

DRAFT RESOLUTION NO. PC 2021-____

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WHITTIER, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL THAT IT REPEAL THE 1993 WHITTIER GENERAL PLAN IN ITS ENTIRETY AND APPROVE THE ENVISION WHITTIER GENERAL PLAN (GPA21-0001)

RECITALS

- A. California Government Code Section 65350 authorizes a city to amend its General Plan.
- B. The City of Whittier last completed a comprehensive update of its General Plan in 1993.
- C. The Envision Whittier General Plan is a comprehensive update which entailed an extensive engagement of the public through a wide range of events and activities to discuss and debate the various issues the City faces over the 20-year planning horizon.
- D. Public engagement of the Whittier community including digital access to the update process through the Envision Whittier General Plan website; and a multimedia campaign utilizing both digital platforms and hard-copy distribution of flyers and project updates. A variety of public engagement strategies were used to ensure that every person in Whittier who wished to express an opinion had the ability to do so, utilizing these non-traditional communication methods in addition to public meetings and workshops.
- E. Stakeholder interviews were conducted in July and August 2017 with local organizations for the purpose of informing the community representatives about the Envision Whittier General Plan and to gather feedback on key topics to be addressed.
- F. Four workshops were held in each Council District of the City in September 2017 to launch the update of the General Plan.
- G. Two questionnaires were distributed both electronically and in hard copy form in November 2017 and April/May 2018 through community gathering outlets and events to establish the Envision Whittier General Plan vision and guiding principles, including Housing Element policies.
- H. A Planning Commission workshop was held in December 2017 to provide an overview of the process and solicit input on key themes to guide the principles of the update to the General Plan.

- I. Two additional Public Workshop were held in June and September 2018, with the purpose of the first focused on sharing economic opportunity information and to gather input on land use and transportation strategies; with the purpose of the second focused on the recommended public policy framework.
- J. The first City Council session was held on March 19, 2019 to vet and integrate the community-identified priorities with direction from the City Council to develop the goals and policies, land use policy maps and to determine the City buildout estimate.
- K. A second City Council meeting was held on September 8, 2020 to gain additional direction and approvals for the proposed land use policy map and the buildout estimates, resulting in the Draft Envision Whittier General Plan.
- L. The Draft Envision Whittier General Plan was published in June 2021 for public review and comment.
- M. The City of Whittier sent the Draft Envision Whittier General Plan to affected entities and agencies in compliance with State law and contacted California Native American tribes that are on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission to invite those tribes to consult on the proposed comprehensive update.
- N. The Envision Whittier General Plan includes the nine mandatory elements as required by the State, reorganized into six topic areas to provide focused discussion of each element and to develop consistent goals and policies including those addressing Environmental Justice; with the 2021-2029 Housing Element as a stand-alone companion document.
- O. The Envision Whittier General Plan is a Citywide document that is an integrated and internally consistent statement of the official land use policy for the City of Whittier.
- P. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires public agencies and local governments to measure the environmental impacts of development projects or other major land use decisions, and to limit or avoid those impacts if possible. The comprehensive update to Whittier's General Plan is considered a project under CEQA.
- Q. The City conducted an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) analysis of the comprehensive update of the Whittier General Plan together with the update to its Housing Element in accordance with all requirements of CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines.
- R. On August 31, 2021, a joint study session with the City Council and Planning Commission was held to conduct a final review of the Draft Envision Whittier General Plan, the Draft 2021-2029 Housing Element, and the Draft EIR.

- S. On September 29, 2021, the Planning Commission of the City of Whittier considered the Envision Whittier General Plan (GPA21-0001), together with the 2021-2029 Housing Element (GPA21-0002) and the EIR prepared for both, the staff report, and all testimony, written and spoken, at a duly noticed public hearing.

NOW THEREFORE, THE PLANNING COMMISSION DOES HEREBY FIND, DETERMINE AND DECLARE AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The above recitals are true and correct and are a substantial part of this resolution.

SECTION 2. The Planning Commission bases its recommendation on the entirety of the record which includes, but is not limited to: (1) the staff reports, technical studies, appendices, plans, specifications, City files and records, and other materials prepared for and/or submitted to the City relating to the update of the General Plan; (2) the evidence, facts, findings and other determinations set forth in this resolution; (3) the environmental analysis prepared for the update to the General Plan; (4) all documentary and oral evidence received at public workshops, meetings, and hearings, or submitted to the City relating to the update of the General Plan and environmental analysis; and, (5) all other matters of common knowledge to the Planning Commission including but not limited to City, State, and Federal laws, policies, rules, regulations, reports, records and projections related to development with the City of Whittier. The record of the proceedings is on file for public examination during normal business hours at the City of Whittier City Hall, Community Development Department, 13230 Penn Street, Whittier, California 90602.

SECTION 3. The Planning Commission hereby recommends that the following findings be made by the City Council with respect to the adoption of the Envision Whittier General Plan:

- (1) The Envision Whittier General Plan includes all mandatory elements specified in Government Code Section 65302, and addresses all required topics within those elements.
- (2) The Envision Whittier General Plan has included goals, policies, and programs relating to social equity, diversity and inclusion throughout the Elements in lieu of a separate Environmental Justice Element as allowed under State law.
- (3) Consistent with California Government Code Section 65303, a general plan may include other elements or subjects beyond the state-mandated elements. Accordingly, the Envision Whittier General Plan contains an optional Historic Resources Element.
- (4) The EIR prepared for the Envision Whittier General Plan includes mitigation measures recommended to avoid or lessen the potential environmental impacts of implementing the goals, policies, and programs.

SECTION 4. The Planning Commission recommends to the City Council that they

repeal the 1993 Whittier General Plan in its entirety, and adopt the Envision Whittier General Plan (GPA21-0001), including its associated land use map.

SECTION 5. The Secretary shall certify to the adoption of this Resolution and shall forward a copy to the City Council and any person requesting the same.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 29th day of September, 2021, by the following vote:

AYES: Commissioners:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Jeffery S. Adams, Secretary
WHITTIER CITY PLANNING COMMISSION