



Staff Report

File #: 24-0349

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

DATE: 05/01/2024

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Planning & Development Department

SUBJECT:

RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE 2024 LOCAL GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This staff report asks the City Council to adopt the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines for the Year 2024. The 2024 Local Guidelines for Implementing CEQA for the City of Corona reflect recent changes in the law.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the City Council adopt Resolution No. 2024-023 approving the 2024 Local Guidelines for Implementing the California Environmental Quality Act for the City of Corona.

BACKGROUND & HISTORY:

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is California's comprehensive environmental law codified in Public Resources Code Section 21000, et seq. CEQA is used by public agencies to evaluate the environmental effects of its actions before they are taken. Actions normally involving decisions on new developments, capital improvement projects, public works projects, transportation projects, and certain regulatory agreements require an evaluation according to CEQA.

CEQA aims to prevent significant environmental effects from occurring because of actions from a public agency by requiring the agency to avoid or reduce, when feasible, the significant environmental impacts of its decisions. To this end, CEQA requires public agencies to adopt specific objectives, criteria, and procedures for evaluating public and private projects that are undertaken or approved by the public agency.

ANALYSIS:

The City's Local CEQA Guidelines reflect recent changes in the law and provide instructions and

forms for preparing all environmental documents required by CEQA. The following is a summary of some noteworthy changes to the Guidelines due to the adoption of recently enacted state legislation.

SB 96

Amended Public Resources Code Section 21152, which now requires a local agency to file a Notice of Determination (NOD) and Notice of Exemption (NOE) with both the County Clerk and the State Clearinghouse in the Office of Planning and Research. Previously, a NOD was only required to be filed with the State Clearinghouse when a project's environmental document was circulated by the State Clearinghouse.

AB 1307

A project subject to CEQA that would result in a significant increase in ambient noise levels typically requires environmental review and mitigation of the noise impact. The Legislature, however, has limited what constitutes a significant noise impact for residential projects. AB 1307 adds Section 21085 to the Public Resources Code to facilitate the development of residential projects in California. Public Resources Code section 21085 provides that "for residential projects, the effects of noise generated by project occupants and their guests on human beings is not a significant effect on the environment."

AB 1449

AB 1449 adds Section 21080.40 to the Public Resources Code, which includes a new statutory exemption under CEQA for affordable housing projects that meet the section's specified requirements. The section exempts from CEQA certain actions taken by lead agencies relating to 100 percent affordable housing projects, including 1) the issuance of an entitlement by a public agency for an affordable housing project, 2) an action to lease, convey, or encumber land owned by a public agency for an affordable housing project, 3) an action to facilitate the lease, conveyance, or encumbrance of land owned or to be purchased by a public agency for an affordable housing project; 4) rezoning, specific plan amendments, or general plan amendments required specifically and exclusively to allow the construction of an affordable housing project, or 5) an action to provide financial assistance in furtherance of implementing an affordable housing project.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

No fiscal impact is associated with amending the City's Local CEQA Guidelines.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

The City's adoption of the Resolution approving the Local CEQA Guidelines is not a project under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5) because it involves an administrative activity and would not result in any environmental impacts.

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Attachments:

1. Exhibit 1 - Resolution No. 2024-023