



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Brian Pedrotti, Community Development Director

**BY:** Andrew Perez, Planning Manager

**SUBJECT:** General Plan Update Study Session and Consultant Introduction

**DATE:** August 22, 2023

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### **SUMMARY OF ACTION:**

Study session for the City Council to receive an update on the status of the project and identify key areas to be addressed as part of the General Plan Update.

### **IMPACT ON FINANCIAL AND PERSONNEL RESOURCES:**

No additional financial or personnel resources are required for this project status update.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Conduct a study session, receive an update on the status of the General Plan Update and provide input and direction to staff and the consultant team on the key issues and areas to be addressed as part of the General Plan Update.

### **BACKGROUND:**

On February 23, 2021, the City Council directed staff to initiate a comprehensive update to the City's General Plan. During that meeting, staff was directed to return to the City Council with a discussion on the scope of work related to the comprehensive General Plan update.

On [July 26, 2022](#), the City Council clarified the scope of work and directed staff to initiate a comprehensive update to the General Plan, including:

- An update to all existing elements except for the Housing Element;
- A consistency review of the Housing Element;
- Creation of an Environmental Justice Element;
- An update to the Climate Action Plan;
- Creation of objective design standards;

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- An overlay district providing specific development standards for the East Grand Avenue corridor;
- Zoning ordinance updates; and
- Inclusion of Healthy Communities strategies throughout.

In November 2022, the City issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the General Plan Update with the City Council’s requested scope of work and budget. Staff received one consultant proposal prior to the RFP deadline of December 21, 2022, from Mintier Harnish (Consultant), a Sacramento-based land use firm. Based on the response to the RFP, staff updated Council on the options for a two-year and three-year schedule, as well as the optional tasks identified in the proposal for services submitted by the consultant. On [March 28, 2023](#), Council approved a consultant services agreement with Mintier Harnish to assist with the Comprehensive General Plan Update for a three-year schedule, including the optional tasks identified in the proposal: update to the Climate Action Plan, an Alternatives Report, evaluation of development standards, an East Grand Avenue Corridor Overlay District, objective design standards, development code update, retail market analysis, and market demand study.

Following the approval of the agreement, staff and the Consultant initiated the project with a kickoff meeting that established short term and long-term schedules, milestones, deliverables, public outreach strategies, and project branding such as colors, logos, and styles. A majority of the meeting focused on major issues and topics to be addressed during the update.

**ANALYSIS OF ISSUES:**

This study session intends to provide an overview of the purpose of the General Plan update, identify the key steps in the preparation process, outline community engagement strategies, and other important issues to be addressed during the update process. Major issues identified during the kickoff meeting include:

- Areas for development and re-development;
- Environmental review processes;
- Objectives of the East Grand Avenue overlay district; and
- Future recreational opportunities.

Council authorized a 3-year project schedule for the project. The first three months of the process have consisted of the gathering and analyzing of data that will provide the foundation for the update. The consultant developed a website, branding, and logo for the project. Staff is currently conducting an audit of all existing General Plan goals, policies, and objectives to identify where the current General Plan has been successfully implemented. The study session discussion can also identify topics for focus at the first community workshop that is scheduled for October 5, 2023 in the Council Chambers. The workshop will be publicized on the City’s social media channels and on the General Plan Update website (PlanArroyoGrande.com). The website is expected to be accessible the

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week of August 21, 2023, and anyone interested in the project will be able to sign up for email notifications for any public workshops, Planning Commission and City Council meetings, and when documents are published. Feedback from both the City Council study session and community workshop will inform the Existing Conditions and Trends Workbook, which will be the first major deliverable for this project. The workbook will examine the city's past and present and identify trends that will shape its future.

Next Steps

- Update to Planning Commission in September;
- Completion of the audit of all existing General Plan goals, policies, and objectives;
- First community workshop on October 5, 2023;
- Delivery of Existing Conditions and Trends Workbook.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

The following alternatives are provided for the Council's consideration:

1. Receive a status update on the project and identify important issues to be addressed during the General Plan Update; or
2. Provide other direction to staff.

**ADVANTAGES:**

The study session will inform the Council and community about the status of the General Plan Update and provide an opportunity for staff and the Consultant to solicit feedback on important issues that can be addressed throughout the Update.

**DISADVANTAGES:**

There are no disadvantages identified at this time.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:**

No environmental review is required for the study session. The City and Consultant will evaluate potential impacts of the comprehensive General Plan Update in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act, and prepare any appropriate environmental document at that time, if required.

**PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND COMMENTS:**

The Agenda was posted at City Hall and on the City's website in accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2.