



**STAFF REPORT
HOLLISTER PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING DATE: October 24, 2024
REPORT # Community Development-2024-16**

AGENDA ITEM: RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE 2040 GENERAL PLAN, CLIMATE ACTION PLAN, AGRICULTURAL LANDS PRESERVATION PROGRAM, AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Rod Powell, Assistant City Manager

STAFF CONTACT: Eva Kelly, Planning Manager

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Adopt a Resolution recommending the City Council take the following actions: Certify the Final Environmental Impact Report; Make Findings of Overriding Considerations relating to the Mitigation Measures and Project Alternatives; Adopt a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; Adopt the 2040 General Plan; Adopt a Climate Action Plan; and Adopt an ordinance adding Chapter 17.28 Agricultural Lands Preservation Program to the Zoning Ordinance.

CEQA: An Environmental Impact Report has been prepared for this project.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: In 2020, the City of Hollister initiated the preparation of a comprehensive update to the City's current 2005-2023 General Plan, a Climate Action Plan, and an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The City has contracted with Placeworks, Inc. ("Placeworks") under the guidance of David Early, FAICP, Principal, and Carey Stone, Project Manager, to prepare these policy documents. During the course of discussions on the project related to policy options, the City Council directed staff and Placeworks to draft an Agricultural Lands Preservation Program (ALPP) alongside the General Plan (GP) and Climate Action Plan (CAP), which is an ordinance to require the dedication of agricultural conservation easements in a ratio of 1:1 acres of developed agricultural lands of importance. Together the GP, CAP, ALPP, and EIR constitute the "General Plan Update Project".

The City published the Draft General Plan, Draft CAP, and Draft ALPP on April 4, 2023. Following the publication of the draft plans, the City Council held a study session on September 11, 2023, where direction was given to staff and Placeworks to amend the Draft General Plan to include, among other things, an expansion of the Sphere of Influence, creation of five Specific Plan areas, an update to the North Gateway to allow for mixed-use, and an update the ALPP to preserve agricultural land at a ratio of 1:1 acres, rather than the previously drafted ratio of 2:1 acres.

Staff and Placeworks have revised the draft documents to reflect the September 11, 2023 direction the revised General Plan was published on July 3, 2024.

A detailed summary of the General Plan Update project process, summary of all documents, community engagement efforts on the General Plan Update, and community input received to date on the revised draft plans is attached herein as **Attachment 11**.

The final Hollister 2040 General Plan (**Attachment 6**), Climate Action Plan (**Attachment 7**), Chapter 17.28 Agricultural Lands Preservation Program (**Attachment 8**), and Final EIR (includes and incorporates the Draft EIR and all attachments, together the “Final EIR”; **Attachments 9 & 10**) are incorporated into this Staff Report.

CEQA: The City has prepared a Final Environmental Impact Report for the 2040 General Plan, Climate Action Plan, and Agricultural Lands Preservation Program. Prior to approval of the 2040 General Plan, Climate Action Plan, or Chapter 17.28 Agricultural Lands Preservation Program, the City Council must certify the EIR, adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations, and adopt a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

CONCLUSION: The Planning Commission, in accordance with Section 17.24.290 of the Hollister Municipal Code, must make a recommendation to the City Council prior to the Council’s approval of a General Plan amendment. The Planning Commission may make a recommendation to approve, approve in modified form, or disapprove of the proposed amendment.

The Planning Commission is asked to make a recommendation to the City Council on the approval of the adoption of the 2040 General Plan, Climate Action Plan, Chapter 17.28 Agricultural Lands Preservation Program, and the certification of the Environmental Impact Report prepared for the same.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL OR COMMISSION ACTION: Throughout the General Plan Update process, the City Council and Planning Commission have held various study sessions and other community workshops to discuss and provide feedback upon the Draft 2040 General Plan, Draft Climate Action Plan, Draft Agricultural Lands Preservation Program, and Draft Environmental Impact Report; however this meeting constitutes the first adoption hearing held by either the Planning Commission or City Council, where any action on the documents will be taken.

PLANNING COMMISSION OPTIONS:

1. Adopt a resolution recommending to the City Council the certification of the Final EIR, adoption of the 2040 General Plan, adoption of a Climate Action Plan, and adoption of a zoning amendment to incorporate Chapter 17.28 Agricultural Lands Preservation Program into the Zoning Ordinance, with the findings contained in the draft resolution.
2. Adopt a resolution recommending to the City Council the certification of the Final EIR, adoption of the 2040 General Plan, adoption of a Climate Action Plan, and adoption of a zoning amendment to incorporate Chapter 17.28 Agricultural Lands Preservation Program into the Zoning Ordinance, with amendments as proposed by the Planning Commission.
3. Adopt a resolution recommending to the City Council the denial of the certification of the Final EIR, adoption of the 2040 General Plan, adoption of a Climate Action Plan, and adoption of a zoning amendment to incorporate Chapter 17.28 Agricultural Lands Preservation Program into the Zoning

Ordinance, with findings as proposed by the Planning Commission.

Staff recommends the Planning Commission select option 1.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution of the Planning Commission recommending approval of all actions to the City Council
2. Draft City Council Resolution for Certification of the Final Environmental Impact Report
3. Draft City Council Resolution for Adoption of the 2040 General Plan
4. Draft City Council Resolution for Adoption of a Climate Action Plan
5. Draft City Council Ordinance for the approval of a Zoning Amendment to add Chapter 17.28, Agricultural Lands Preservation Program to the Zoning Ordinance
6. Hollister 2040 General Plan
7. Hollister Climate Action Plan
8. Chapter 17.28, Agricultural Lands Preservation Program
9. Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
10. Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report
 - a. Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Final EIR
 - b. Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report
 - c. Appendix A: Notice of Preparation and Scoping Comments
 - d. Appendix B: Revised Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Data
 - e. Appendix C: Biological Resources Data
 - f. Appendix D: Cultural Resources Data
 - g. Appendix E: Revised Noise Data
 - h. Appendix F: Revised Transportation Data
 - i. Appendix G: Comment Letters
11. Memo from Placeworks – Overview of Project and Summary of Community Input on Revised Draft Plans
12. Attachment 1 to Memot from Placeworks – Public Comments Received
13. Presentation