

# Appendix C

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## Equity Gap Analysis



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RE: Encinitas Climate Action Plan Update – Equity Considerations – Technical Memorandum

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the potential equity considerations associated with the City of Encinitas Climate Action Plan Update (CAP Update). The City of Encinitas has made progress in understanding racial and ethnic barriers in housing, addressing the growing homelessness problem, and bringing underrepresented community organizations into the planning process. However, there are gaps in equity planning that can be addressed during the implementation of the CAP Update. Demographic and socioeconomic factors were reviewed from the CalEnviroScreen tool as well as additional Census data to further inform on the city’s unique community characteristics. The equity consideration proposed include ensuring continuous community involvement from underrepresented groups, bridging language barriers, working to alleviate issues experienced by cost and transportation burdened households, creating local green jobs and workforce training, and creating a climate adaptation implementation plan that prioritizes the most vulnerable communities.

## 1.0 Equity Work that City of Encinitas has Done to Date

### Community Outreach:

The City has conducted outreach to various community groups during the CAP Update process to better understand equity concerns felt by the community. One business organization, three environmental organizations, and two underrepresented organizations responded to surveys out of the 24 organizations contacted for input. Primary equity concerns raised by the organizations are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1: Equity Concerns Raised by Community Organizations**

| Organization Type  | Primary Equity Concerns   |
|--|---|
| Business<br>[6 organizations contacted, 1 interviewed]             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate change concern: flood and wildfire</li> <li>Outsized burden on builders of new development; shift focus to existing building decarbonization</li> <li>Increased requirements on new development in turn increase housing cost burden to residents</li> </ul>   |
| Environmental Groups<br>[8 organizations contacted, 5 interviewed] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate change concern: risk to biodiversity and beach assets through drought and sea level rise</li> <li>Transportation and car dependance are equity issues</li> <li>Transportation access and safety is not equitable in the city</li> <li>Parking requirements reduce ability to develop bike and pedestrian friendly areas</li> </ul> |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing element sites should be placed in areas with alternative transportation routes and options</li> <li>• Land use and housing costs are too high and unequitable</li> <li>• Existing transit system is poor</li> <li>• Market-based, private flex fleet programs likely will not result in equitable access</li> <li>• Work regionally to ensure active transportation network extends beyond city boundaries</li> <li>• Fleet sharing programs also need truck access</li> </ul>                                     |
| Schools<br>[2 organizations contacted, none interviewed]       | No responses  |
| Underrepresented<br>[8 organizations contacted, 2 interviewed] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate change concern: climate adaptation for homeless population</li> <li>• Energy transition accessibility to cost burdened individuals (energy, housing, seniors, renters)</li> <li>• Effect on native plant life</li> <li>• Need equity metric tracking</li> <li>• Concerned about senior population, communities in pollution zones, and low-income communities</li> <li>• Climate adaptation issues for renters (like high heat)</li> <li>• Concerns on language barrier for Spanish speaking population</li> </ul> |

**Study of Racial and Ethnic Barriers in Housing:**

The City contracted with Opportunity Consultant in 2023 to assess [Barriers to Racial and Ethnic Equity in Housing](#) within Encinitas, and incorporated recommendations into city planning initiatives including Climate Action Planning. Findings included:

- Encinitas’ housing market is less racially and economically diverse than that of surrounding communities.
- Low-income and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) residents are clustered in certain areas of the city.
- There are policies in place that create barriers to developing more multifamily units, including Proposition A.
- There is a shortage of affordable housing, and programs designed to promote affordability do not adequately serve community needs.
- There is a limited amount of affordable housing in Encinitas, and the locations of affordable housing exacerbate existing inequities.
- Limited public transit constrains affordable and accessible housing development.
- Private sector practices and incentives contribute to displacement.

**Addressing Homelessness:**

The City began a Homeless Outreach Program in June 2022 to provide support, resources, and services to individuals experiencing homelessness. Additionally, the City houses a Safe Parking Program for those living out of their cars and has staff dedicated to working on solutions to homelessness.

## 2.0 Population Characteristics: Socioeconomic Factor Indicators

The following socioeconomic indicator categories were pulled from CalEnviroScreen 4.0<sup>1</sup> with factors updated using the latest data available, as described in Table 2. CalEnviroScreen is widely used as a tool to understand equity issues in communities across California.

**Table 2: CalEnviroScreen Demographic Indicators**

| Indicator Type   | Definition  | Metric  | Metric Source  |
|--|---|---|--|
| Educational Attainment<br>Socioeconomic Indicators                 | Percentage of the population over age 25 with less than a high school education (5-year estimate, 2015-2019).   | 10.2%   | 2023 ACS: S1501 Educational Attainment   |
| Housing-Burdened Low-Income Households<br>Socioeconomic Indicators | Percent of households that are both low income (making less than 80% of the HUD Area Median Family Income) and severely burdened by housing costs (paying greater than 50% of their income to housing costs). | 13.3%<br>(15.9% spend over 50% of their income on housing, 37.4% make under 80% HUD area median income) | Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy, HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research, ACS 2017 - 2021 |
| Linguistic Isolation<br>Socioeconomic Indicators                   | Percentage of limited English-speaking households   | 2.3%  | 2022 ACS: S1602 Limited English-Speaking Households  |
| Poverty<br>Socioeconomic Indicators                                | Percent of the population living below two times the federal poverty level  | 17.0%   | 2023 ACS: K201702 Ratio of Income to Poverty Level in the Past 12 Months                                       |
| Unemployment<br>Socioeconomic Indicators                           | Percentage of the population over the age of 16 that is unemployed and eligible for the labor force   | 2.9%  | 2022 ACS: DP03 Selected Economic Characteristics   |

The CalEnviroScreen tool primarily focuses on pollution burden and health impacts. While important indicators, for a small coastal community like Encinitas that experiences significantly less pollution and health burdens than other areas in California, we recommend broadening the socioeconomic indicators to include those included in Table 3 and Figure 1. The indicators in Table 3 include vulnerable populations mentioned in the interviews with community organizations (Table 1) with the best available data to contextualize the issue.

<sup>1</sup> CalEnviroScreen 4.0 is the latest iteration of the California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool. The original and subsequent versions were developed by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, or OEHHA, an office within the California Environmental Protection Agency. Documentation: <https://oehha.ca.gov/media/downloads/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen40reportf2021.pdf>

**Table 3: Additional Recommended Demographic Indicators**

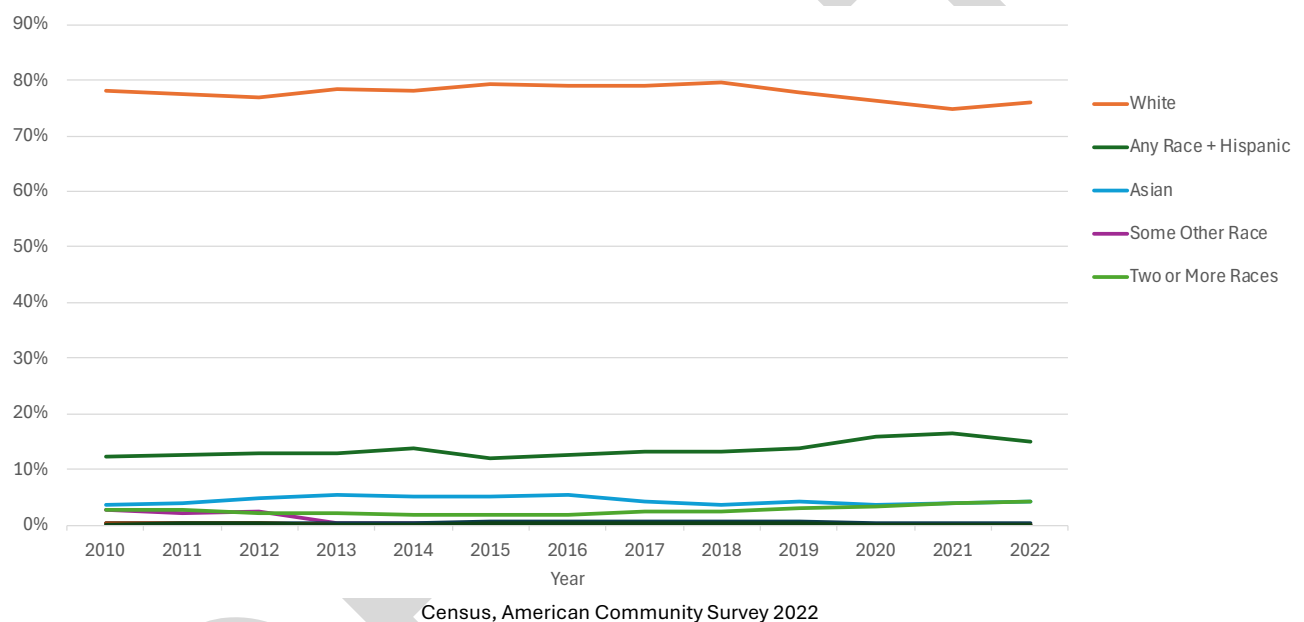
| <b>Vulnerable Populations</b>   | <b>Metric</b> | <b>Metric Source</b>  |
|---|---------------|---|
| Population over 65 years old  | 24%           | Census ASC 2022   |
| Population with a disability  | 9%            | Census ASC 2022   |
| Householders living alone   | 23%           | Census ASC 2022   |
| Households with a child under 18 and no spouse                        | 8%            | Census ASC 2022   |
| Population without health coverage                                    | 3.7%          | Census ASC 2022   |
| Percent of population, over 18 years old, with self care difficulties | 1.8%          | LiveWell San Diego Database, 2022 <sup>2</sup>  |
| Percent of population who is primary caregiver                        | 5.4%          | LiveWell San Diego Database, 2022 <sup>2</sup>  |
| Unsheltered Population – 2024   | 123           | San Diego Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH), 2024 Point in Time Count <sup>3</sup> |
| Unsheltered Population – 2022   | 76            | San Diego RTFH <sup>3</sup>   |
| Unsheltered Population – 2020   | 47            | San Diego RTFH <sup>3</sup>   |
| <b>Experience Communication Isolation</b>                             |               |   |
| Do not speak English at home  | 16%           | Census ASC 2022   |
| Speak limited English at home   | 2.3%          | Census ACS 2022   |
| Speak little to no English  | 1%            | Census ASC 2022   |
| Without internet or a computer  | 2%            | Census ASC 2022   |
| <b>Cost Burdened – Renters</b>  |               |   |
| Population that rents their residence                                 | 31%           | Census ASC 2022   |
| Renters who spend over 30% of their household income on rent          | 50%           | Census ASC 2022   |
| Median gross rent   | \$2,861       | Census ASC 2022   |
| <b>Cost Burdened – Homeowners</b>                                     |               |   |
| Population that lives in an owner-occupied residence with a mortgage  | 40%           | Census ASC 2022   |
| Households that spend over 30% of household income on housing costs   | 37%           | Census ASC 2022   |
| Median housing costs for residences with a mortgage                   | Over \$4,000  | Census ASC 2022   |
| <b>Transportation Burdened</b>  |               |   |
| Percent of households with no vehicle available                       | 3.8%          | Census ASC 2022   |
| Percent of the Populations with Travel Time to work over 60 mins      | 4.7%          | LiveWell San Diego Database, 2022 <sup>2</sup>  |
| Percent of the population using public transportation to work.        | 0.7%          | LiveWell San Diego Database, 2022 <sup>2</sup>  |
| <b>Access to Community Spaces</b>                                     |               |   |

<sup>2</sup> Live Well San Diego Database, County of San Diego Equity Indicators. <https://data.sandiegocounty.gov/browse>

<sup>3</sup>San Diego Regional Leader on Homelessness Annual Point in Time Count. <https://www.rtfhsd.org/reports-data/>

| Vulnerable Populations  | Metric | Metric Source                                  |
|---|--------|--|
| Percent of households that meet the minimum level of service (within 0.25 miles and $\geq$ 300 sq.ft/du of community spaces). | 49.2%  | LiveWell San Diego Database, 2022 <sup>2</sup> |
| Percent of the population living within 0.25 miles of a park or community space.  | 58.6%  | LiveWell San Diego Database, 2022 <sup>2</sup> |

Figure 1: Racial Diversity of City of Encinitas from 2010 - 2022



### 3.0 Considerations for Further Aligning Climate Action and Equity

The following items are recommended considerations to integrate equity into the City’s CAP Update:

- 1. Ensure Continuous Community Representation:** Build on the community outreach work done to date by establishing community climate advisory boards or task forces from various community stakeholder groups including vulnerable and underrepresented communities.
- 2. Bridge the Language Barrier:** Develop a policy to ensure all CAP outreach is conducted in Spanish and English.
- 3. Expand Climate Vulnerability Assessments to View from an Equity Lens:** As impacts from climate change start to affect the population, the City should incorporate equity considerations into the current Climate Adaptation chapter of the CAP. To incorporate equity into the existing plan would entail completing a community sensitivity analysis to the impacts of climate change (which populations are most at risk for first and worst impacts of climate change) and creating an equitable plan to adapt to those issues.
- 4. Target Climate Adaptation Investments Equitably:** Direct funding to flood-prone or heat-vulnerable neighborhoods and ensure these areas and vulnerable populations within those areas receive priority access.

5. **Train Workforce for Increased Green Jobs:** Create or participate in a plan to develop a local workforce for climate transition jobs. As an example, this would include: EV charging installation and maintenance jobs, solar and microgrid installation and maintenance jobs, native plant and tree maintenance, etc.
6. **Alleviate Issues Experienced by Cost Burdened Households:** Conduct outreach on the City's plans to increase residential development in an effort to reduce housing costs in Encinitas. Prioritize funding for programs that improve the energy efficiency of homes in lower-income and cost-burdened neighborhoods through CAP Update measure BD-1: Require Existing Residential Energy Efficiency. Additionally, implement recommendations from *Barriers to Racial and Ethnic Equity in Housing* study to remove systemic barriers to community diversity.
7. **Alleviate Issues Experienced by Transportation Burdened Households:** Ensure local flexible fleet program is developed with equitable access to flexible fleet options, with focus on neighborhood access and rate design. Additionally, prioritize Active Transportation Plan implementation to ensure safe bike and pedestrian access to the most underserved areas first.
8. **Track Equity Indicators:** In addition to tracking the process of each CAP measure, use metrics to measure the impact of climate initiatives on different demographic groups, tracking indicators like economic benefits, health outcomes, and adaptation improvements in vulnerable areas. Publish these results to the Climate Dashboard.

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