



**City of Encinitas
Native Plant Ordinance
Public Workshop #2**

June 23, 2025

6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Agenda



Introductions



Background/History



Review changes to the ordinance



Receive feedback on the latest version of the ordinance (Group Exercise)



Discuss incentive programs (Group Exercise)



Next Steps

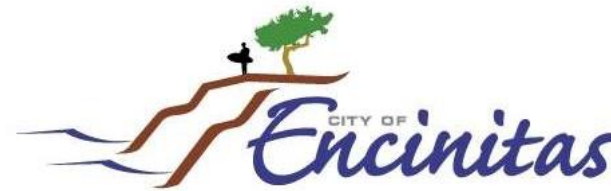
Project Team Introductions

City of Encinitas

- Sara Cadona, Project Manager
- Patty Anders, Planning Manager
- Meagan Openshaw, Assistant Director

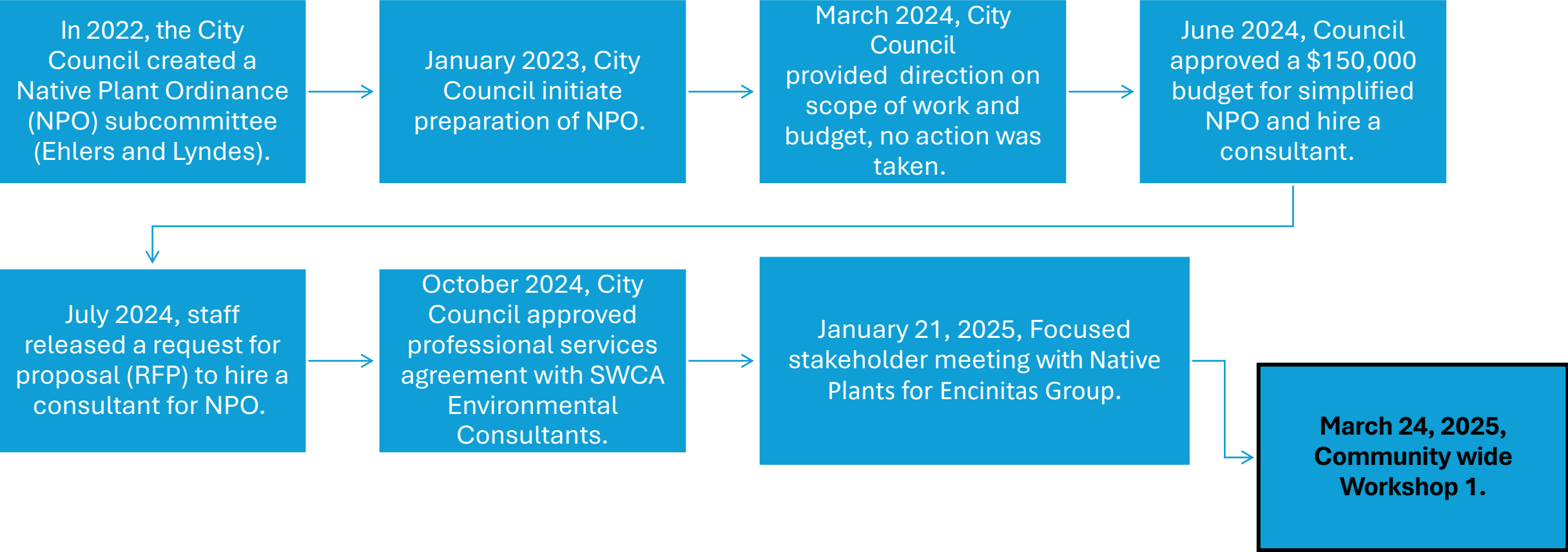
Consultant Team

- Lindsay Teunis, SWCA, Restoration Ecologist
- Shirley Innecken, SWCA, Senior Biologist
- Carrie Alidaee, SWCA, Staff Biologist
- Jennifer Montgomery, Schmidt Design Group, Landscape Architect
- Patrick Montgomery, Native West, Nursery Professional



SCHMIDT
DESIGN
GROUP

Background



Draft Ordinance – Selected Data Resource

Based off community input and technical expertise, Calscape was the data resource selected to use for the Native Plant Ordinance (NPO).



Calscape

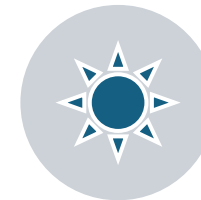
California Native Plant Society



A California Native Plant Society Updated/Maintained Web-Based Publication



Searchable database of 8550 plants native to California; Includes pages to guide in finding native plants, designing, finding nurseries, garden care, and locating landscape professionals; Adopts the taxonomy of the Jepson eFlora uses the CCH distributional information to model potential plant ranges. Calscape is a partnership of home gardeners, volunteers, industry professionals, universities, and funders



User-friendly search and filtering options; Searchable by address, nursery availability, plant type, sun and water needs, special uses, soil drainage, ease of care, wildlife suitability, size, flowering season, seasonality, cultivars and plant communities. Searchable by scientific and common names. Can save lists to personal account.

<https://calscape.org/search>

<https://calscape.org/garden-planner/ecoregion-map>

Calscape Website Updates and Timing



Calscape
California Native Plant Society

February 2025

- Virtual meeting with Calscape
- Calscape noted priority to support efforts like this program
- NPO team tested use for ordinance and provided comments

March 2025

- Explained queries for counties/zip codes/cities (only show 10 miles around point)
- Calscape confirmed pending edits to using ecoregions as a search criteria/criterion

April/May 2025

- Calscape confirmed “county location” search now generates full set of plants within the county limits (cities are up next)
- New ecoregion filter will be added mid-August.
- Will be able to select more than one ecoregion
- Will be included in the list of filter options on main plant search page (***optimal for ordinance use***)

Strikethrough = delete
Underline = added

Overview of Revisions to Ordinance

Subsection A. Intent and Purpose – no revisions

Subsection B. Conflicting Provisions – new section

Subsection C. Definitions – minor revisions

Subsection D. Applicability – minor revisions for streamlining

Subsection E. Exemptions – added 3 new exemptions

Subsection F. General Requirements – select revisions

Subsection G. Development Applications for Private/Public Projects – minor revisions

Subsection H. Installation Requirements and Recommendations – major revision

Subsection I. Maintenance, Replacement and Removal Requirements – minor revisions

Subsection J. Enforcement – minor revisions

Draft Ordinance – New Subsection B. Conflicting Provisions

In the case of conflict between the planting provisions of this Section and other provisions of the Municipal Code, resolution or ordinance of the City, the regulations of this Section shall supersede, unless stated otherwise below:

1. For existing and proposed trees located in the public right-of-way the standards set forth in this Section shall supersede those standards found in Encinitas Municipal Code (EMC) Chapter 15.02 or the Urban Forest Management Program Administrative Manual of Procedures, unless otherwise determined by the City Arborist.
2. Properties in the Coastal Bluff Overlay Zone shall first comply with EMC Section 30.34.020 of the Municipal Code.

Draft Ordinance – Subsection C. Definitions

Key Updates

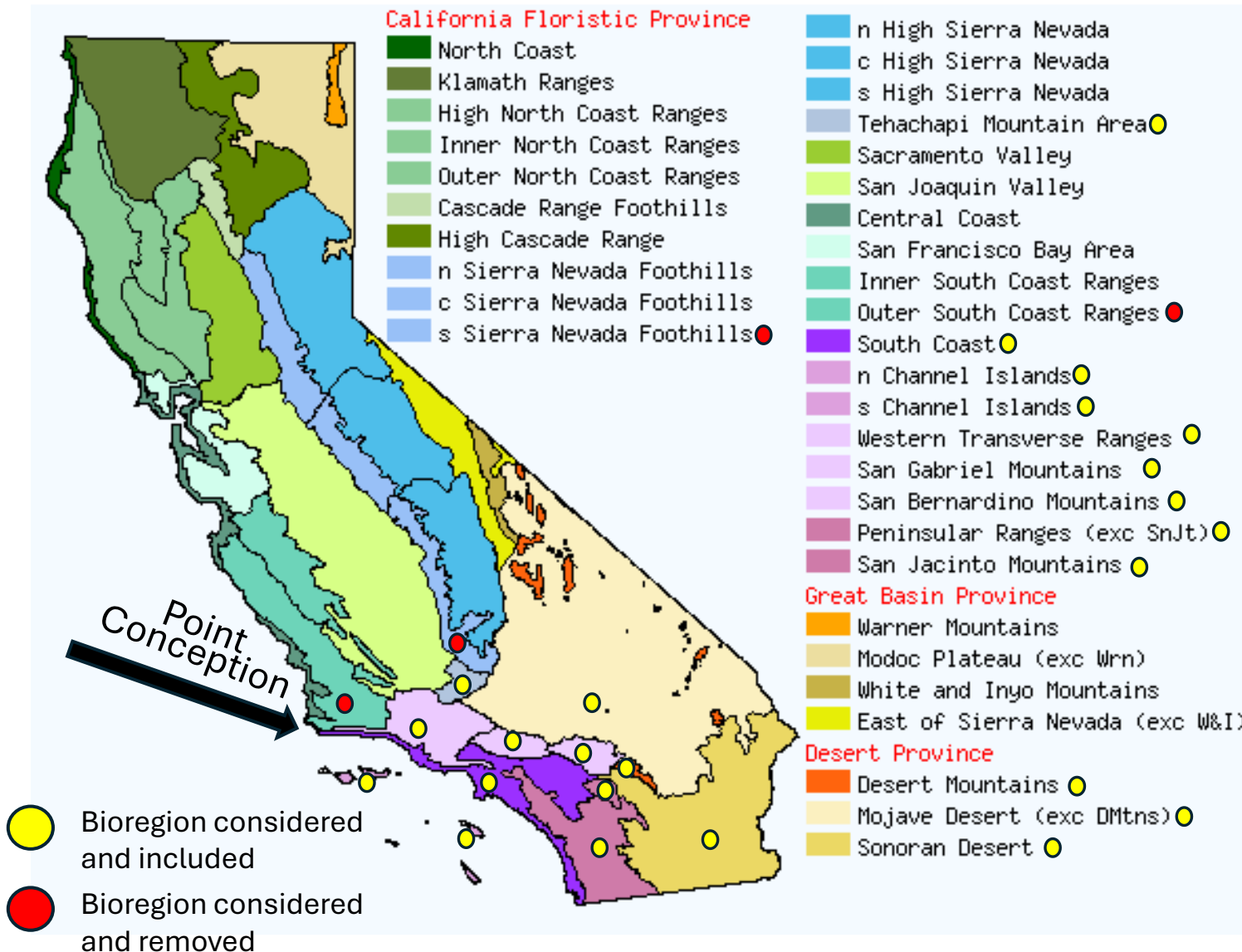
Southern California Native Plant:

- shall mean a native plant or plants that have been identified from the native plant resource(s) per new EMC Section 23.27.030.5.a, as determined from the project's site address that is known or has been known in the following Jepson bioregions (i.e., EcoRegions per Calscape). The following EcoRegions shall qualify under this definitions: Desert Mountains, Mojave Desert, North Channel Islands, Peninsular Ranges, San Bernadino Mountains, San Gabriel Mountains, San Jacinto Mountains, Sonoran Desert, South Channel Islands, South Coast, Tehachapi Mountain Area, and Western Traverse Ranges.

Native Plant:

- shall mean any plant known (~~specimens, seeds, cuttings, etc.~~) to occur in California prior to European contact. These plants evolved in California over a very long period, and are the plants that have co-evolved with animals, fungi and microbes, to form a complex network of relationships. Native cultivars (i.e., select native plant specimens propagated for landscaping purposes) and naturally occurring hybrids of native plants will also be considered native for the purpose of the ~~ordinance~~ Section.

Map of “southern California native plant” definition



Proposed boundary of “southern California” based on Jepson bioregions (a.k.a. eco regions in Calscape) which divides California into 35 ecologically distinct areas for the purpose of indicating where plant taxa grow.

From the Ordinance, C. Definitions:
The following EcoRegions shall qualify under this definition: Desert Mountains, Mojave Desert, North Channel Islands, Peninsular Ranges, San Bernardino Mountains, San Gabriel Mountains, San Jacinto Mountains, Sonoran Desert, South Channel Islands, South Coast, Tehachapi Mountain Area, and Western Transverse Ranges.

The ecoregions included in Calscape vary visually slightly from Jepson:
<https://calscape.org/garden-planner/ecoregion-map>

Draft Ordinance – Subsection D. Applicability

Key Updates

The provisions of this ~~Section~~ ~~Chapter~~ shall apply to ~~all~~ the following projects that require a discretionary permit:

- ~~1. Private property subject to development including any new subdivision or new multi-family, mixed-use, mobile home park, commercial, or light industrial sites. Any project that requires a Design Review permit, pursuant to EMC Section 23.08.030.A, and proposes a landscape plan.~~
- ~~2. Redevelopment projects or existing projects (multi-family, mixed-use, mobile home park, commercial, or light industrial) that require 75 percent or more of the existing landscaping area on a site to be replaced.~~
3. All City owned properties.

Reminder: Single family residence, accessory dwelling units (ADU), and junior accessory dwelling units (JADU) are **exempt**.

Draft Ordinance – Subsection E. Exemptions

Added the following three exemptions:

5. Community gardens.

6. Extensive green roofs, provided that native plants shall be incorporated to the extent that doing so is feasible based on the survivability of native plants in such conditions.

7. All orchards, botanical gardens, nurseries, and other professional growing operations.

Draft Ordinance – Subsection F. General Requirements

Key Updates

2. The total of all landscaped areas on the project site shall consist of a minimum fifty (50) percent southern California native plants, and shall be calculated as follows:
 - a) Ground plane (excluding trees) shall cover a minimum of fifty (50) percent of the total landscaped area as measured by the species size at maturity, and
 - b) Trees shall be a minimum of fifty (50) percent of the total tree quantity on the project site.

3. ~~Any proposed landscaped area within fifty (50) feet of that is adjacent to any environmentally sensitive area, undeveloped area, or open space, and/or required setback, shall be planted one hundred (100) percent southern California native plants. within the first 150 feet abutting the area and/or required setback.; and~~

Draft Ordinance – Subsection F. General Requirements

Key Updates

7. California State lands and beaches are highly encouraged to comply with the provisions of this Section.
9. Plants that are identified ~~as on the~~ invasive plant ~~speciestists~~ shall not be allowed in any proposed landscapeding area except for turf grass which can be considered for use outside of areas that are within close proximity to sensitive open space.

Draft Ordinance – Subsection H. Installation Recommendations

Key Updates

- Removed detailed recommendations since industry standards, best practices and technical information continues to evolve and are unique for individual native plants, soils, irrigation, and habitats.

New General Language

1. Native landscaping shall be installed in accordance with industry standards, best practices, and the most current technical guidance available. The approach should be tailored to the specific native plant species and broader vegetation communities included in the design to ensure long-term health and ecological sustainability. Key factors such as soil condition, irrigation method and frequency, proper planting techniques and other appropriate factors must be carefully considered and appropriately implemented.

Draft Ordinance – Section I. Maintenance, Replacement and Removal Requirements

Key Updates

1. Maintenance

a. Approved native landscaping plans areas shall be perpetually maintained to be in compliance with this Section by the property owner, assigns or any successors in interest in the property/homeowners' association.

b. Pruning in native landscaping areas shall should be limited to what is needed for appropriate native plant health and to maximize habitat value and pollinator use. Trimming is permitted when necessary to prevent obstruction of pedestrian pruned to avoid blocking walkways, access passageways, vehicular sight-distance visibility views, or to ensure adequate clearance for fire safety and maintenance operations. for vehicular traffic.

c. Native landscaped areas shall be managed to minimize weeds. Weeding methods shall prioritize non-chemical treatments including hand-pulling in smaller areas and mulching or solarizing in larger areas.

2. Removal and Replacement

c. Dead and missing native plants shall be removed and replaced to be in compliance with the approved landscaping plan and in compliance with this Section.



Incentive Program

Some **initial ideas** to incentivize property owners to replace their existing landscaping with native plant landscaping were:

- Parks and Recreation Demonstration Gardens
- Financial incentives such as tax discounts on native plants and rebates on rain barrels.
- Regulations and policies such as stormwater fee reductions.
- Education and awareness including workshops and demonstrations, signage, open/community example gardens.
- Community engagement such as certification programs and/or competitions.
- Practical support such as native plant giveaways, volunteer planting and maintenance trainings and certifications.
- Identify grants or other funding opportunities.
- Identify potential partnerships for new incentive opportunities.
- Advertise trainings and educational opportunities for not only the community but landscape professionals.

Incentive Program Update



Water Authority/District

Meeting on June 5 from 2-3 PM

Strategy is to advertise existing rebates and programs created by the San Diego County Water Authority.

Here are a few:

- ❖ Turf Replacement Program
- ❖ Rebate starting at \$3 per square foot for residential and commercial customers who remove their grass and replace it with water-efficient and native plants.
- ❖ WaterSmart Landscaping Contest: Enter their garden/landscaping, winner will receive \$250 gift card and recognized at water agency board meeting.
- ❖ LEAVES- Commercial Landscape Rebate
- ❖ Large commercial properties may utilize this program to receive irrigation device rebates, turf removal rebate, and free evaluations and recommendations from a professional.

Local Nurseries

Meeting on June 11 from 2-3 PM

Strategy is to partner with Encinitas nurseries to educate the community, support local businesses, and encourage the planting of native plants.

Summary:

- ❖ Monthly Coupon
- ❖ Offering one free native plant a month. This native plant will be compliant with the native plant ordinance.
- ❖ Provide information about the native plant: water usage, local pollinators, and examples of locations in City it can be found (park, school, demonstration garden, and open space).



Group Discussion on Draft Ordinance and Incentive Programs

Next Steps



PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD
*(MID/LATE SUMMER
2025)*



ENVIRONMENTAL
COMMISSION/ UFAC
(LATE SUMMER 2025)



PLANNING
COMMISSION *(EARLY
FALL 2025)*



CITY COUNCIL
(LATE FALL 2025)

Sign up for updates on the City's Native Plant Ordinance webpage @ [Encinitasca.gov](https://www.encinitasca.gov)