

**NEWPORT BEACH PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS – 100 CIVIC CENTER DRIVE  
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2025  
REGULAR MEETING – 6:00 P.M.**

**I. CALL TO ORDER** - 6:00 p.m.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Commissioner Gazzano

**III. ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Chair Tristan Harris, Vice Chair David Salene, Secretary Jonathan Langford,  
Commissioner Curtis Ellmore, Commissioner Michael Gazzano, Commissioner  
Greg Reed, Commissioner Mark Rosene

ABSENT: None

Staff Present: Acting Community Development Director Jaime Murillo, Assistant City Attorney  
Yolanda Summerhill, and Administrative Assistant Clarivel Rodriguez

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS** – None

**V. REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCES** – None

**VI. CONSENT ITEMS**

**ITEM NO. 1 MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 18, 2025**

**Recommended Action:** Approve and file.

Chair Harris opened public comment. There were none.

**Motion** made by Commissioner Ellmore and seconded by Vice Chair Salene to approve the meeting minutes of September 18, 2025, including revisions recommended by Jim Mosher.

AYES: Ellmore, Gazzano, Harris, Langford, Rosene, and Salene

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: Reed

ABSENT: None

**VII. STUDY SESSION ITEMS**

**ITEM NO. 2 GENERAL PLAN UPDATE – INTRODUCTION OF LAND USE ELEMENT AND  
SAFETY ELEMENT (PA2022-080)**

**Site Location: Citywide**

**Summary:**

A report to the Planning Commission outlining the progress made on the City of Newport Beach's ongoing comprehensive update to its General Plan, last revised in 2006. Following delays due to the State-mandated 6th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA), the City resumed its broader update process in 2022 with the formation of the General Plan Update Steering Committee (GPUSC) and the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC), including various subcommittees to review each Element. The update process consists of four phases; Phase 1 (Background Analysis + Visioning) is complete, and Phase 2 (Policy Development + General Plan Amendment)

is nearly finalized. City staff, working closely with the GPAC, GPUSC, and consultant Dudek, developed draft goals and policies based on existing conditions reports and community input gathered through digital platforms and workshops. The Land Use Element and Safety Element are both required elements pursuant to State General Plan Law. Initial drafts have been prepared and are ready for broader community review.

City staff seeks preliminary feedback from the Commission before the draft is released for wider public review. Final drafts will return for formal endorsement by the Planning Commission in late 2025 or early 2026.

**Recommended Actions:**

1. Receive a brief presentation from City staff, receive and file the draft Land Use Element and Safety Element; and either:
  - a) Form an ad hoc committee to review the draft Elements and provide comments for the Planning Commission's consideration at a meeting in November 2025; or
  - b) Have Planning Commissioners review individually and be prepared to discuss and provide feedback to City staff at a meeting in November 2025.

Chair Harris clarified that this is a discussion item, and the Commission will not be making any decisions tonight but rather providing direction to staff.

Assistant City Attorney Yolanda Summerhill requested that the conversation about the General Plan update be conducted at a higher level so the City Attorney's office can evaluate any potential conflicts of interest before when the updated General Plan elements return for formal approval.

Acting Community Development Director Jaime Murillo stated that the City's General Plan was last comprehensively updated in 2006 and reported on the City's ongoing community-driven updating process. He reported that staff is looking for the Commission's feedback on the Draft Land Use Element and the Draft Safety Element, adding that the City's other boards, commissions, and committees have similarly been presented recently with the draft elements related to their areas of work.

Acting Community Development Director Murillo reported that the Safety Element is one of the State-mandated components of the General Plan and includes many components mandated by State law, including evacuation preparedness, resilience to extreme weather events, and adaptations for climate change. He added that the California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) has accepted the draft. He stated that new components included in the Draft Safety Element from the current General Plan include preparedness for warmer days through shade trees and cooler pavement, planning for sea level rise, consideration for non-automobile evacuation options, updated fire hazard maps, and addressing aviation hazards, including emerging technologies.

Acting Community Development Director Murillo reported that the Land Use Element is also State-mandated. He clarified that the City cannot allow for a reduction in residential density for identified Housing Element sites and added that the Land Use Element must be consistent with other regulatory documents, such as the Local Coastal Program (LCP). He reported that the Draft Land Use Element has been condensed and consolidated from the current General Plan to make it more user-friendly. He added that additions from the current General Plan include new policies to help balance planning for Housing Element focus areas, a refreshed list of opportunities for change, including Balboa Island, increased opportunities for open space amenities, including

Public Access Open Space (PAOS), and allowing for staff-administered updates to tables for transparency.

Acting Community Development Director Murillo reported on a few of the new policies included in the draft elements, including Policy No. LU-1.4 allowing for administrative updates to tables in the Land Use Element to help facilitate modifications in accordance with City Charter Section 423. He noted a series of policies under Draft Land Use Element, which will help reenergize sections of the city, such as industrial areas, with new uses like the Monrovia Townhomes approved at the last meeting. He added that there are a variety of new policies focused on opportunities for change on Mariners' Mile, Coyote Canyon, and the airport area. He highlighted new policies related to encouraging interdepartmental coordination within the City and interagency coordination on matters such as working with Orange County to bring the Newport Coast area under the City's LCP.

Acting Community Development Director Murillo encouraged public participation and provided information about General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) meetings, along with the two open houses to be hosted by the City on October 21<sup>st</sup> and October 22<sup>nd</sup>. He stated that staff would like to receive the Commission's initial thoughts on the drafts by November 17<sup>th</sup>, with a more advanced draft to return to the Commission in early 2026 for formal approval. He noted that creating an Ad Hoc Subcommittee is an option for the Commission if it chooses, adding that the General Plan updates will be on the Commission's November 6<sup>th</sup> agenda as an opportunity to provide feedback to staff.

Chair Harris opened public comments.

Jim Mosher clarified that he is speaking as an individual, although he is a GPAC Member. He stated that the draft elements are a work in progress and requested the Commission's valuable input. He noted for the benefit of the Commissioners that the policies in parentheses cited after many Draft Land Use Element policies are referencing the current General Plan policies from which the draft policy is derived. He stated that some policies in the current General Plan have not been carried over to these drafts. He reported that neither the GPAC nor the City's consultants from Dudek have reviewed the current General Plan's Implementation Plan. He added that the Draft Safety Element does not yet have the notations connecting draft policies to current ones.

Chair Harris closed public comments.

Assistant City Attorney Summerhill clarified that if all Commissioners want to weigh in on the draft in an open forum, as suggested by Commissioner Rosene, then staff can always pause the discussion for a recusal if a specific topic pertains to an area where any given Commissioner has a business interest or if it is close to their homes.

Commissioner Rosene expressed appreciation for the notations connecting draft policies to the current ones where applicable. He stated that the drafts should progress further before the Commission weighs in on any specific item.

Secretary Langford stated that the inclusion of the phrase "environmental justice" is an unnecessary political buzzword of today and called for more timeless terminology that will still be applicable in the future.

Vice Chair Salene requested a list of things that were removed from the current General Plan.

Commissioner Rosene agreed with Secretary Langford's assessment that the phrase "environmental justice" is polarizing. He recommended using the phrase "community-based

environmental concerns” as a replacement.

Chair Harris questioned how some of the things in the Draft Safety Element would be funded and recommended inclusion of potential funding sources. He lauded the call for underground electrical lines but expressed concerns about density and conflicting fire areas. He suggested a potential policy about drone use as a means of fire detection. He noted that clarity has been added to the Draft Land Use Element and commended how the policies could reinvigorate some areas of Newport Beach, adding new residents to help the City meet its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) figures.

Chair Harris received and filed the report.

## **VIII. STAFF AND COMMISSIONER ITEMS**

**ITEM NO. 3 MOTION FOR RECONSIDERATION** - None

**ITEM NO. 4 REPORT BY THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR OR REQUEST FOR MATTERS WHICH A PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBER WOULD LIKE PLACED ON A FUTURE AGENDA**

Acting Community Development Director Murillo reported that the next meeting on October 23<sup>rd</sup> will feature public hearings about a Development Agreement between the City and the Irvine Company for a 700-unit rental housing development at the intersection of MacArthur Boulevard and Campus Drive, and for a restaurant expansion in Corona del Mar. He reported, as a follow up to the SOL Mexican Cocina public hearing at the September 18<sup>th</sup> meeting, that the applicant surrendered its approval over a misunderstanding about live entertainment restrictions, so its existing Conditional Use Permits and Outdoor Dining Permits will remain in effect. He added that a new application from the restaurant will come to the Commission at a future date.

**ITEM NO. 5 REQUESTS FOR EXCUSED ABSENCES** – Commissioner Reed and Vice Chair Salene reported that they will be unable to attend the October 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT** – With no further business, Chair Harris adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

**The agenda for October 9, 2025, Planning Commission meeting was posted on Thursday, October 2, 2025, at 3:45 p.m. in the Chambers binder, on the digital display board located inside the vestibule of the Council Chambers at 100 Civic Center Drive, and on the City’s website on Thursday, October 2, 2025, at 5:27 p.m.**

---

Tristan Harris, Chair

---

Jonathan Langford, Secretary