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CITIZEN PARTICIPATION [New Element]

Goal 1 To improve citizen and community participation in all of the City's land use planning and decision-making tasks, including the General Plan update and decisions on individual development projects.

Policy CP-1 Improve Notification and Process [New Policy]

The City shall enhance notification, information, and process for citizen input in land use matters, by increasing the use of new technology for citizen participation, and improving the role of City administrative structure and staff in relationship to meaningful citizen participation.

Policy CP-2 Update and Amendment to the General Plan [New Policy]

The Planning Commission should establish clear procedures for maximum citizen participation in the General Plan update and amendment process, including providing procedures by which applicants (developers and landowners), the City staff, and members of the public may recommend amendments to the General Plan.

Policy CP-3 Community Involvement in Planning [New Policy]

Whenever a specific plan, an area plan, a strategic plan, a redevelopment plan, or any other land use planning is undertaken, there must be continuous and maximum participation by those who will be affected by the plan including committees of residents who live in or near the plan area, merchants, and others who do business in the plan area, as well as members of interested groups and the general public.

Policy CP-4 Planning Commission Advisory Committees [New Policy]

The Planning Commission should use advisory committees made up of stakeholders and interested parties, review the progress of such groups at Planning Commission meetings, and consider the possible chairing of such groups by Commission members to effectively inform the Commission of citizen and neighborhood concerns and priorities.

Policy CP-5 Representation on Advisory Committees [New Policy]

The City shall establish procedures to ensure that advisory planning committees include a wide range of individuals and special interests, with representation from every district or area of the City. Planning advisory committees shall not be dominated or weighted heavily toward developers, landowners, and business interests. The City Manager shall not establish or choose representatives of planning advisory committees; rather, committees and representatives shall be chosen by the Planning Commission based on nominations from existing community groups and organizations, with ratification by a majority vote of the Planning Commission.

Policy CP-6 Role of the Planning Commission [New Policy]

The City, including the City Council and the City Manager, shall support and improve the effectiveness of the Planning Commission as the most important avenue for citizen participation in the planning process.

Policy CP-7 Public Input at the Planning Commission [New Policy]

The Planning Commission should consider modifying its traditional three- or five-minutes-per-person public comment and public hearing format to facilitate more effective citizen input. The Planning Commission should utilize, when appropriate, a more informal, less structured workshop format with citizens able to speak more than once and with an emphasis on give-and-take among speakers and Commissioners. The Planning Commission should modify its public hearing notification policy to provide time for citizens to submit material in writing that reaches Commissioners in their packets prior to the meeting.