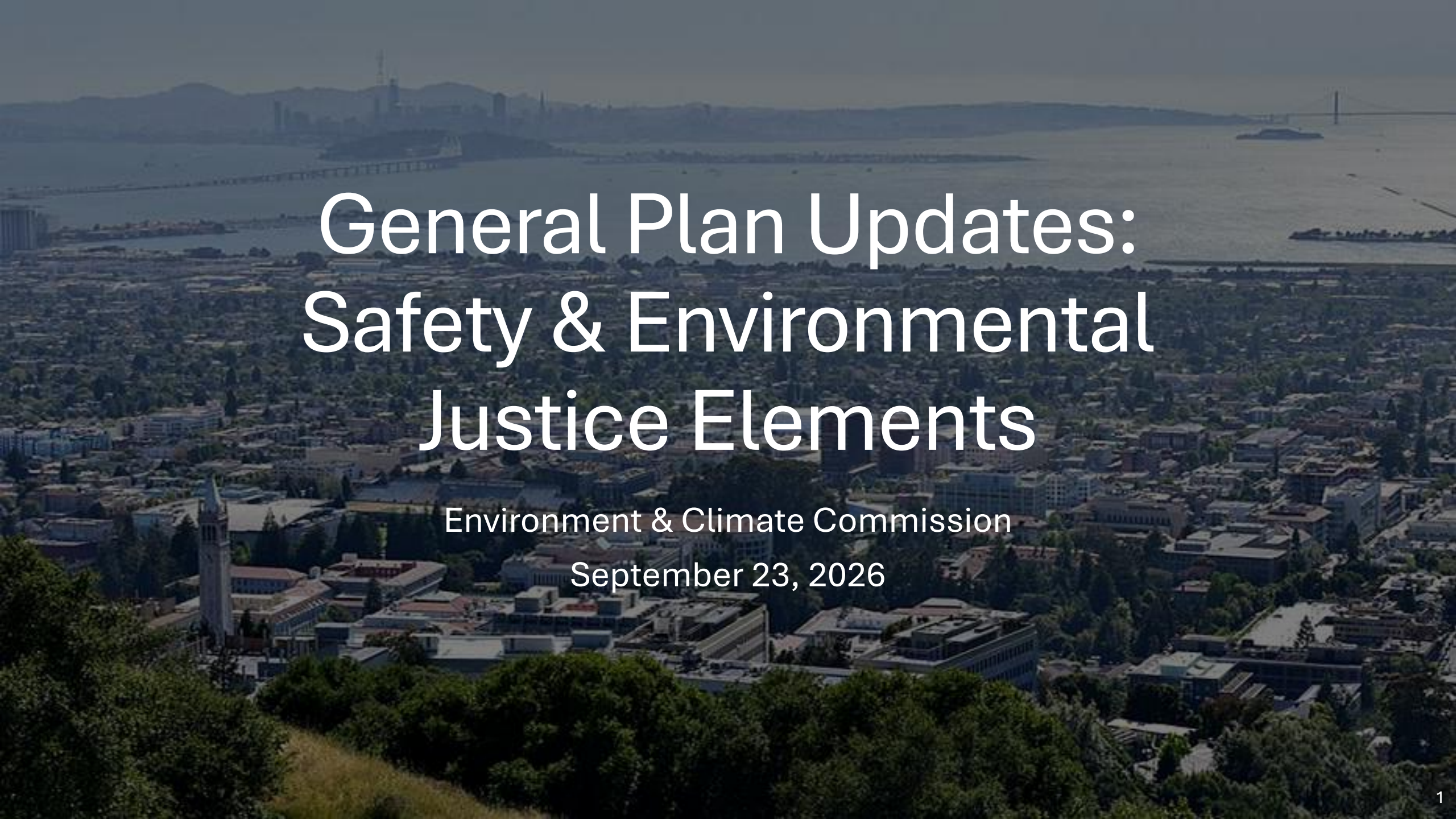


An aerial photograph of San Francisco, California, showing the city's dense urban landscape, the Golden Gate Bridge in the distance, and the surrounding hills. The text is overlaid on the image.

General Plan Updates: Safety & Environmental Justice Elements

Environment & Climate Commission

September 23, 2026

Outline

- General Plan Background
- Berkeley's Safety EJ Project
 - Approach
 - Content
- Next Steps



**Safety
Element**



**Environmental
Justice
Element**

What is a General Plan?

LAND USE



Designates allowable land uses (housing, commercial, industrial)

CIRCULATION



Plans the transportation network (streets, transit, bikes, pedestrians)

HOUSING



Plans for the community's housing needs for all income levels

CONSERVATION



Preserves natural resources (water, soil, habitat, energy)

OPEN SPACE



Conserves land for recreation, scenic beauty, and public health.

NOISE



Manages community noise impacts and sets standards.

SAFETY



Protects the community from risks like fire, flood, and seismic hazards.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

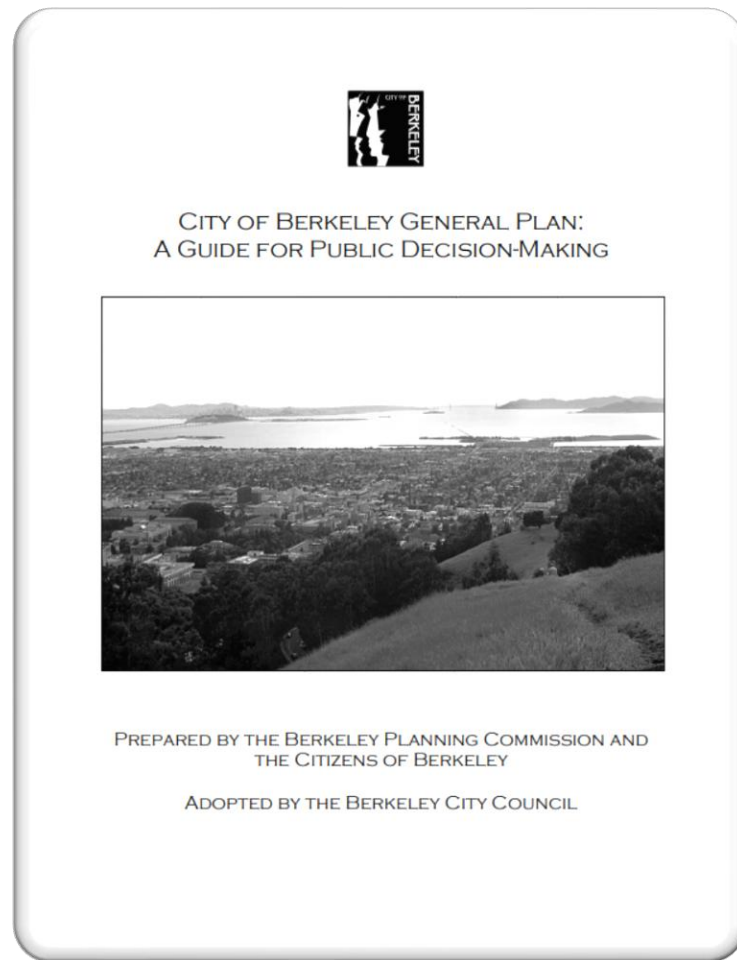


Ensures equitable health, services, and engagement in disadvantaged communities

Required by California Government Code Section 65302

Berkeley's General Plan (GP)

Adopted in 2002

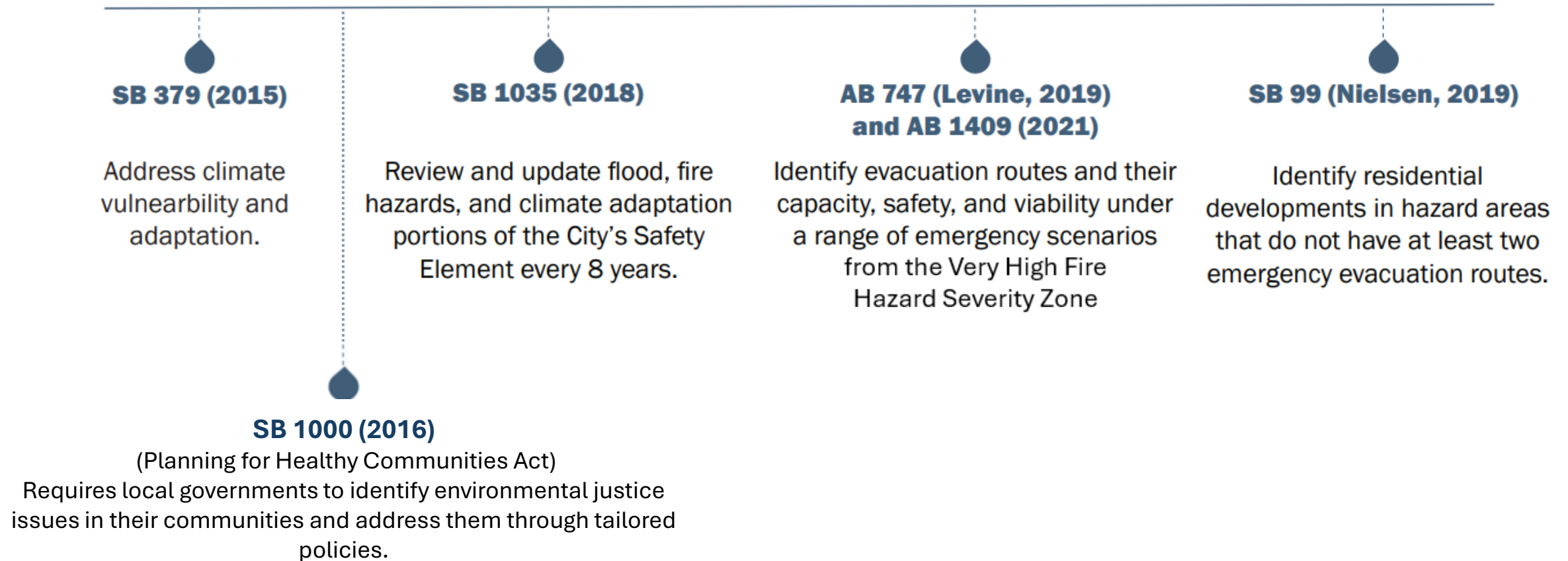


7 Mandatory Elements PLUS:

- Economic Development & Employment Element
- Urban Design & Preservation Element
- Citizen Participation Element



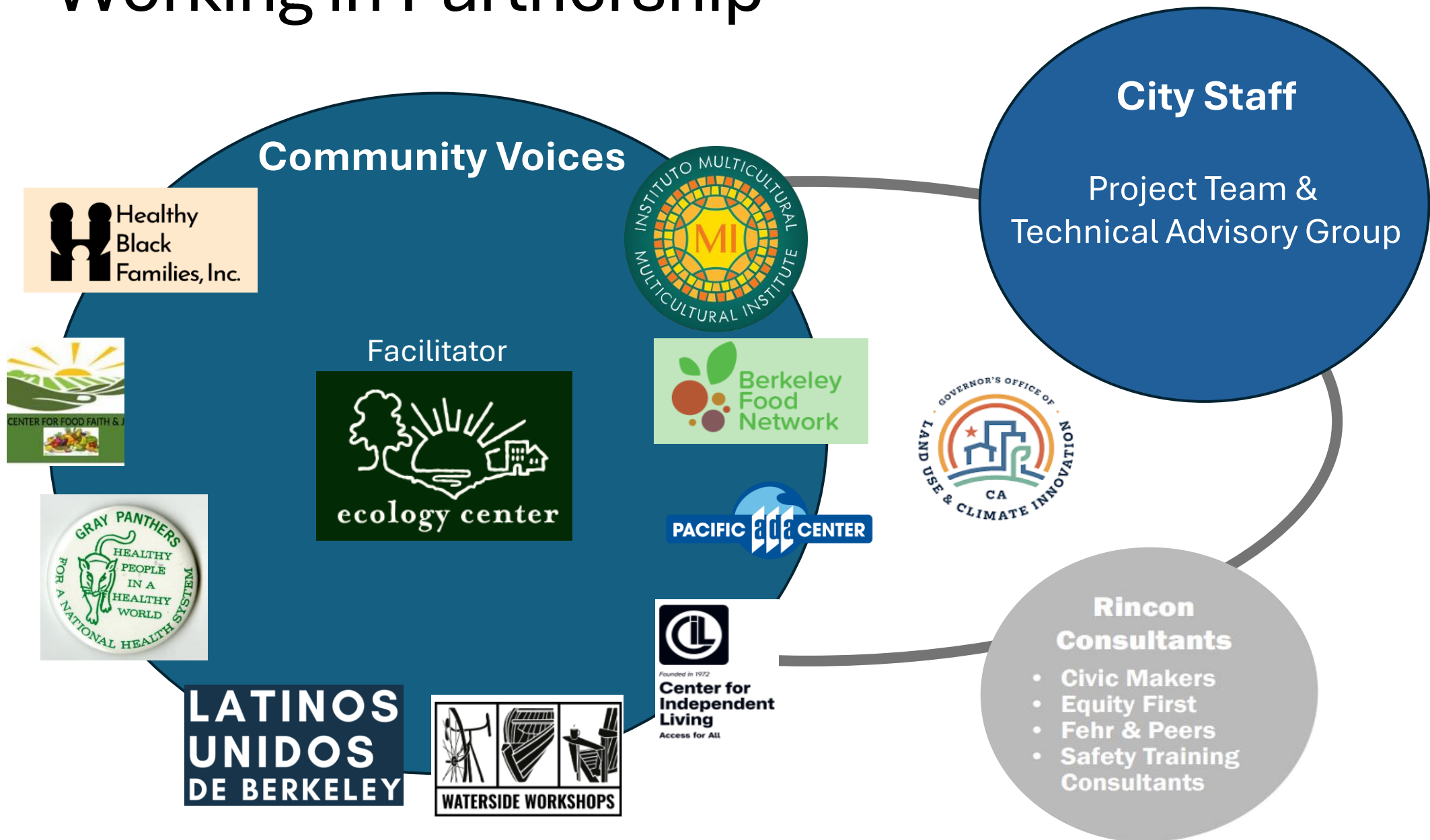
State Laws Require GP Updates



Community-led Approach



Working in Partnership



Giving Community Voice



More About our Process

Trust Building with CAC

- Establish Community Advisory Committee (CAC)
- Conduct CAC Interviews & Surveys
- Develop Community Maps



Co-Creation with CAC

- Draft Equity Principles
- Draft Policies & Programs



Continuous Feedback Loop

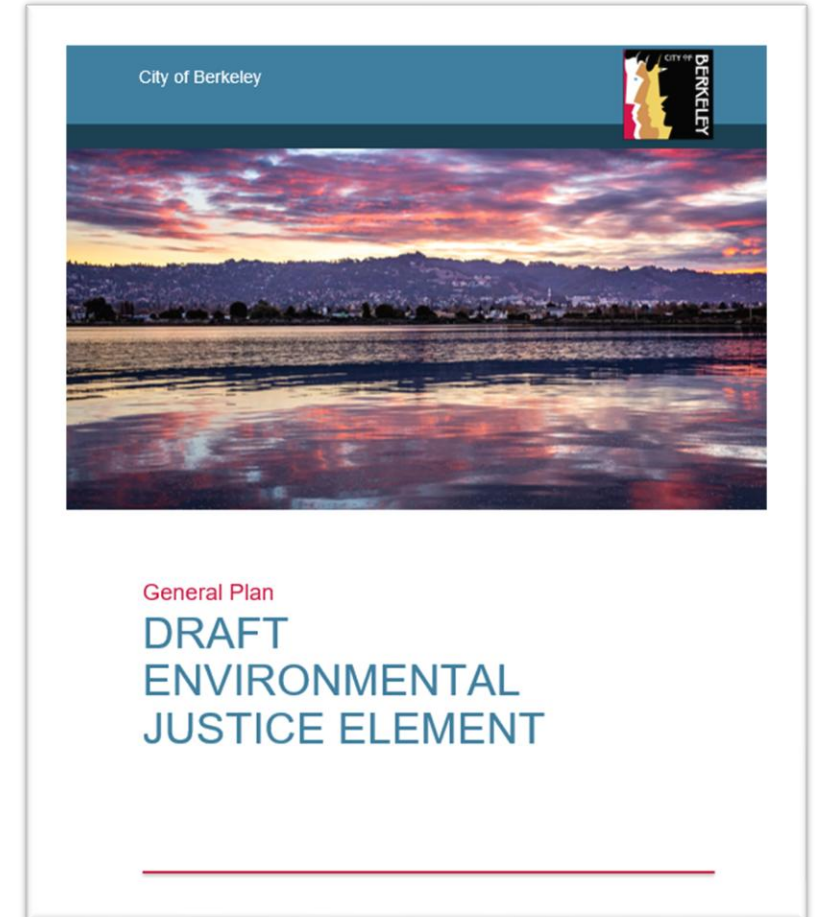
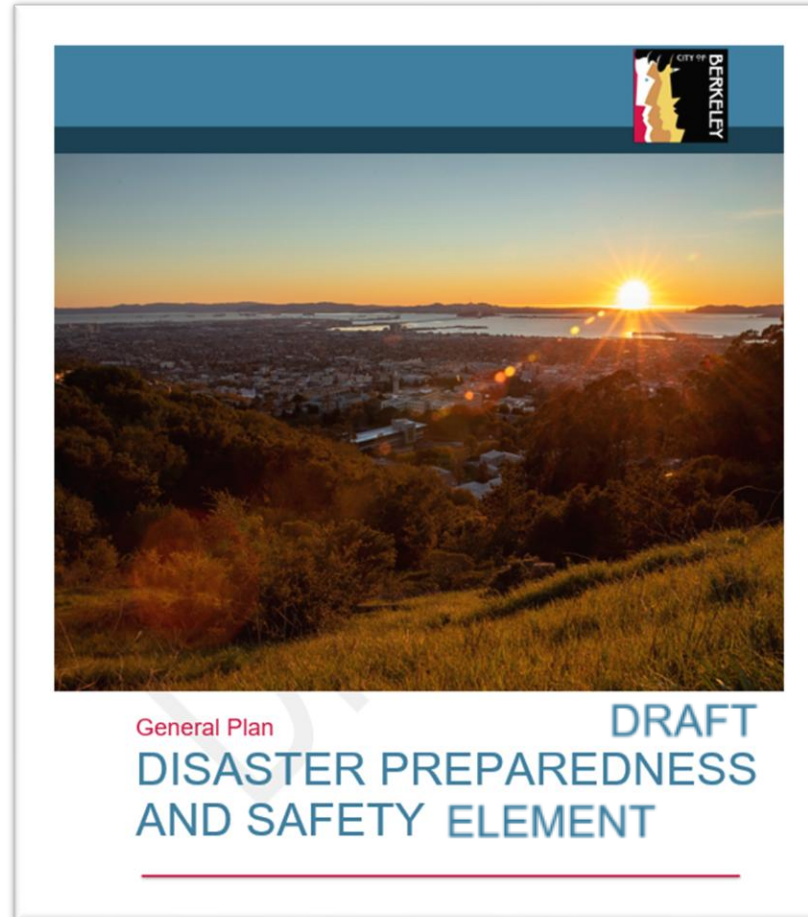
- Hold Exhibits & Workshops
- Draft Elements



- Community Workshop
- Community survey

And Then Came the Draft Elements!

Public Review Drafts and CEQA document will be available on the City's website on Sept 25.



<https://berkeleyca.gov/construction-development/land-use-development/general-plan-and-area-plans/prepared-safe-and-healthy>

What We Heard from Community - Safety

Priorities Include:

- Equitable disaster preparedness and access to resources
- Community education, training, and hazard awareness
- Strong neighborhood and community partnerships
- Reliable emergency community and response
- Effective evacuation
- Resilient infrastructure and equitable recovery



From Community Priorities to Safety Element

Community Said	The Element Responds With
Reduce risks from natural disasters with a focus on vulnerable communities	Goal S-3 Berkeley reduces vulnerability to wildfires by strengthening the built environment, guiding development away from high-risk area, reducing fuel loads, and fostering partnerships that advance community and regional fire resilience. • <i>Ex: Reduce fire fuel loads (Policy S-3.2)</i>
Strengthen emergency services and equitable disaster response and recovery	Goal S-9 Berkeley provides responsive and effective day-to-day police and fire services by maintaining well-trained first responders, modern equipment, and operational practices that reflect best practices and community needs. • <i>Ex: Enhance first responder training. (Policy S-9.5)</i>
Improve evacuation readiness	Goal S-15 The City Organization is equipped, and the Berkeley community is prepared for effective evacuation and leaving early. • <i>Ex: Build evacuation partnerships for planning and capacity building. (Policy S-15.3)</i>

What We Heard from Community – Environmental Justice (EJ)

Priorities Include:

- Healthier neighborhoods
- Affordable and healthy housing
- Preserve and enhance community, culture, and belonging
- Equitable access to food, parks, and public spaces
- Center community voices in City decisions



“Environmental justice is about more than environmental conditions, it is also about affordability, accessibility, belonging, and who gets to shape the future of their community.”

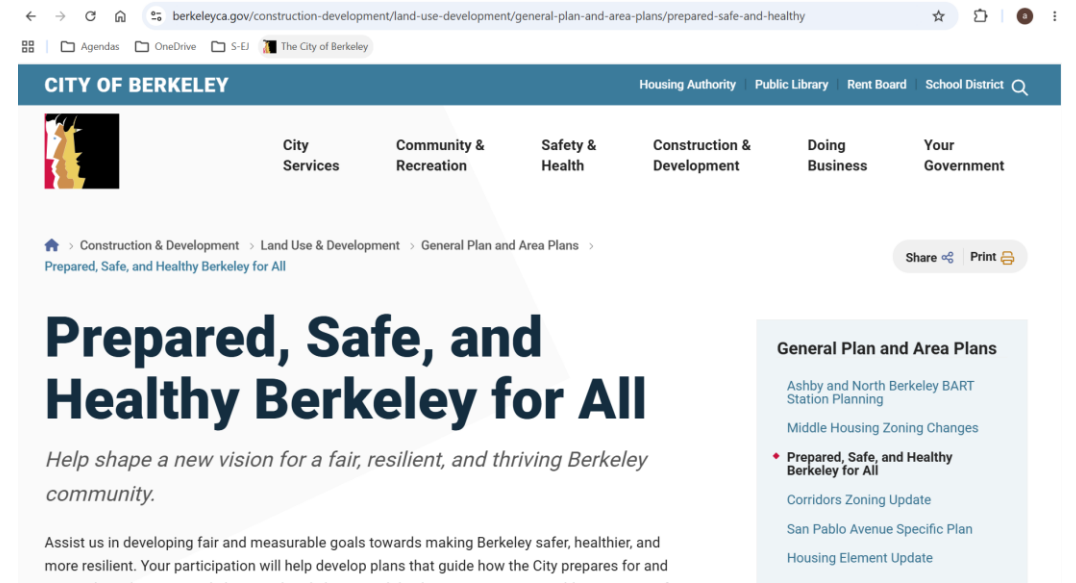
From Community Priorities to EJ Element

Community Said	The Element Responds With
Make engagement more accessible	Goal EJ-2 Belonging, Equity & Civic Empowerment
Address pollution in overburdened neighborhoods	Goal EJ-3 Pollution Exposure & Air Quality
Improve access to healthy food	Goal EJ-6 Healthy and Affordable Food
Make parks, services & facilities accessible	Goal EJ-7 Services & Facilities / EJ-8 Parks & Green Spaces
Protect housing affordability, health & belonging	Goal EJ-9 Housing Equity & Resilience
<i>“Make engagement accessible and meaningful.”</i> Residents called for earlier engagement, language access, ADA accessibility, participant supports, and stronger partnerships with community organizations.	EJ-2: Belonging, Equity & Civic Empowerment • Policy EJ-2.1 Meaningful and Equitable Community Participation • Policy EJ-2.2 Partner with Community • Policy EJ-2.3 Strengthen Community Networks • Policy EJ-2.4 Empower Youth

Where to Find the Drafts

- Draft Safety Element
- Draft Environmental Justice Element
- Draft Initial Study – Negative Declaration (CEQA)

<https://berkeleyca.gov/construction-development/land-use-development/general-plan-and-area-plans/prepared-safe-and-healthy>



Next Steps

CEQA Public Review Period:

September 25 – October 25, 2026

Safety & EJ Element Public Review Period:

September 25 – November 15, 2026

Board of Forestry Hearing (Safety):

December 2, 2026

Planning Commission Public Hearing (Safety, EJ & CEQA):

January 20, 2027

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