

ATTACHMENT I

DRAFT FINDINGS TO ADOPT THE 2045 GENERAL PLAN

Findings to Adopt the Contra Costa County 2045 General Plan

1. Required Finding: That adoption of the proposed General Plan amendment is in the public interest, as required under Government Code Section 65358(a).

Project Finding: The Contra Costa County 2045 General Plan replaces the existing County General Plan that was originally adopted in 1991 and received relatively minor updates in 2005. The existing General Plan largely reflects planning philosophies and practices of the 1980s and earlier. In particular, it supports sprawling, low-density development patterns that became standard following World War II. Such development patterns are linked to numerous direct and indirect environmental, health, and social consequences including, but not limited to, excessive land consumption, conversion of irreplaceable agricultural land to urban use, inefficient delivery of public services, insufficient density to support public transit, energy inefficiency, automobile dependency, emissions that contribute to poor air quality and climate change, and isolation of vulnerable populations, especially seniors.

Adoption of the 2045 General Plan represents a paradigm shift in planning for unincorporated Contra Costa County. The 2045 General Plan encourages and facilitates higher densities, infill development, mixed-use projects, and walkable communities, which use land more efficiently, allow for more efficient delivery of urban services, support public transit and other non-automobile transportation modes, decrease automobile trips and associated emissions, and improve energy efficiency. The 2045 General Plan offers more effective protections for life and property through stronger policies limiting development in hazard zones, such as areas subject to wildfire and sea level rise. The 2045 General Plan also includes stronger protections for agricultural land, sensitive habitats and species, open space areas, and unique landscapes throughout the county.

Furthermore, as directed by the Board of Supervisors, the 2045 General Plan is built upon the foundational themes of environmental justice, economic development, community health, and sustainability. These themes are woven throughout the 2045 General Plan, and it contains hundreds of goals, policies, and actions supporting them. The 2045 General Plan aspires to reverse historical patterns of discrimination and disempowerment related to land use and provision of public services, create a diverse and adaptable economy that provides opportunities for all county residents, improve overall community health and wellbeing, and create sustainable and resilient communities.

For these reasons, adoption of the 2045 General Plan is in the public interest.

2. Required Finding: That adoption of the proposed General Plan amendment will not exceed the annual limit on General Plan amendments specified under Government Code Section 65358(b).

Project Finding: Pursuant to Government Code Section 65358(b), no mandatory element of the General Plan may be amended more than four times per calendar year. Adoption of the 2045 General Plan affects all mandatory elements and will be the first amendment in 2024 for all mandatory elements except the Land Use Element. The Land Use Element of the existing General Plan has been amended twice in 2024. Thus, adoption of the 2045 General Plan constitutes the third Land Use Element amendment for 2024. Adoption of the 2045 General Plan is compliant with Government Code Section 65358(b).

3. Required Finding: That upon adoption of the proposed General Plan amendment, the General Plan will remain internally consistent and compatible, as required under Government Code Section 65300.5(a).

Project Finding: The 2045 General Plan replaces the existing General Plan in its entirety. The 2045 General Plan was developed over a six-year period and has undergone numerous internal (County) and external (outside agency and public) reviews to ensure internal consistency and compatibility between its goals, policies, actions, maps, and diagrams.

4. Required Finding: That adoption of the proposed General Plan amendment will not violate the provisions of the 65/35 Land Preservation Standard or Urban Limit Line, as outlined in Measure L-2006.

Project Finding: Adoption of the 2045 General Plan will not result in a violation of the 65/35 Land Preservation Standard (the “65/35 Standard”) initially established through voter adoption of Measure C-1990 and reaffirmed through adoption of Measure L-2006. Under the 65/35 Standard, no more than 35 percent of the land in the county, inclusive of the cities, may be designated for development of urban uses and at least 65 percent of the land must be designated for non-urban uses such as agriculture, open space, parks, etc. Under the existing General Plan, approximately 28 percent of the land in the county is designated for urban land use. The 2045 General Plan land use map replaces the existing General Plan land use map and continues to designate approximately 28 percent of the land in the county for urban use. Adoption of the 2045 General Plan therefore will not result in a violation of the 65/35 Standard.

The 2045 General Plan does not change the location of the ULL, nor does it designate additional land outside the ULL for urban use. Furthermore, the 2045 General Plan contains new policies in the Land Use Element that clarify and further support the provisions of the ULL. Specifically, Policy LU-P2.2 calls for strengthening the ULL’s effectiveness by supporting efforts to acquire and permanently protect land along its boundary; Policy LU-P2.4 prohibits major subdivisions outside the ULL as well as successive subdivisions of land outside the ULL that was already subdivided; Policy LU-P2.8 discourages extension of water

and sewer services outside the ULL and clarifies when such extensions might be acceptable; and Policy LU-P2.9 calls for the County to consistently advise the Local Agency Formation Commission to support the ULL when considering requests for annexation of land into water and sewer districts.

5. Required Finding: That adoption of the proposed General Plan amendment is compliant with the provisions of Measure J-2004, the Contra Costa Growth Management Program, and related Contra Costa Transportation Authority resolutions.

Project Finding: Adoption of the 2045 General Plan complies with the objectives and requirements of Measure J-2004, the Contra Costa Growth Management Program (GMP), and related Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) resolutions.

The CCTA GMP Implementation Guide (February 2021) sets forth procedures for local agency consultation and evaluation of impacts related to proposed General Plan amendments. The 2045 General Plan, including the Transportation and Growth Management Elements, and associated Draft Environmental Impact Report, were referred to CCTA, all Regional Transportation Planning Committees, and all cities within the county for review and comment. Comments were received from CCTA only, and the Transportation and Growth Management Elements were revised in response to those comments. The 2045 General Plan Growth Management Element is consistent with CCTA's Model Growth Management Element.

6. Required Finding: That adoption of the proposed General Plan amendment will not impede attainment of the County's goals related to environmental justice, community health, economic development, and sustainability.

Project Finding: The 2045 General Plan establishes numerous goals, along with supporting policies and actions, related to environmental justice, community health, economic development, and sustainability. Future General Plan amendments must not impede attainment of these goals.