



CITY OF GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA REPORT TO THE SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM

Report: Land Use and Circulation Elements - Project Update, and proposed amendment to the existing contract with De Novo Planning Group (Contract No. 8000769) to update the scope of work to add preparation of the General Plan Environmental Justice Element as required by Government Code §65302(h), and to extend the timeline for an additional 18 months.

1. Motion accepting the status report on the preparation of the Land Use Element and Circulation Element updates, and to accept Council comments thereon.
2. Motion approving a contract amendment with De Novo Planning Group in the amount of \$199,580 for a new not-to-exceed contract amount of \$1,081,309 to include preparation of an Environmental Justice Element of the General Plan and extend the timeline term.

COUNCIL ACTION

Item Type: Action

Approved for January 30, 2024 **calendar**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staff is presenting a status update on the preparation of the Land Use Element and Circulation Element comprehensive updates for Council's review and comment. Based on Council's feedback, staff will continue with the preparation of the draft Elements for public outreach and subsequent presentation to City Boards and Commissions for review and recommendation to the Council for adoption.

Staff is also requesting an amendment to the existing contract with De Novo Planning Group, who is currently assisting staff with preparation of the Land Use and Circulation Element updates and who prepared the Housing Element update. The contract amendment is necessary to expand the scope of work for De Novo to prepare an Environmental Justice ("EJ") Element. State law currently requires either a new EJ Element be adopted, or EJ policies be included in existing elements, simultaneously with the revision or adoption of two or more other General Plan Elements. Staff will be presenting the draft EJ Element to the City Council for review and comment and will conduct public outreach prior to presenting the EJ Element to City Boards and Commissions for review and recommendation to the Council for adoption.

The contract amendment also includes a term extension.

RECOMMENDATION

Accept report on the Land Use and Circulation Element Updates and provide comments, if any, and approve the motion authorizing amendments to the De Novo Planning Group contract.

ANALYSIS

The City is in the process of preparing a comprehensive update to the Land Use and Circulation Elements of the General Plan, led by the hired consultant, De Novo Planning Group, and the following is a status update on this Project.

GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS OVERVIEW

State law requires that all California counties and cities adopt a long range planning document, known as the General Plan. General Plans provide direction on how communities can achieve established goals and are often described as a blueprint for land use, development, and resource decisions, and include the following mandatory elements: Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, and Noise and Safety. Glendale's General Plan contains the mandatory seven elements plus the following four more optional elements: Community Facilities, Historic Preservation, Recreation, and Air Quality. Each element typically identifies a specific issue or subject area, provides a thorough context and assessments of the current and planned impacts associated with the topic, and identifies specific goals, policies, and programs to implement policy goals related to that topic.

State law now mandates that when two or more General Plan Elements are being revised or adopted, cities and counties are also required to either adopt an Environmental Justice ("EJ") Element or incorporate EJ policies into other General Plan Elements. With the exception of the Housing Element, which is required to be updated at least every eight years, other General Plan elements typically cover longer-range planning periods that can span several decades. The State Office of Planning and Research (OPR) recommends that General Plans be comprehensively updated every 10-15 years to reflect changes in community values, economic conditions, and emerging issues and challenges.

The analysis and components of each element must comply with California Government Code ("GC") Section 65302 and generally conform to the State of California's General Plan Guidelines (2017), published by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research.

A Land Use Element, prepared pursuant to GC Section 65302(a), designates the proposed general distribution and location and extent of the uses of land for housing, business, industry, open space, natural resources, recreation, education, public buildings and grounds, and other land use categories. A Land Use Element addresses the appropriate designation of land uses through descriptive text covering objectives, principles, and standards, as well as a map which visually identifies the location of each identified land use.

A Circulation Element, prepared pursuant to GC Section 65302(b), consists of the general location and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation

routes, terminals, any military airports and ports, and other local public utilities and facilities, all correlated with the land use element (and other elements) of the plan. The Circulation Element must also include plans for a balanced, multi-modal transportation network (complete streets) that meets the needs of all users of streets, roads, and highways (including bicyclists, children, persons with disabilities, motorists, movers of commercial goods, pedestrians, users of public transportation, and seniors) for safe and convenient travel in a manner that is appropriate within the context of our community.

New State legislation has expanded the topics that must be addressed within General Plans; the comprehensive updates will comply with these requirements, including the adoption of a new EJ Element. The updates will also include visionary goals for the City's future growth and development and will capitalize on the opportunity to integrate Elements with other local and regional plans and projects (i.e., transit planning, sustainability, public safety, etc.).

LAND USE ELEMENT

Glendale's Land Use Element was last comprehensively updated in 1986. However, various General Plan Amendments (text and map), Specific Plans (Town Center Specific Plan for the Americana at Brand and Downtown Specific Plan), and Community Plans have been adopted since the last comprehensive update which also guide long-term land use decisions.

The objectives of the current comprehensive update consist of the following:

- Streamline policy direction to address the mix of land uses, location of future growth, land use compatibility, urban design, and economic development
- Simplify land use definitions
- Identify strategic locations for expanded housing choices, including:
 - New City-Owned Residential Overlay
 - Increased allowable residential density around the future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Stops along Glenoaks Boulevard and at the corner of Broadway and Glendale Avenue
 - Increased allowable residential density between the 134 Freeway and Glenoaks Boulevard, west of Central and east of Pacific Avenues, as well as directly south of the 134 Freeway in the Pacific Avenue Gateway area
- Include specific and meaningful actions to achieve City goals
- Comply with the requirements of the California Government Code
- Integrate graphics, tables, maps, and photos to create a user-friendly document

An essential component of the Land Use Element is the Land Use Map, and the comprehensive update will include the following modifications to the Map:

- Updates to create consistency with current zoning/built uses
- Updates to reflect land use changes already approved through other actions (i.e., Community Plans)
- Resolution of parcels with more than one designation/zone
- Creation of a new "Specific Plan" designation to improve administration of Specific Plan areas

- Creation of a new “City-Owned Residential Overlay” to allow for multi-family development at City-owned properties
- Application of new land use designation and standards for areas proximate to the BRT stops and the area north of the 134 Freeway, south of Glenoaks Boulevard, west of Central Avenue and east of Pacific Avenue

CIRCULATION ELEMENT

Glendale’s Circulation Element was last comprehensively updated in 1998.

Objectives of the updates to the Circulation Element include the following:

- Streamline policy direction to address “complete streets,” walking and bicycling, transit, ridesharing, carpooling, traffic demand, environmental health and air quality, parking, and goods movement
- Prepare new “complete streets” layered network maps (prioritizing pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and auto streets)
- Identify necessary network improvements
- Illustrate long-term roadway vehicular classifications
- Identify routes for emergency evacuation and goods movement
- Comply with the requirements of the California Government Code
- Integrate graphics, tables, maps, and photos to create a user-friendly document

City staff has successfully completed the Citywide Pedestrian Plan, as adopted by City Council in March 2021, and is in the final stages of updating the Bicycle Transportation Plan. These completed and ongoing plans are integral to the development of the Circulation Element and contribute to the overall vision for a sustainable and well-connected urban environment.

The consultant team is currently working with staff on updating the City’s transportation model in compliance with State of California’s SB 743 guidelines and developing a defensible Transportation Impact Mitigation Fee.

Effects of Regional Transportation Plans on the General Plan Element Updates

The updates of the Land Use and Circulation Elements coincide with the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro)’s planned North Hollywood to Pasadena BRT project. The North Hollywood to Pasadena Transit Corridor project is part of Metro’s plan for better transit. This project will connect the cities of Los Angeles (North Hollywood and Eagle Rock communities), Burbank, Glendale, and Pasadena, improving access to jobs, education, and other important destinations. In 2022, Metro adopted an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the BRT that illustrated the planned route, analyzed preferred stop locations, and provided actions to mitigate potential impacts to the communities on the route. The project is now in the preliminary design stage before it enters the start of final design and construction. Since the planned BRT project will traverse the City and include seven stops in Glendale, the Land Use and Circulation Element updates are anticipated to incorporate policy and implementation measures related to the Metro project.

In order to promote sustainable multimodal mobility along the proposed BRT route, the Circulation Element will include policies to maintain and enhance pedestrian thoroughfares, bike lanes, and vehicular travel in the Metro project area. Staff is also analyzing the development potential around the future BRT stops and proposing to concentrate new development around major transit stops, with increased residential density in proximity to these stops; such changes are to be incorporated into the comprehensive Land Use Element update. The implementation timeline for Metro's BRT and the timing of the Land Use and Circulation Element Updates and EJ Element adoption is fortuitous because it will allow the Circulation Element to seamlessly integrate with the Land Use Element, ensuring sustainable growth that aligns with Metro's, and the City's, commitment to efficient transportation and urban development.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (“EJ”) ELEMENT

In 2016, Senate Bill 1000 (The Planning for Healthy Communities Act) amended Government Code Section 65302 to require that both cities and counties that have Environmental Justice Communities incorporate EJ policies into their general plans, either in a separate EJ element or by integrating related goals, policies, and objectives throughout the other elements, upon the adoption or next revision of two or more elements concurrently. Environmental Justice Communities are described by the California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool (CalEnviroScreen) as areas (i.e., census tracts) of a city or county that have higher environmental burdens and vulnerabilities than other areas. Based on data from CalEnviroScreen Version 4.0 and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) Priority Populations Mapping Tool, Environmental Justice Communities are present in Glendale and thus addressing this topic is required as part of the City's General Plan.

Because the City is revising two General Plan Elements (Land Use and Circulation Elements), it is required to either incorporate EJ policies into the elements, including other related elements not currently being updated, or adopt a separate EJ Element. Staff is proposing to adopt a separate EJ Element because it is a more straightforward method to ensure compliance with statutory requirements.

The purpose of the EJ legislation is to address the “unique or compounded health risks” in Environmental Justice Communities by decreasing pollution exposure, increasing community assets, and improving overall health. The EJ Element must also provide objectives and policies for seven specific topics (GC Sections 65302(h)(1)(A-C):

- Pollution Exposure and Air Quality
- Public Facilities
- Food Access
- Safe and Sanitary Homes
- Physical Activity
- Community Engagement
- Address the Needs of Environmental Justice Communities

Staff recommends that De Novo's existing contract be amended to include preparation of the new EJ Element. Should Council authorize this amendment, the EJ Element will be prepared and presented to City Boards and Commissions for review and recommendation, and then to the City Council for adoption in conjunction with the Land Use Element and Circulation Element updates.

CONTRACT AMENDMENT

Staff has reviewed De Novo's "Proposal to Prepare an EJ Element for the City" (Exhibit 1) and has found them to be fair, reasonable, and acceptable. In addition to the \$149,580 for the EJ Element, Staff recommends an additional \$50,000 (less than 5% of the original 2019 contract amount) for any unanticipated Land Use and Circulation Element overruns. The total additional contract amount would be \$199,580. This would be paid using the State's Local Early Action Plan Grant funding with no cost to the City.

The original professional services agreement with De Novo Planning Group Corporation, authorized by City Council on December 3, 2019, for \$881,729, included the following:

- Update of the City's General Plan Land Use, Housing and Circulation Elements;
- Update of the City's Transportation Model to recalibrate for vehicle miles travelled (VMT) to determine thresholds in compliance with State of California SB 743 guidelines (replacing the long-standing transportation-related environmental impact criterion "Level of Service (LOS)," which measured vehicle traffic flow and delay, with a new criterion based on vehicle miles traveled (VMT));
- Development of a defensible Transportation Impact Mitigation Fee for incoming and future developments in the City of Glendale; and
- Environmental Analysis assessing the impacts of all the above projects in conjunction with one another to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), including preparation of a Program Environmental Justice Report EIR.

With the EJ Element, the new total contract amount would be \$1,081,309.

In addition to the proposed contract amendment to include a new stand-alone EJ Element within De Novo's scope of work, staff is also requesting a contract term extension of an additional 18 months for implementation of all components of the contract.

Due to the pandemic, prolonged reviews of the Housing Element and limited staff resources, the original contract term was extended from January 31, 2020 to September 30, 2021 (Amendment #1), and again to September 20, 2024 (Amendment #2). To date, De Novo and Planning Division staff have successfully completed the State-certified 2021-2029 Housing Element and are currently working on the Land Use and Circulation Elements, as well as the VMT and Transportation Impact Fee projects.

The current contract with De Novo is set to expire on September 20, 2024. Approval of the additional 18-month extension would ensure adequate time to conclude all of the significant planning projects included in De Novo's expanded scope of work.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will continue working with the consultant team to prepare the Draft Land Use and Circulation Elements, and if authorized, staff will also work with De Novo on drafting the required EJ Element. The staff and consultant team will undertake an extensive public outreach campaign to gather public comment. Once the draft Land Use Element and Circulation Element updates and EJ Element are sufficiently final form to provide a stable project description for purposes of CEQA review, a Draft EIR will be prepared. The proposed Land Use and Circulation Elements, EJ Element, along with the Draft EIR, will be circulated for public review and comment. Following completion of public comment, the Final EIR, the proposed Land Use and Circulation Elements, as well as the EJ Element, will be brought to the Planning Commission for review and recommendation, and then to the City Council for public hearing of the FEIR certification and adoption of the proposed Land Use and Circulation Element revisions and adoption of the new EJ Element. Throughout the process, the consultant and staff will be providing City Council with regular updates.

STAKEHOLDERS/OUTREACH

Extensive public outreach will be conducted as part of the Project, including online engagement, advisory committee meetings, community events, surveys, and other activities, including, but not limited to, providing the public with a timeline for all public meetings leading to the proposed adoption of the updated Elements and new EJ Element.

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost of the previously authorized Professional Service Agreement with De Novo was \$881,729. The contract amendment will cost \$199,580, which was approved as a part of the FY 2023-24 budget. No new appropriation is being requested at this time. The City Council approved funding is outlined below:

Existing Appropriation		
Amount	Account String	Funding Source
\$199,580	GL: 43110-2160-CDD-0020-P0000 PL: CDD01002AG	State Grant

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (CEQA/NEPA)

No environmental review is required at this time. Environmental review in compliance with State and Local CEQA Guidelines will be conducted as part of the Project once the Land Use, Circulation Elements and EJ Element are in sufficiently final form.

CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE

In accordance with the City Campaign Finance Ordinance, Exhibit 2 shows the names and business addresses of the members of the board of directors, the chairperson, CEO, COO, CFO, Subcontractors and any person or entity with 10% interest or more in the company proposed for professional services agreement in this Agenda Item Report.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

Submitted by:

Bradley Calvert, Director of Community Development

Prepared by:

Vilia Zemaitaitis, Deputy Director of Long Range Planning

Approved by:

Roubik R. Golanian, P.E., City Manager

EXHIBITS/ATTACHMENTS

1. DRAFT Scope of Work: Environmental Justice Element
2. Campaign Finance Disclosure