



Community Stakeholder Group

Planning Terms and Resources

PLANS AND ORDINANCES

General Plan

A statement of policies, including text and diagrams setting forth objectives, principles, standards, and plan proposals, for the future physical development of the city or county.

Specific Plan

A plan addressing land use distribution, open space availability, infrastructure, and infrastructure financing for a portion of the community. Specific plans put the provisions of the local general plan into action.

Zoning

Local codes that regulate the use and development of property. A zoning ordinance divides a city or county into land use districts or “zones”, represented on zoning maps, and specifies the allowable uses within each of those zones. It also establishes development standards for each zone, such as minimum lot size, maximum height of structures, building setbacks, and yard size.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

California Environmental Quality Act

In general, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that all public and private projects be reviewed prior to approval for their potential adverse effects upon the environment.

Environmental Impact Report

An environmental impact report (EIR) is a detailed review of a proposed project, its potential adverse impacts upon the environment, measures that may avoid or reduce those impacts, and alternatives to the project.

HEARING BODIES

Planning Commission

A group of residents appointed by a city council or board of supervisors to consider land use planning matters. The commission’s duties and powers are established by the local legislative body and may include hearing proposals to amend the general plan or rezone land, initiating planning studies, and taking action on proposed subdivisions.

City Council

A city’s primary legislative body. The popularly elected city council is responsible for enacting ordinances, imposing taxes, making appropriations, establishing policy, and hiring some city officials. The council also adopts the local general plan, zoning, and subdivision ordinance.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Understanding the Basics of Land Use and Planning: Guide to Local Planning
https://www.ca-ilg.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/2010_-_landuseplanning.pdf