation in government.• Supporting participatory budgeting.• Promoting cultural competence.• Increasing opportunities for youth.
<p>7. Prioritizing Improvements and Programs in EJ Communities</p> <p>Environment justice seeks to improve the environmental health of those most harmed by pollution burdens by intentionally investing in the most impacted communities to create opportunities that will allow its residents to live long healthy lives.</p> <p>EJ Communities may have specific needs which may require taking special actions to ensure that existing conditions are improved and not exacerbated. In addition, effective prioritization would ensure that policies and programs benefiting EJ Communities are implemented in a timely fashion.</p> <p>Lastly, focusing on the prioritization of improvements and programs for EJ</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reducing economic inequities by targeting growth to build wealth in communities harmed by disinvestment, segregation and generational denial of opportunity.• Promoting clean, green jobs with focus on job training and opportunities for Black Americans, Indigenous peoples, Immigrants, and formerly incarcerated)• Prioritizing historically underserved areas for infrastructure improvements.• implementing projects identified by existing residents in Environmental Justice Communities as funds become available.• Assessing the environmental justice impacts of new development regulations.• Supporting racial and tribal reconciliation and reparations

SB1000 – Required Topics	Potential Outcomes from Focused Discussions
Communities can also help jurisdictions access public funding that is dedicated to benefitting EJ Communities and prepare governments for potential funding applications.	

See also Section on Community Engagement and Outreach Summary for a summary of feedback received from popup and community hub events. Additional environmental justice focus groups will be held in Fall 2022.

3. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

Community engagement efforts for Phase 1 of the GPU include an extensive and inclusive outreach process, and involves very close coordination between the City, Community Consultant, and Technical Consultant.

The Community Consultant team in partnerships with several community-based organizations (CBOs) represent important communities in Oakland who have been historically excluded from traditional planning processes and who are doing much of this work already.

Community Engagement and Outreach Summary

Since November 2021, the GPU team has engaged with the community through pop-ups, cultural events, townhalls, focused discussions, neighborhood workshops/meetings, online engagement, presentations to community groups and Neighborhood Councils (NC), study sessions, and public hearings etc. to engage and to solicit input and guidance.

All community input shared will be used to ground truth data based on peoples' lived experience, inform areas of focus for the update of General Plan elements, and guide development of General Plan policies.

Information on all community engagement events, including engagement summaries; workshop and townhall presentations, recordings, and meeting summaries; and discussion group summaries, are being provided via the [GPU website at
<https://www.oaklandca.gov/topics/meetings-and-events>](#), e-newsletters, and social media updates. The following is a summary of the ongoing GPU engagement for Phase 1 focused on EJ, Safety, and Industrial Lands:

- **Popup and Community Hub Events:** Since November 2021 to July 2022, the GPU Deeply Rooted Collaborative team has conducted 52 pop-up and community hub events in Eastmont, Fruitvale, San Antonio, Chinatown, West Oakland, and Downtown. For example, pop-up events have been held at the West Oakland Cultural Action Network's (WOCAN) and West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project's (WOEIP) Juneteenth events in West Oakland, and at larger community events such as Oakland Youth Arts Explosion (OYAE) and Art+Soul, Town Nights at Fruitvale, Oakland Asian Cultural

Center's (OACC) Queer Trans Asian Pride event, Oakland Carnival, Malcolm X JazzArts Festival, and 510 Day. The Village in Oakland also conducts weekly pop-up hubs, known as **Living Rooms**. These events are held at public parks and plazas for unhoused Oaklanders and offer hot meals and clean drinking water, recreation and educational activities, and resources to legal, mental, health, educational, and medical resources. These pop-ups have occurred at various locations such as DeFremery Park, San Antonio Park, Grove Shafter Park (Marcus Garvey Park), and Alameda County Social Services Plaza. At these community-embedded events and online, the team has engaged with over 1,900 people, with a majority being individuals from communities of color. These events sought to hear community concerns, ideas and solutions through interviews and focus group conversations. **Table 3** provides a summary of community feedback focused on EJ, Safety, and Industrial Lands from the Popup and Community Hub Events.

Table 3: Community Feedback Focused on Environmental Justice, Safety, and Industrial Lands from Popup and Community Hub Events

Focus Areas	Community Concerns	Community Policy Ideas
Environmental Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air, noise and dust pollution from industry, proximity to highway, the port, trucks and cars • Collisions • Lack of access to healthy and affordable food choices • Lack of parks/green spaces and trees • Illegal dumping and Visible trash in the streets, particularly in underserved low-income and unhoused communities • Generational impact of living next to military zones with airplane and jet fuel pollution • Redlining and racial segregation causing generational health issues and cancer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Port of Oakland include EJ and Public Health policies, criteria, equity, update science, research and data apply to all levels of administration and operation for the residents of West Oakland and flatlands. • Traffic Safety Measures like speed bumps, cross walks, traffic lights, pothole repair, bike lanes and repaved sidewalks Invest in public transportation that is affordable and frequent, less cars, more bike infrastructure like bike parking, and other sustainable alternatives such as renewable energy and electric cars. • Affordable grocery stores in East and West Oakland - Incentivize and fund corner grocery stores to carry healthy food • Plant more trees and prioritize tree equity in neighborhoods without trees • Encourage community gardens • Create and dispatch street cleaning teams, particularly focusing on hazardous trash in low-income neighborhoods of color • Enforce regulations on illegal dumping • Prioritize community input with project development

Focus Areas	Community Concerns	Community Policy Ideas
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in Asthma and other respiratory issues during wildfire season • Flooding concerns in flatlands • Access to emergency services, evacuation etc. due to flooding • Hospitalizations caused by the long-term effects of wildfire smoke • Violence in low-income neighborhoods discourages residents from walking in the neighborhood • Disproportionate health effects on young children and older adults • Identify traffic collisions as a major safety issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <input type="checkbox"/> Removal of Interstate 980 • Prioritize wildfire prevention • Sacred burning, fire banking, and indigenous practices as a preventative strategy to prevent uncontrolled fires • Monitor sea level rise, mitigation, and infrastructure adaptation • Build community resilience centers with free resources • Build resilient infrastructure and disaster adaptation, prioritizing equity • Prioritize drought mitigation and adaptation • Support street violence prevention programs • Prepare for and mitigate infrastructure damage from earthquakes or natural disasters • Implement infrastructure updates in public areas, such as brighter lights and accessible emergency call boxes
Industrial Lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respiratory issues created and/or exacerbated by industrial pollution from nearby industrial plants, trucks, and construction • Residents live near industrial lands and pollution are unable to go outside, which especially impact children • Industrial pollution impact West Oakland and North Oakland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand and enforce regulations on industrial facilities • Prioritize diesel and fossil fuel reduction => Focus on air pollution from trucks and industrial transportation • Implement public air monitoring, especially near Port, highways, and high-traffic areas • Regulate companies to compensate residents for operation in neighborhood • Expedite sustainability initiatives at the Port of Oakland • Consider removing Interstate 980 and other highways
Equity and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of investment in underserved neighborhoods • Need social connections in order to navigate housing • Need spaces for artists and those doing community work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize equitable city investment to provide the same services to the flatlands compared to the hills • Prioritize community input with project development • Support community education centers, public libraries, community organizations and grassroots efforts

Focus Areas	Community Concerns	Community Policy Ideas
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of material in Oakland stores is poorer than other cities Infrastructure, like rail tracks, funds are not equitably distributed and must go to places beyond Downtown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address gentrification, displacement, and exacerbating disparities among Downtown Oakland communities Focus on retaining Oakland culture in the wave of gentrification Support land trusts and other community ownership structures Build resilience centers with free resources – masks, food, large gardens, and gardening opportunities Continue supporting small businesses: “Oakland does a good job of supporting small independent businesses.” Increase initiatives to support affordable and accessible childcare, especially important for economic mobility in Black communities

- **Environmental Justice Community Hub:** Staff published an interactive [Environmental Justice Community Hub](#) to provide background information on SB 1000 and solicit feedback to ensure that the draft Map of Potential Environmental Justice (EJ) Communities reflect real conditions on the ground, and the experience of Oaklanders who live, work, learn and play in EJ Communities. The Map of Potential Environmental Justice (EJ) Communities (**Attachment A**) has been updated based on the new insights and feedback gathered through our survey, ground-truthing exercises, and conversations with communities.
- **Focused Discussion Groups:** Five discussion groups were held and led by the GPU Community Consultants (Deeply Rooted, EJ Solutions), GPU Technical Consultants (Dyett & Bhatia), and City staff between June 2022 – August 2022 that focused on Environmental Justice, Safety, and Industrial Lands. The EJ and Safety Element discussion groups focused on identifying key issues, presenting environmental justice and safety focused-policies from existing plans to identify potential policy gaps, and documenting equity-focused policy ideas. The Industrial Lands discussion group focused on identifying economic growth possibilities, the strengths and weaknesses of different sectors (e.g., logistics, advanced manufacturing, and life sciences), as well as sustainable ways to support the Port of Oakland as an economic engine. Additional focus groups will be held in Fall 2022.
- **Community Education Workshops:** Two community education workshops were hosted on April 8, 2022, and April 9, 2022, and were organized by the Deeply Rooted Collaborative Community Engagement partner to review the past and present policies that led to today's conditions in housing and environmental justice. Over 100 people attended the workshops. Speakers included the Oakland unhoused leader Needa Bee (The Village in Oakland), environmental justice leader Ms. Margaret Gordon (West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project), Margaretta Lin (Just Cities) and Diana

Benitez (Just Cities). Attendees shared their frustration regarding ongoing displacement and disinvestment and various community-centered solutions that would bring much needed resources to communities of color in Oakland without displacement.

- **Neighborhood Workshops:** Two neighborhood workshops led by the GPU Technical Consultant, Dyett & Bhatia, and City staff were held on April 30, 2022, at the East Oakland Senior Center and on May 26, 2022, at the West Oakland Senior Center. The workshops introduced the General Plan and gathered community input on a vision for the City in 2045, as well as local issues and opportunities that should be addressed in the General Plan. Councilmembers Treva Reid and Carroll Fife and their staff participated and provided their feedback at these workshops.
- **Youth Engagement:** The GPU Community Consultant, Deeply Rooted Collaborative, has established a Deeply Rooted Youth Fellowship comprised of 20 fellows between the ages of 15 to 22. The Fellowship will be a 2-to-3-year commitment during the GPU process and fellows will be provided with a monthly stipend. Planning, design, and training of the fellowship program will be done in coordination with Y-Plan. Fellows will coordinate with the Oakland Youth Advisory Commission (OYAC) and will be engaged in outreach activities such as community-based events, presentations about the GPU process to the community and schools, and social media outreach. Additional information can be found at <https://www.oaklandca.gov/news/2022/twenty-local-youth-selected-to-lead-youth-outreach-for-oakland-general-plan-update>
- **Neighborhood Councils and Community Group Meetings:** Staff is working with Neighborhood Service Coordinators to present at upcoming Neighborhood Councils (NCs) and other community groups on General Plan topics including housing, environmental justice, industrial lands and safety, and natural hazards and receive their feedback. Since April 2022, Staff have presented at over 40 NCPCs and will continue to engage and obtain feedback. Staff are also identifying engagement opportunities at other Neighborhood – Community groups, faith-based organizations, and other community congregation events as well. The complete list of Neighborhood Councils and Community Groups that staff have presented to can be found here: <https://www.oaklandca.gov/topics/meetings-and-events#neighborhood-council-nc-community-group-presentations>.
- **Technical Advisory Committee:** The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is comprised of internal City department representatives from Housing & Community Development, Race and Equity, Economic & Workforce Development, Human Services, Oakland Public Works, Department of Transportation, Fire Department, Parks, Recreation and Youth Development, Information Technology Department, and Department of Violence Prevention as well as the offices of the City Administrator and City Attorney. The TAC also includes as other Oakland-based, neighboring, and regional governmental agency representatives from AC Transit, Alameda County Public Health Department (ACPHD), Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), Caltrans, East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), East Bay Parks Regional District (EBPRD), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) - Region 9, Metropolitan Transportation Commission – Associate of Bay Area

Governments (MTC-ABAG), Oakland Unified School District (OUSD), Port of Oakland and San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority .

- The TAC serves to advise on key strategies to address Oakland's big issues related to housing, environmental justice, safety, and other General Plan topics; review community input collected at key points in the process; and inform, discuss, and provide technical direction on policies and actions. At the TAC meetings held on May 23, 2022, and June 27, 2022, TAC members provided feedback on the draft EJ Communities map and initial input on Environmental Justice and Safety Elements policies and programs, as well as visioning for Industrial Lands.
- **Equity Working Group:** The GPU Community Consultant, Deeply Rooted Collaborative, has convened an Equity Working Group (EWG) comprised of 20 diverse residents who will: 1) Identify the major challenges and impacts of the General Plan (housing, safety, environmental justice, land use, transportation, and parks); and 2) Advocate for solutions that advance equitable and healthy communities for Oakland residents. The EWG has met thrice between June 2022 to August 2022 to provide feedback on the Draft Housing Element. Upcoming EWG meetings will focus on the EJ and Safety Elements.
- **Study Sessions with Official Decision-Making Bodies:** The Planning Commission, City Council, and various city boards and commissions will be active participants in the GPU process and will have opportunities to provide direction at each stage in the process. The GPU project team will continue to check in with these decision-making bodies at key milestones to ensure that the GPU project remains on the right track in terms of process, direction, and overall vision.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact from this agenda item, as it is informational only and is intended to seek guidance from the Public Safety Committee.

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

See Section on Community Engagement and Outreach Summary for detailed information on public outreach conducted to date by the GPU Team. This study session is another opportunity for public outreach.

This meeting was noticed in the Oakland Tribune as well as emails sent to subscribers to the GPU email listserv.

COORDINATION

The GPU will continue to be a multi-department effort, with the Planning and Building Department collaborating closely with key partners, including the following city departments: Housing & Community Development, Race and Equity, Economic & Workforce Development, Human Services, Oakland Public Works, Department of Transportation, , Fire Department, Parks, Recreation and Youth Development, Information Technology Department, and Department of Violence Prevention as well as the offices of the City Administrator and City Attorney.

This report has been reviewed by the Office of the City Attorney and the Budget Bureau.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: By adopting an updated General Plan Safety Element, Oakland residents, businesses and the essential civic functions of the government will be better prepared following a natural or human-caused disaster, and the City's economy could therefore recover more readily.

Concurrent adoption of a General Plan Environmental Justice Element would promote meaningful civil engagement in public decision-making processes and identify objectives and policies that address the most pressing needs in the community, particularly where social and racial inequity is most prevalent.

The new Industrial Lands policy that is also part of Phase 1 of the GPU will encourage the use of cleaner technology in established industrial sectors with strong labor forces benefitting local residents and identify new job-dense industrial sectors with little environmental impacts that the City should support.

Environmental: The lack of sufficient housing options in Oakland worsens air pollution, as community members priced out of the local housing market are forced to drive long distances to their jobs. The City of Oakland 2030 Equitable Climate Action Plan (ECAP) recognizes that households living near employment-dense areas and transit corridors have lower carbon footprints than those living in less dense areas further from transit (www.oaklandca.gov/projects/2030ecap). Affordable housing located near transit is particularly impactful, as low-income households are more likely not to own cars if they have access to quality transportation options. To that end, the ECAP Action TLU-1 calls for the General Plan, upon its next update, to align with the City's greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction, adaptation, resilience, and equity goals.

Adoption and implementation of an updated General Plan Safety Element would help preserve Oakland's environmental quality by minimizing potential damage from safety hazards and disasters, including sea level rise and wildfire risks. When the City improves public infrastructure, it increases and protects the quality of Oakland's water, air and soil.

Concurrent adoption of an Environmental Justice (EJ) Element would promote meaningful civil engagement in the public decision-making process and identify objectives and policies that

prioritize improvements and programs that address the most pressing needs in the community, particularly where social and racial inequity is most prevalent.

Race & Equity: An Equity Working Group (EWG) convened by Deeply Rooted has been created to work with City Staff and the GPU team to make sure that the General Plan's Housing, Safety, Environmental Justice, Land Use, Transportation, Noise, and Open Space/Conservation/Recreation Policies, and key Zoning issues align with community concerns and needs. The EWG will also support outreach efforts to ensure that geographies and populations that are most burdened by environmental justice inequities are engaged in identifying community needs and assets and providing feedback on proposed solutions.

The updated General Plan Safety Element would direct improvements to public infrastructure and critical facilities which can result in more disaster-resistant neighborhoods and prepare residents to respond to and recover more quickly from natural or human-caused events.

Concurrent adoption of the City's first EJ Element would promote meaningful civic engagement in the public decision-making process and identify objectives, policies, improvements, and programs that address the most pressing needs in the community, particularly where social and racial inequities are most prevalent.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)

The City of Oakland will be preparing a Phase I Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to assess the environmental impacts of the Environmental Justice, Housing, and Safety Element updates, and related Phase I amendments, including any implementing zoning program, in compliance with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Phase 1 Program EIR will focus on growth forecasts and potential housing sites, and also aim for mitigation measures that staff could apply as standard conditions of approval for projects, particularly those involving housing development. Key effort will also focus on the intended use of this Program EIR to support the City's use of CEQA streamlining provisions and tiered documents for the environmental review of future plans and projects. The EIR will serve both to inform the public and decision makers of potential environmental impacts and the mitigation measures associated with the General Plan's implementation.

An EIR Scoping Session was held at the April 20, 2022, Planning Commission meeting to solicit comments from the Planning Commission and the public on the types of information and analysis that should be considered in the GPU EIR.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends That The City Council Conduct A Study Session And Receive An Informational Report As Follows: (A) Safety Element Framework and Key Safety Issues in Oakland; (B) Environmental Justice Element Requirements and Key Environmental Justice Issues in Oakland; And (C) Provide Feedback to Staff On Key Goals Needed To Address Environmental Justice Issues, And Advance Equitable Processes For Integrating Climate Resilience And Public Safety Strategies

Edward D. Reiskin, City Administrator

Subject: Study Session On The General Plan Update: Environmental Justice Element, Safety
Element Update, and Industrial Lands Vision

Date: September 12, 2022

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Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments (1):

A. Attachment A: Map of Potential Environmental Justice Communities in Oakland

