



## City Council Agenda Item

**City Council Meeting Date:** May 18, 2021

**TO:** Jim Throop, City Manager

**FROM:** Brian Halvorson, Planning Manager  
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**SUBJECT:** Consideration of Planning Commission Recommendation for General Plan Text Amendments (GP 21-01) to Delete the Economic Development Committee from the 2030 General Plan; Adoption of Resolution No. 6410(21)

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### **Recommendation:**

Staff recommends the City Council:

- 1) Hold a public hearing;
- 2) Consider the Planning Commission's recommendation to adopt text amendments deleting all references to the Economic Development Committee (EDC) from the 2030 General Plan; and
- 3) Adopt Resolution No. 6410(21) Amending the 2030 General Plan to delete references to the EDC; or
- 4) Provide other direction.

### **Background**

The EDC was formed in 2012 based on recommendations provided to the City from California Association for Local Economic Development (CALED). In 2010, CALED performed professional advisory services for the City and observed that the City could develop a policy to guide its role in economic development. Creating the EDC was one of their recommendations and in 2012 the EDC was formed. The first agenzized meeting was on February 15, 2012.

On August 18, 2015, the City also adopted an Economic Development Element as an optional element to the 2030 General Plan that addresses the economic health of the City and establishes goals/policies that encourage economic growth while also maintaining and improving the quality of life in the community.

Within this element, there is a requirement to appoint an Economic Development Committee whose focus is to improve the Lompoc economy (Economic Development Element Policy 3.6). Although the EDC has not met since January 9, 2020<sup>1</sup>, the City continues to promote and implement the Economic Development Element.

As part of the adopted Biennial Budget Fiscal Years 2019-21<sup>2</sup>, the City Council dissolved the Economic Development Division effective July 1, 2019. Furthermore, on September 15, 2020, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 6361(20) to eliminate the Economic Development Committee with the intent to transition the committee to the Chamber of Commerce. Therefore, in order to make the City's General Plan consistent with those eliminations, text amendments to the General Plan are needed. Due to the elimination of the Economic Development Division there is no longer staff available to prepare an annual report, or other such documents.

### **Discussion**

On March 10, 2021, the Planning Commission adopted Resolution No. 943 (21) recommending the City Council adopt a General Plan Text Amendment to delete references to the EDC.

Currently, Policy 3.6 (within Goal 3) of the Economic Development Element, states:

The City shall appoint an Economic Development Committee whose focus is to improve the Lompoc economy. The Economic Development Committee shall create and update annually a Strategic Plan for economic growth and then coordinate this plan with other City commissions that have a vested interest in the plan.

In addition, Implementation Measure 11 in the Economic Development Element states:

The City should continue to work with the Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Committee and other organizations to develop the economic development strategy that includes incentives to expand existing businesses and attract businesses.

Furthermore, Implementation Measure 14 is shown in the Land Use Element as follows:

The City shall convene a task force of community business leaders that will establish an economic development committee and prepare an economic development plan to further explore opportunities and constraints to economic development. The economic development committee shall provide periodic reports to the City Council.

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<sup>1</sup> Primarily due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

<sup>2</sup> Resolution No. 6265(19)

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The above General Plan Policy and Implementation Measures were presented to the Planning Commission on March 10, 2021, with a recommendation for complete deletions from the General Plan. However, after review and discussion, the Commission expressed concern regarding the deletion of Implementation Measure 11 in its entirety. The Commission recommended the City should maintain a Strategic Plan for the economic development of the City, which would provide information on the progress and planning of economic growth to the City by the Chamber of Commerce and/or other organizations contracted to work on economic development.

Instead of recommending deleting Policy 3.6 and Implementation Measure 11 of the Economic Development Element, the Commission recommended amending Policy 3.6 and Implementation Measure 11 to include language that "*the City shall work with proper and competent organizations*" to create and update annually a Strategic Plan for economic growth and also to develop an economic strategy that includes incentives to expand existing businesses and attract businesses.

At the close of the discussion, the Commission adopted Resolution No. 943 (21) with revisions (as shown in stricken and underlined text) to Policy 3.6 and Implementation Measure 11, as well as deleting Implementation Measure 14, as follows:

#### **Economic Development Element Policy 3.6**

~~The City shall appoint an Economic Development Committee whose focus is to improve the Lompoc economy. The Economic Development Committee shall~~ The City shall work with proper and competent organizations to create and update annually a Strategic Plan for economic growth and then coordinate this plan with other City commissions that have a vested interest in the plan.

#### **Economic Development Element Implementation Measure 11**

The City should continue to work with ~~the Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Committee and other~~ proper and competent organizations to develop the economic development strategy that includes incentives to expand existing businesses and attract businesses.

It should be noted that the City's economic development goals, policies and implementation measures outlined in the Economic Development Element can still be accomplished without the EDC. In addition, the City provides funding to the Chamber of Commerce, which is dedicated to promoting the Lompoc Valley and the prosperity of all businesses in the community through a unified organization. The Chamber of Commerce is an association of over 350 member businesses, non-profit organizations and individuals committed to promoting and maintaining a strong economy and quality of life in the Lompoc Valley and economic development is very important to the Chamber's mission.

### Conformance with General Plan/Zoning

An EDC is not required by law or needed to carry out or implement the long-term goals and policies of the City's 2030 General Plan. Additionally, the City Council previously deleted the EDC from the Commissions, Committees, and Boards Handbook.

Therefore, the elimination of the EDC from the Economic Development Element and any references to the EDC will allow General Plan conformance. There are no references to the EDC in the Zoning Code (Title 17) so the deletion of the EDC from the General Plan would also conform to the City's Zoning Code.

### Environmental Review

This action is exempt from CEQA review pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. Therefore, no further environmental review is required and a Notice of Exemption (NOE) will be filed following action by the City Council on the proposed amendments.

### **Fiscal Impact:**

No funding was allocated in the current budget for the amendments and all work has been completed using existing City staffing. Due to low staffing levels in the Planning Division, the timing of the amendments were affected by existing workloads and the various additional amendments/requests initiated by the Planning Commission and City Council.

### **Conclusion:**

The deletion of the EDC from the City's 2030 General Plan will provide needed consistency with the previous revisions made by the City Council on September 15, 2020, eliminating the EDC from the Commissions, Committees, and Boards Handbook with the intent to transition the committee to the Chamber of Commerce.

Respectfully submitted,

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Brian Halvorson, Planning Manager

**APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL TO THE CITY MANAGER:**

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Christie Alarcon, Community Development Director

**APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL TO THE CITY COUNCIL:**

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Jim Throop, City Manager

Attachments: 1) Resolution No. 6410(21)  
2) Planning Commission Resolution 943 (21)