



## Frequently Asked Questions for Plan Pacifica Release: General Plan, Sharp Specific Plan, and EIR

Updated: 6/23/2022

This assortment of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) is provided to assist the public in understanding information about the Plan Pacifica process. This FAQ is provided as a courtesy to the public and is not intended to provide legal advice nor is it intended to be relied upon as the process for any specific project. The FAQ may be updated periodically with new information from time to time.

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### PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING – JUNE 23, 2022 AT 7 PM (VIA ZOOM ONLY)

[MEETING AGENDA](#) | [ZOOM LINK TO JOIN MEETING](#)

**1. What is the purpose of this Planning Commission meeting? Didn't the Planning Commission already recommend approval of the General Plan Update?**

Yes, the Planning Commission recommended City Council approval of the General Plan Update on June 11. However, the recommendation did not include the Sharp Park Specific Plan (SPSP) which is still under consideration by the Planning Commission. On June 23, the Planning Commission will continue its review of the SPSP starting with oral public comments.

### CITY COUNCIL MEETING – JUNE 25, 2022 AT 9 AM (VIA ZOOM ONLY)

[MEETING AGENDA](#) | [ZOOM LINK TO JOIN MEETING](#)

**2. What is the purpose of this City Council meeting?**

The City Council will consider the Planning Commission's recommendation to approve the General Plan Update and certify an environmental impact report (EIR) evaluating the potential environmental impacts from the General Plan Update and Sharp Park Specific Plan. The City Council will receive oral public comment at this meeting.

**3. Will the public be allowed time to speak about the General Plan, SPSP, and Environmental Impact Report (EIR) separately?**

Public comments must be limited to the items up for consideration by the City Council – the General Plan Update and the EIR. Comments on the General Plan Update and EIR will be allowed during a three minute public comment period. Consistent with the City’s standard procedure for review of plans and projects, comments on the EIR should be included during the comment period provided for the General Plan as it is all part of the same agenda item.

Written public comments can be submitted at any time to [publiccomment@pacificagov](mailto:publiccomment@pacificagov) and will be made part of the written record. Comments submitted by 12 PM on Friday, June 24 will be provided to the City Council prior to the public hearing.

**4. Has an appeal been filed to challenge the Planning Commission’s recommendation to the City Council to approve the General Plan Update? How will this affect adoption of the General Plan Update?**

Yes, an appeal was filed on June 21. Pursuant to the Pacifica Municipal Code, the appeal must be heard within 60 days of filing. The City Council must resolve the appeal before it may consider adoption of the General Plan Update.

**GENERAL PLAN PACIFICA INFORMATION**

**5. How can the public note a disagreement with a response provided by the City to a comment on the General Plan, SPSP, and/or Draft EIR?**

Any member of the public can comment during the verbal public comment period provided at the June 23 Planning Commission meeting (for the Sharp Park Specific Plan), and at the June 25 City Council meeting (for the General Plan Update and EIR).

Written public comments can also be submitted at any time to [publiccomment@pacificagov](mailto:publiccomment@pacificagov) and will be made part of the written record.

**6. Will the City address each public comment submitted on the General Plan and SPSP?**

The City is required by law to provide written responses to comments submitted during the public comment period on the Draft EIR that address the adequacy or sufficiency of that document. Other comments that address policy considerations in the General Plan or SPSP have been provided to the Planning Commission for consideration. Staff will respond to questions from Commissioners and Councilmembers on any of these policy-related comments during the public hearing process.

**7. What is Plan Pacifica?**

Plan Pacifica is the combined process to update the City of Pacifica’s General Plan and Local Coastal Program (LCP), and to develop a new Specific Plan for the Sharp Park neighborhood. It also includes preparation of an environmental impact report (EIR) to assess potential environmental impacts from the General Plan and SPSP.

Following an extensive public engagement process, the City Council approved the Local Coastal Land Use Plan (LCLUP) (a component of the LCP) in February 2020. The LCLUP is a land use plan focused on the Coastal Zone. Its primary purpose is to provide policies that implement the Coastal Act of 1976, including but not limited to coastal resources protection and coastal access. The General Plan update has been drafted to be consistent with the LCLUP for areas within the Coastal Zone. The EIR prepared for the General Plan Update and SPSP evaluates all policies in these documents for all areas within Pacifica, including those areas within the Coastal Zone.

In June 2020 the City submitted the LCLUP to the California Coastal Commission (CCC) for certification. The City is continuing to work with the CCC towards certification of the LCLUP. The CCC must certify the City's LCLUP before it may take effect.

**8. Do the General Plan update and SPSP provide all the details to understand what future development may look like?**

The General Plan update and SPSP contain a broad array of policies to address the built environment, protect resources, and guide the City's infrastructure investments. However, they do not contain all of the policies needed to fully regulate development. The City's Zoning Ordinance is the companion to the General Plan and the City's specific plans, including the new SPSP as well as the City's subdivision ordinance and Building Code standards.

The Zoning Ordinance must be consistent with the General Plan and SPSP and thus will be amended in the future to conform to the updated General Plan and SPSP. The Zoning Ordinance contains additional specific details such as height limits, setbacks, parking requirements, maximum lot coverage, floor area ratio (FAR) limitations, and so on, that more precisely regulate development. It can also provide more specificity about allowable uses within the respective zoning districts. The General Plan and SPSP essentially provide the envelope, while the Zoning Ordinance fills in most of the other details.

As mentioned above, the process to update the Zoning Ordinance for consistency with the General Plan will begin following adoption of the General Plan.

**9. Can the City start the Housing Element update process in parallel with the General Plan and SPSP review and approval process?**

The Housing Element update process is prescribed in state law to occur every eight years. The City must adopt a new Housing Element by January 2023. The Housing Element must address a range of topics that affect housing including but not limited to identification of sites where the City's 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) of 1,892 units can be accommodated. The City's 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle RHNA allocation is significantly greater than its 5<sup>th</sup> Cycle RHNA allocation of 413 units.

Identification of sites to accommodate the City's 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle RHNA allocation will require intensive analysis and community engagement. A necessary prerequisite to this analysis and engagement is an updated General Plan that reflects relevant information about Pacifica, including transportation and hazards, that can inform appropriate land use decision making for additional housing sites. The City also needs proper land use tools including additional land use designations that provide a broader range of densities than exists in the 1980 General Plan (currently in effect). Higher densities are likely to be necessary to accommodate the 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle

RHNA allocation site identification process. Without an updated General Plan and SPSP, the City will be unable to undertake an appropriate planning process for the Housing Element update.

Additionally, the City's staff and consultant resources are fully committed at present time working on adoption of the General Plan and SPSP, advancing other City Council priority projects, and maintaining day-to-day public services in the Planning Department. Therefore, it is infeasible in terms of resources to begin a concurrent update to the Housing Element prior to adoption of the General Plan and SPSP.

## **PUBLIC REVIEW AND INPUT PROCESS**

### **10. What is the public review and comment process for Plan Pacifica?**

The City held a public review and comment period on the draft EIR (DEIR) from January 7 through March 8, 2022. This 60-day review and comment period exceeded the 45-day requirement in state law. The City has prepared a Response to Comments (RTC) document that includes responses to public comments on the DEIR received during the 60-day review and comment period.

The City continues to welcome written comments on the General Plan Update and SPSP at any time prior to their adoption to [publiccomment@pacificagov](mailto:publiccomment@pacificagov). These comments will be a part of the written record.

### **11. Where can I find the public review drafts of the Plan Pacifica documents?**

The Plan Pacifica documents are available in digital formats in several locations.

- Links to the digital format documents are here:
  - [General Plan Update and SPSP](#)
  - [Environmental Impact Report: Draft EIR and Final EIR](#)
- Printed copies are available upon request to the Planning Department ([permittech@pacificagov](mailto:permittech@pacificagov) or 650-738-7341) during [business hours](#)

Please note, in person review may be affected by conditions relating to COVID-19.

### **12. How can I submit comments?**

You can submit comments by email, mail, or in-person delivery to the Planning Department, at the addresses indicated below. All comments must be in writing.

- **Mail/In-person delivery:**

Christian Murdock, AICP, Acting Planning Director  
City of Pacifica Planning Department  
540 Crespi Drive  
Pacifica, CA 94044

Note: Check Planning Department operating hours prior to in-person delivery

- **Email:**  
[publiccomment@pacificacounty.gov](mailto:publiccomment@pacificacounty.gov)

### **13. What opportunities for public involvement will be provided prior to adoption of the General Plan Update and SPSP?**

Various public input opportunities are available prior to adoption of the General Plan Update and SPSP:

- Planning Commission public hearings. The first public hearing was held on June 6. Another public hearing will be held on June 23 to consider the Sharp Park Specific Plan.
- City Council public hearings. The first public hearing is scheduled for June 25 to consider the General Plan Update. Another public hearing will be scheduled to consider the Sharp Park Specific Plan following a recommendation by the Planning Commission.
- The comprehensive zoning update that will follow General Plan and SPSP adoption will have several informational sessions and at least one public hearing at both Planning Commission and City Council before enactment. Updated zoning will include additional details of how to implement the General Plan and SPSP at the project level.
- The Housing Element update that will begin later in 2022 and continue through early 2023 will include community input opportunities and public hearings on topics including identification of sites to accommodate the City's 1,892-unit Regional Housing Needs Allocation for the period 2023-2031.

[Subscribe to the Plan Pacifica mailing list](#) to receive email notifications of upcoming public hearings and other important announcements.

### **14. Will the City provide responses to all comments submitted?**

Any interested party may comment on the General Plan update, the SPSP, and the EIR. The City will strive to provide responses when possible and has prepared responses to public comments provided during the DEIR public comment period as required by law.

All written comments received by the City will be included as a part of the written record and considered by the Planning Commission and City Council prior to making a decision on the Plan Pacifica documents.

### **15. How was the public involved in developing the General Plan update and SPSP?**

The City has conducted extensive community outreach throughout the Plan Pacifica process. The General Plan and LCLUP updates started in 2009 and included robust community engagement:

- Formation of a General Plan Outreach Committee
- Stakeholder interviews with 35 representatives of the various community interests
- Community forums attended by 225 community members
- Multiple community meetings before release of 2014 drafts

- Joint City Council/Planning Commission study session in 2015

After combining a new SPSP with the updates to the General Plan and LCLUP, the City kicked-off another broad community engagement effort throughout 2019 and 2020. This included:

- Five community meetings across the City attended by more than 250 community members in summer 2019
- Online video advertisements on Facebook and Instagram explaining ‘What is a General Plan?’ and ‘What is an LCLUP?’ in summer 2019
- Commission and committee presentations in summer 2019
- Stakeholder interviews with 17 representatives of residents, community organizations, business owners, and developers in fall 2019
- Two joint City Council/Planning Commission study sessions in fall 2019
- Online community survey with over 100 responses in fall 2019
- Planning Commission presentation of SPSP Existing Conditions Report in November 2019
- Formation of a City Council ad hoc subcommittee on SPSP outreach in November 2019
- SPSP community meeting at Little Brown Church in January 2020
- Online community survey with over 350 responses in spring 2020
- Community workshop and EIR scoping meeting in August 2020
- SPSP virtual “walk” along Palmetto Avenue in November 2020
- SPSP policy direction at City Council in September and November 2020

Additionally, City staff has received many written communications from the public sharing various perspectives on the Plan Pacifica process and its associated documents. In total, the City has held nearly 20 public meetings and has received input from more than 1,000 members of the public throughout this extensive public engagement process.

The City also undertook an extensive public engagement process during the LCLUP update process that culminated in the City Council’s approval of the LCLUP update in February 2020, as noted above.