



CITY OF

NEWPORT BEACH

City Council Staff Report

July 8, 2025
Agenda Item No. 14

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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TITLE: General Plan Update Steering Committee Bi-Monthly Update to the City Council

ABSTRACT:

Since the previous update to the City Council in January 2025, the General Plan Update Steering Committee held one public meeting, the General Plan Advisory Committee held two public meetings, and various subcommittees held three public meetings. This report provides an update to the City Council on the discussions and actions taken.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a) Determine this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because this action will not result in a physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly; and
- b) Receive and file the report.

DISCUSSION:

The General Plan Update Steering Committee (GPUSC) is chaired by Nancy Gardner with Phillip Brown and Kimberly Carter as members. The primary purpose of the GPUSC is to guide the 24-member General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) and to report to the City Council. The City's dedicated website for the General Plan Update is <https://www.newportbeachca.gov/gpupdate>. It provides information on the progress made and upcoming events, as well as opportunities for community input and engagement.

Attachment A to this report was prepared by GPUSC Chair Gardner and summarizes some of the notable recent progress made by both committees. Below is a list and recap of each meeting held since the January 2025 update to the City Council.

Recap of the April 2, 2025, GPAC Meeting

- Given this was the first meeting since the terms for all GPAC members expired in February 2025, the first order of business was to identify the chairperson(s). By

unanimous vote, GPAC Members Jeremy Evans and Arlene Greer were both confirmed as co-chairpersons.

- Between this meeting and the prior meeting in November 2024, the Noise Subcommittee met three times. A summary of those meetings and the GPAC's related actions follows.
 - The Noise Subcommittee, led by GPAC Member and Subcommittee Chair Jim Mosher, met on November 13, 2024, to discuss identifying new major noise sources, determine possible guiding principles, and to review the current Noise Element. The Subcommittee met again on December 6, 2024, to continue reviewing the current Noise Element with emphasis on its goals and organization, as well as its policies. The Subcommittee met again on December 13, 2024, to continue reviewing the current Noise Element and to discuss potential updates that may be needed. The meeting also included a discussion of emerging technology, such as advanced air mobility (e.g., drones), Dudek's forthcoming work on the Noise Element, and the importance of setting clear standards to help Code Enforcement with its efforts to enforce noise standards. At the April 2025 meeting, the GPAC expressed support for the Subcommittee's efforts.
- City staff shared updates on drafting the General Plan since the GPAC last met, and presented the *Phase 2 Outreach and Engagement Summary*, which is attached to this report as Attachment B for reference. The GPAC received and filed the Summary. City staff also discussed next steps and what to expect in terms of deliverables and timing.

Recap of the June 4, 2025, GPAC Meeting

- Between this meeting and the prior meeting in April, the Arts and Culture and Historical Resources Subcommittee, the Harbor, Bay, and Beaches Subcommittee, and the Recreation and Natural Resources Subcommittee all convened; however, only the Arts and Culture and Historical Resources Subcommittee and the Harbor, Bay, and Beaches Subcommittee had business on the June 4, 2025, GPAC meeting agenda. A summary of the Subcommittees' meetings and the GPAC's related actions follows.
 - The Arts and Culture and Historical Resources Subcommittee met on April 24, 2025, and confirmed GPAC Co-Chair Arlene Greer would continue as the Subcommittee chair. At the meeting, the Subcommittee reviewed the initial drafts of the Arts and Culture Element and the Historical Resources Element. The Subcommittee provided feedback and agreed to allow City staff to make some small revisions and to share the Elements with the full GPAC for consideration. After some discussion at the GPAC meeting, the GPAC unanimously supported moving the initial draft Elements forward for review and concurrence by the GPUSC. As noted in Attachment A, the Subcommittee placed emphasis on pursuing adoption of the 2014 Arts and Culture Master Plan, as well as the creation of a legacy business program to bolster and keep better record of the City's historic resources.

- The Harbor, Bay, and Beaches Subcommittee met on April 30, 2025, and confirmed GPAC Member Curtis Black as the Subcommittee chair. At the meeting, the Subcommittee reviewed the initial draft of the newly renamed Harbor, Bay, and Beaches Element (see Attachment A for GPUSC Chair Gardner's note on this). The Subcommittee provided feedback and agreed to allow City staff to make some small revisions and to share the Elements with the full GPAC for consideration. After some discussion at the GPAC meeting, the GPAC unanimously supported moving the initial draft Elements forward for review and concurrence by the GPUSC. As highlighted in Attachment A, the Subcommittee is looking to support the preparation of a comprehensive sea-level rise program that aligns with the City's goals and state requirements.
- Although not part of the GPAC's June 4 meeting agenda, it is notable that the Recreation and Natural Resources Subcommittee met on May 15, 2025. GPAC Member Dennis Baker was appointed as Subcommittee chair. At the meeting, the Subcommittee reviewed the initial drafts of the Recreation Element and the Natural Resources Element. The Subcommittee provided feedback and agreed to allow City staff to make some small revisions and to share the Elements with the full GPAC for consideration. These drafts will be shared with the GPAC at its July meeting.
- Lastly, City staff provided an update on upcoming deliverables and the next steps.

Recap of the June 23, 2025, GPUSC Meeting

- Given this was the first meeting since the terms for all GPUSC members expired in February 2025, the first order of business was to identify the chairperson. By unanimous vote, GPUSC Member Nancy Gardner was confirmed as chairperson.
- The GPUSC reviewed the actions of the GPAC at its June 4, 2025, meeting, highlighting the initial drafts of the Arts and Culture Element, Historical Resources Element, and the Harbor, Bay, and Beaches Element. After brief comments, the GPUSC unanimously voted to concur with the GPAC's work efforts and to move the drafts along to the responsible City boards, commissions and committees for additional review and input.
- Lastly, City staff provided an update on upcoming deliverables and the next steps.

Outreach Updates, and Upcoming Meetings

- Since last reported in January 2025, the project website has seen an increase in 1,243 unique visitors for a total of 11,083 unique visitors since efforts began in March 2024. As the next phase of the process begins, the General Plan Update will continue to be advertised on the City's website and social media, as well as in Stu News, the Daily Pilot, and the City Manager's newsletter, The Week In Review.

- By the time of the July 8 City Council meeting, the GPAC will have met on July 2, 2025, to review the initial draft Recreation Element and Natural Resources Element. In addition, the Noise Subcommittee and Land Use Subcommittee are anticipated to convene in mid-July, with the full GPAC and GPUSC meeting again in late July or August 2025. With the Noise Element added to the scope for the General Plan Update, the project is anticipated to conclude with adoption in the first quarter of 2026.
- Beginning in late July or early August, the draft General Plan Elements that have been reviewed by the Subcommittees, GPAC and GPUSC, will be shared with the related and responsible City boards, commissions and committees at study sessions for additional input and feedback prior to advertising the draft Elements for review by the broader community.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact related to this item.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

Staff recommends the City Council find this action is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) (the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment) and 15060(c)(3) (the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378) of the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, because it has no potential for resulting in physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly.

NOTICING:

The agenda item has been noticed according to the Brown Act (72 hours in advance of the meeting at which the City Council considers the item).

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – GPUSC Chair Gardner’s Memo to the City Council
Attachment B – Phase 2 Outreach and Engagement Summary