



Governor's Office of
Planning and Research

CITY OF **BERKELEY**

Prepared, Safe, and Healthy Berkeley for All

City of Berkeley Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element
Update, Environmental Justice Element, and Equitable Climate
Resilience Metrics Project Introduction

Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element Update, Environmental Justice Element, and Equitable Climate Resilience Metrics

Project Summary

In June 2023, the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) awarded a grant to the City of Berkeley (the “City”), in partnership with the Ecology Center and the Berkeley Climate Equity Collaborative, as part of the Adaptation Planning Grant Program (APGP). The grant helps to fund a new, multi-year project to update the City’s General Plan Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element, develop a new General Plan Environmental Justice (EJ) Element, and create metrics to monitor and evaluate the City’s progress towards advancing its climate action and resilience goals.

The Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element and Environmental Justice Plans will focus on ensuring everyone in Berkeley is safe and healthy, with a focus on historically underserved communities. We aim to strengthen our community’s ability to adapt to climate changes by inviting all community members to participate in the early planning stages. With your help, we can create plans that identify how climate change and environmental justice issues affect our city and develop strategies to support a more inclusive community for us all.

How to Participate

Community meetings, informational events, surveys and interactive workshops will be held throughout the planning process. We invite you to join this process to give your input by:



Signing up for email updates



Visiting the website



Contacting the project team



Attending workshops



Commenting at public meetings

General Plan Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element Update

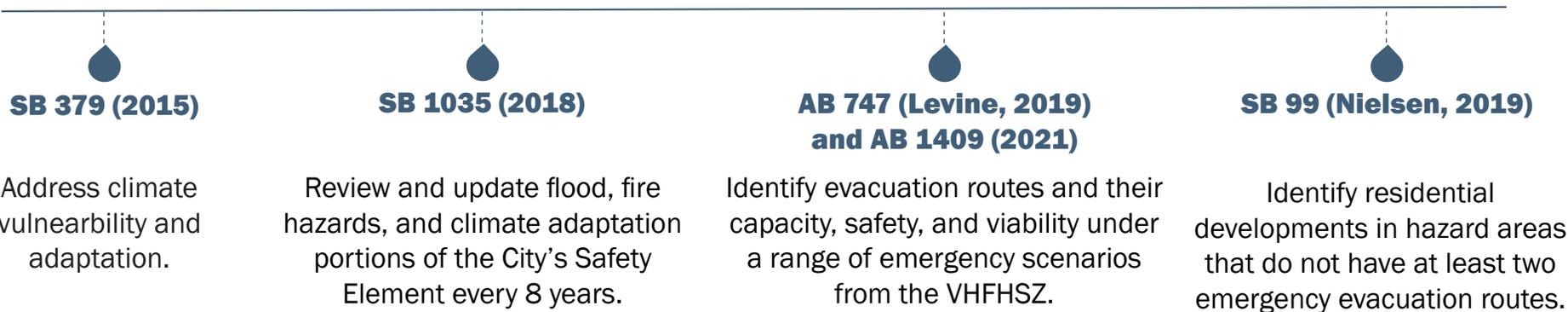
The City's existing General Plan includes a Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element. This plan has rules and actions to help reduce the risk of dangers and disasters, whether they are natural or human-made. It also supports the City's efforts in preventing disasters, responding to emergencies, dealing with disasters, and recovering after any of these events. This Element provides the policy framework to support the City's mitigation, emergency preparedness, disaster response, and future recovery efforts. The Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) is part of the Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element, and will continue to be updated periodically, as required by State and Federal regulations.

This project will update the Element with new information in compliance with recent State laws, and reflect the community's vision of a safe, resilient Berkeley.

Topics to be addressed:

- 1** Identify known hazards and risks, assess vulnerability to them, and discuss ways to reduce those risks.
- 2** Evaluate the capacity, safety, and viability of potential evacuation routes and locations under a range of emergency scenarios. (AB 747).
- 3** Identify residential developments that do not have at least two emergency evacuation routes (SB 99).
- 4** Create policies for community safety.

New State Laws Informing this Update



SB 379 (2015)

Address climate vulnerability and adaptation.

SB 1035 (2018)

Review and update flood, fire hazards, and climate adaptation portions of the City's Safety Element every 8 years.

AB 747 (Levine, 2019) and AB 1409 (2021)

Identify evacuation routes and their capacity, safety, and viability under a range of emergency scenarios from the VHFHSZ.

SB 99 (Nielsen, 2019)

Identify residential developments in hazard areas that do not have at least two emergency evacuation routes.

Hazards and Risks in Berkeley



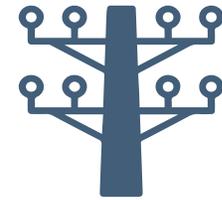
**Seismic and
Geological**



**Hydrology and
Flooding**



Air Quality



**Utility
Interruption**



**Fire,
Wildland and Urban**



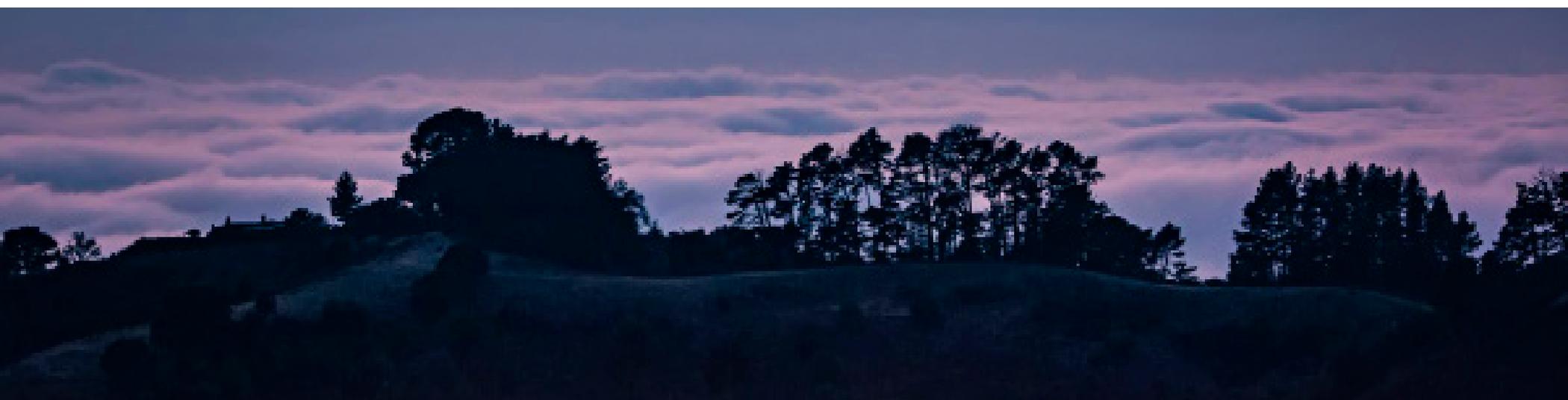
**Climate Change-
related**



**Human-made
Hazards**



**Social
Vulnerability**



New General Plan Environmental Justice (EJ) Element

Senate Bill (SB) 1000, the Planning for Healthy Communities Act, requires the City to adopt an EJ element. The core goals of SB 1000 are to promote social equity, align with public health, and to involve affected communities in the decisions that impact their lives.

What is environmental justice?

The State defines environmental justice as: “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of people of all races, cultures, incomes, and national origins, with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.”

Government Code § 65040.12(e)

Berkeley has a history of segregated neighborhoods due to past redlining policy. As a result, low-income households are more likely to be located towards the west side of Berkeley, while more affluent communities are more likely to be located on the east side. According to CalEnviroScreen, neighborhoods closest to the San Francisco Bay and along Interstate 580 experience the highest environmental burdens, including pollution from diesel particulate matter (PM), increased exposure to lead risk in homes, closer proximity to cleanup sites, groundwater threats, and exposure to hazardous waste. Due to higher exposures of environmental burdens and systemic inequities, these neighborhoods face public health impacts, including asthma and cardiovascular disease.

In addition, immediately south and southeast of the University of California, Berkeley, almost half of all residents located with three census tracts are considered housing-burdened, paying a considerably large percentage of their monthly income on housing. These same census tracts also have considerable rates of poverty, ranking in the top 5 percent of all census tracts across the state.

Topics to be Addressed

The Environmental Justice Element will identify communities that face more pollution and environmental problems within Berkeley, and address these topics, consistent with SB1000:

- 1 Reduction of pollution exposure
- 2 Prioritization of needs of disadvantaged communities
- 3 Access to public facilities, services and community amenities
- 4 Promotion of:
 - Physical activity
 - Safe and sanitary homes
 - Healthy food access
 - Civic engagement

Equitable Climate Resilience Metrics

The City is creating a plan to track Berkeley’s progress in meeting climate goals that is fair for all our community members. A new dashboard will show an easy-to-understand summary of important measurements and indicators.

The City has been tracking climate progress for many years but realize that these measurements might not be representative of the

experiences of all Berkeleyans, particularly those living in Berkeley’s underrepresented and underserved areas.

We want to work with you to find out what measurements would show success in climate change, action, and resilience in addition to being accountable to these measurements developed by community

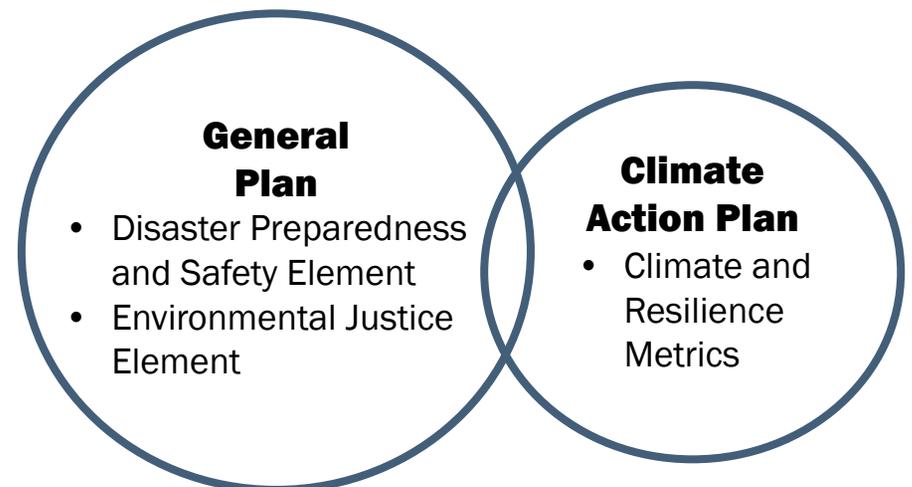
How is this all related?

The Berkeley General Plan is a comprehensive and long range statement of the City’s priorities and values developed to guide public decision making in future years. All land use approvals and decisions must be consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan.

There are currently nine “Elements” contained within the Berkeley General Plan, including: Land Use, Transportation, Housing, Disaster Preparedness and Safety, Open Space and Recreation, Environmental Management, Economic Development and Employment, Urban Design and Preservation, and Citizen Participation. This project includes an update to the existing Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element, as well as the creation of a new element, the Environmental Justice Element.

While not a General Plan Element, the Climate Action Plan (CAP) sets goals aimed at reducing the City’s greenhouse gas emissions, as well as sets forth a vision of a more sustainable, livable, equitable, and economically vibrant community. The CAP overlaps with the

goals and policies put forth in both the Disaster Preparedness and Safety Element, as well as the Environmental Justice Element, which is why this project is also focused on developing Climate and Resilience Metrics with which to measure the progress made towards the City’s climate goals.



Related City Plans

The City of Berkeley is addressing climate and environmental justice-related challenges, as reflected in recently adopted plans and strategies. This project will reference and incorporate these adopted plans and strategies where appropriate.



Project Phasing



Phase 1: Initiation & Data Gathering

- Social Vulnerability Methodology Map
- Climate Adaptation Assessment
- Equity Guardrails
- Groundwater Rise and Toxic Materials Analysis



Phase 2: Existing Conditions

- Environmental Justice Environmental Hazard and Pollution Technical Memorandum
- Safety Element Hazards Technical Memorandum
- Safety Element Hazards Technical Memorandum
- Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy Metrics



Phase 3: Policy Development

- Environmental Justice Policy Topics
- Safety Element Policy Topics
- Equity Guardrails
- Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy Metrics



Phase 4: Element Finalization and Adoption

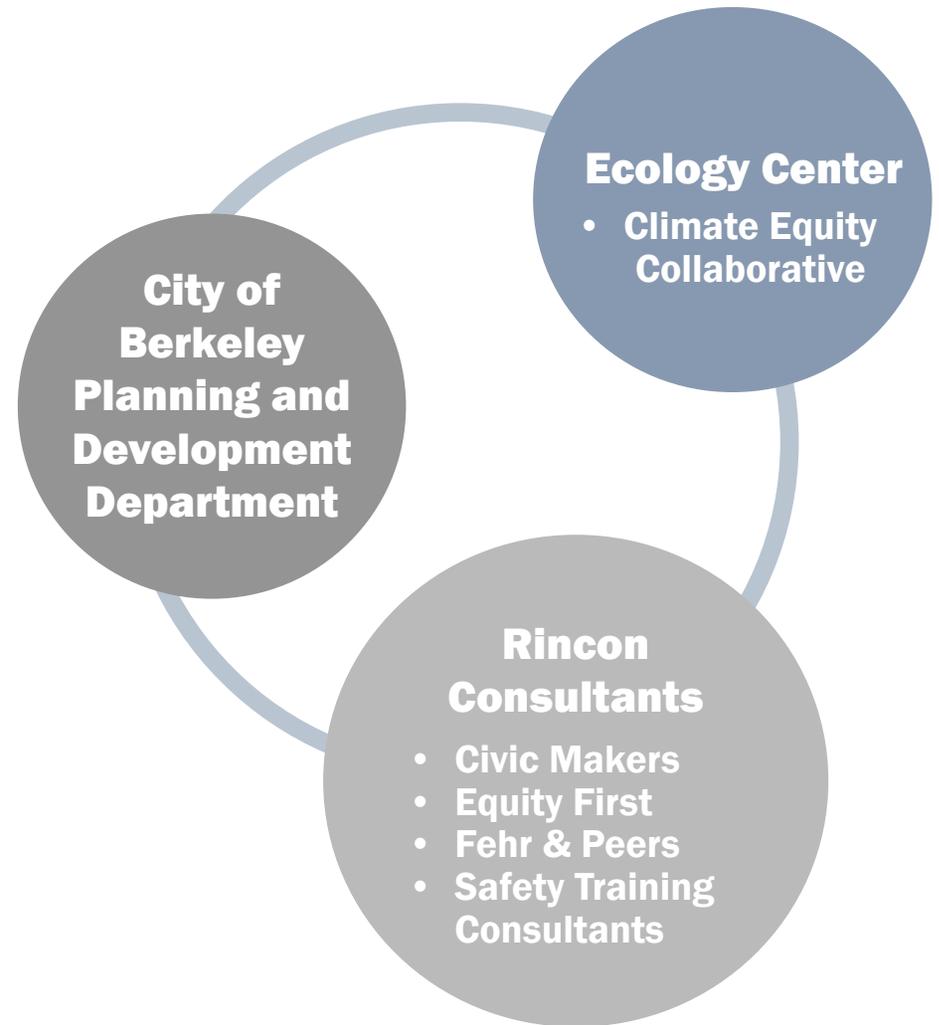
- Environmental Justice Element
- Safety Element
- Dashboard

Project Team

This effort is led by the **Planning and Development Department**, in partnership with the **Ecology Center**.

The Ecology Center, a Berkeley non-profit founded in 1969 that works to improve the health and environmental impacts of urban residents, works with other community-based organizations to convene the Climate Equity Collaborative. The Collaborative works to engage organizations that represent low-income, BIPOC and frontline communities, to amplify their voices, elevate their experiences and build their capacity to collaborate as partners in developing and implementing climate change and resilience solutions. The Ecology Center is leading equitable community engagement efforts for this project, including holding community meetings, doing focus groups, conducting interviews, and taking surveys in our City's most vulnerable locations.

Rincon Consultants, a science and planning firm, is working with City staff and the Ecology Center to support this project. The Rincon team provides expertise in the policy areas this project addresses, and includes **Civic Makers, Equity First Consulting, Fehr & Peers**, and **Safety Training Consultants**. Rincon recently collaborated with the City and Ecology Center to develop the Existing Building Electrification Strategy (2021) – a plan to transition existing buildings in Berkeley to all-electric in a way that benefits all residents, especially members of historically marginalized communities.



“This effort is led by the Planning and Development Department, in partnership with the Ecology Center.”