Imagine Livermore 2045 General Plan

Equity and Inclusion Plan

November 2, 2021

The purpose of the Equity and Inclusion Plan is to identify strategies and tools to engage all Livermore residents in the General Plan Update to ensure the outcomes of the planning process reflects all voices in the community. This plan is organized by the following sections:

- **Purpose**
- **Engagement Objectives**
- **Target Audience**
- **Commitments to the Community**
- **Engagement Techniques**
- **Health and Safety Precautions**
- **Engagement Activities**
- **Barriers to Engagement**
- **Evaluation and Tracking Success**
- **Attachment A: General Plan Update Outreach Schedule**
- **Attachment B: Outreach Partners**

This plan is intended to be a living document. As the General Plan outreach process progresses, the project team will continually monitor the success of the outreach program; listen to feedback from community members, community-based organizations, the General Plan Advisory Committee, the Planning Commission, and the City Council, and make adjustments as needed.

Purpose

The Imagine Livermore 2045 General Plan Update will be a multi-year process that will look deeply at citywide growth, development, land use, circulation, conservation, sustainability, housing, infrastructure, safety, and other significant issues that will affect all residents. Engaging the community on these topics throughout the process is crucial for developing a General Plan that speaks to the needs and interests of the Livermore community.

The City of Livermore has identified equity and inclusion as priorities in its governance. This was most recently demonstrated in the convening of the City Council Equity and Inclusion Subcommittee from September 2020 to June 2021, which produced 11 recommendations for making Livermore more equitable and inclusive. This General Plan Update process will be consistent with these recommendations, beginning with this Equity and Inclusion Plan.

The Livermore community has historically had high rates of civic engagement. Livermore has many engaged residents who have a very sophisticated understanding of planning-related issues and take full advantage of opportunities to add their voice to local decisions. However, there are also many residents who never or rarely get involved. Capturing the ideas and opinions from residents who typically go unheard is an important goal of the General Plan update process to engage this larger, more diverse community.

Given the General Plan's citywide scale, it is vital to learn about the wide range of issues and concerns held throughout the community. For example, people who feel linguistically isolated may provide useful feedback for crafting policies that reduce or eliminate barriers for participation by non-English residents; people who are paying more than half their income in rent may inform how urgently the General Plan prioritizes housing affordability.

The General Plan team will use a diverse range of tools and strategies to engage different segments of the community and to gather their feedback.

Engagement Objectives

There are four desired objectives of this Equity and Inclusion Plan for the General Plan Update public engagement process:

- To ensure Livermore residents are aware that the General Plan is being updated, what the General Plan is, and why it is important to all community members.
- To hear from people who represent the full range of demographics, perspectives, and experiences in the Livermore community. This includes an explicit focus on traditionally underrepresented and marginalized communities in the process, including racial and ethnic groups and low-income communities for whom barriers such as language and cultural differences, lack of access to technology, and lack of trust in government may hinder participation.
- To build a level of public trust in the update process and community-wide support for the General Plan that will lead to its successful implementation after adoption.
- To identify and illuminate issues that were likely unknown in previous planning processes by engaging historically underrepresented groups and updating the General Plan to encompass desires and issues specific to these groups.

Target Audiences

Livermore residents, like the Bay Area as a whole, identify with numerous overlapping and interrelated communities. Livermore residents are LGBTQ+, veterans, immigrants, parents, and members of many different faiths. Based on the feedback from our communitywide survey, we heard that most residents see Livermore as a welcoming and inclusive place for members of these and other communities and want those qualities to be honored and strengthened during the General Plan update. We also know from regional and national history that certain groups have been traditionally underrepresented in planning-related decision-making and disproportionately harmed by unjust practices. Throughout the General Plan Update, we will make intentional efforts to reach and include these underrepresented groups including communities for whom language and cultural differences may preclude or discourage involvement. The target audience includes:

- Latinx and Spanish Speaking Community
- Low-Income Households
- Renters, Rent Burdened Households, and Affordable Housing Residents
- Youth and Students
- People with Disabilities

Latinx and Spanish-Speaking Community

Latinx residents comprise approximately 20 percent of the population and are mostly dispersed throughout Livermore with a community concentrated in the area north of Downtown and the Wagoner Ranch/East Avenue area.
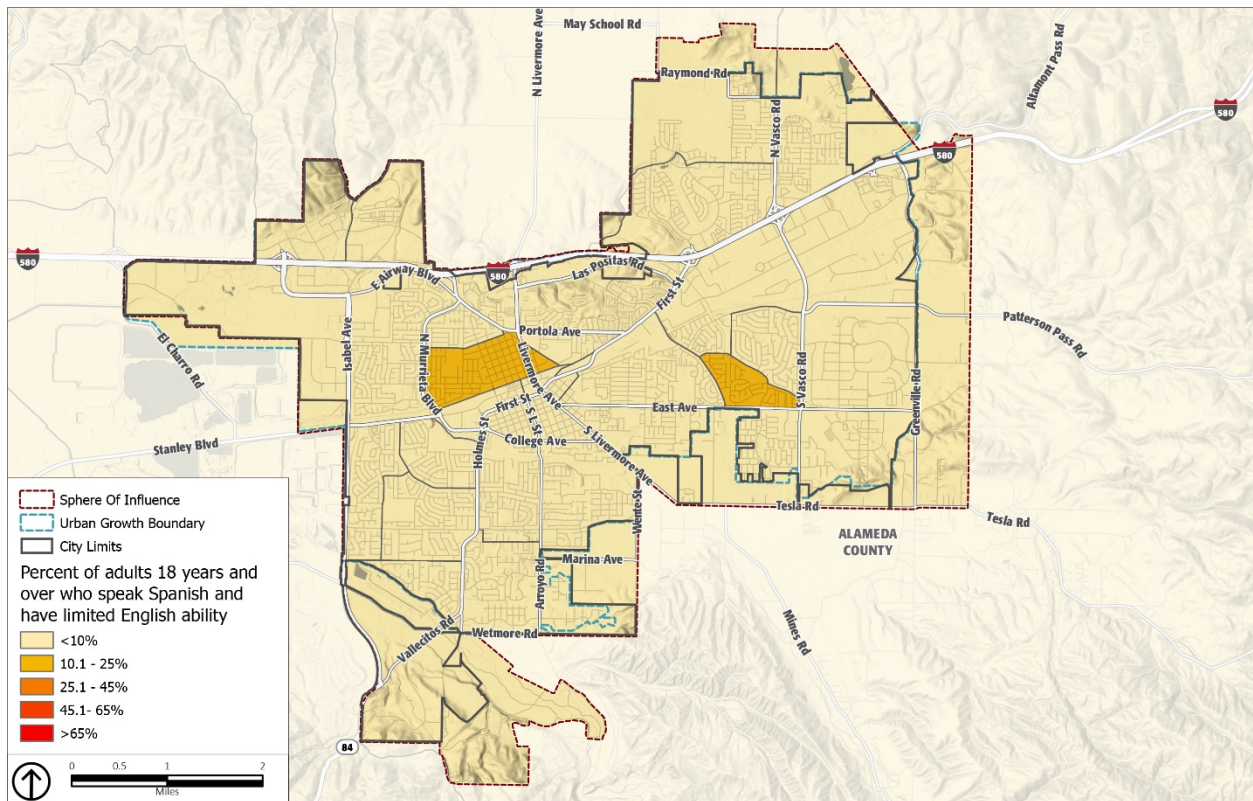
Source: U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) 2015-2019 5-year estimates; City of Livermore, 2021; Esri, 2021; PlaceWorks, 2021

Low-Income Households

Though regarded as a fairly affluent community, Livermore has concentrations of low- to moderate-income households, particularly in the central and north areas. Low- and moderate-income households are mapped below according to federal standards, which define low-income households as having incomes 80 percent or below of the area median household income and moderate-income households are as having 80-95 percent of the area median income. Approximately 17 percent of all Livermore households are low-income households.
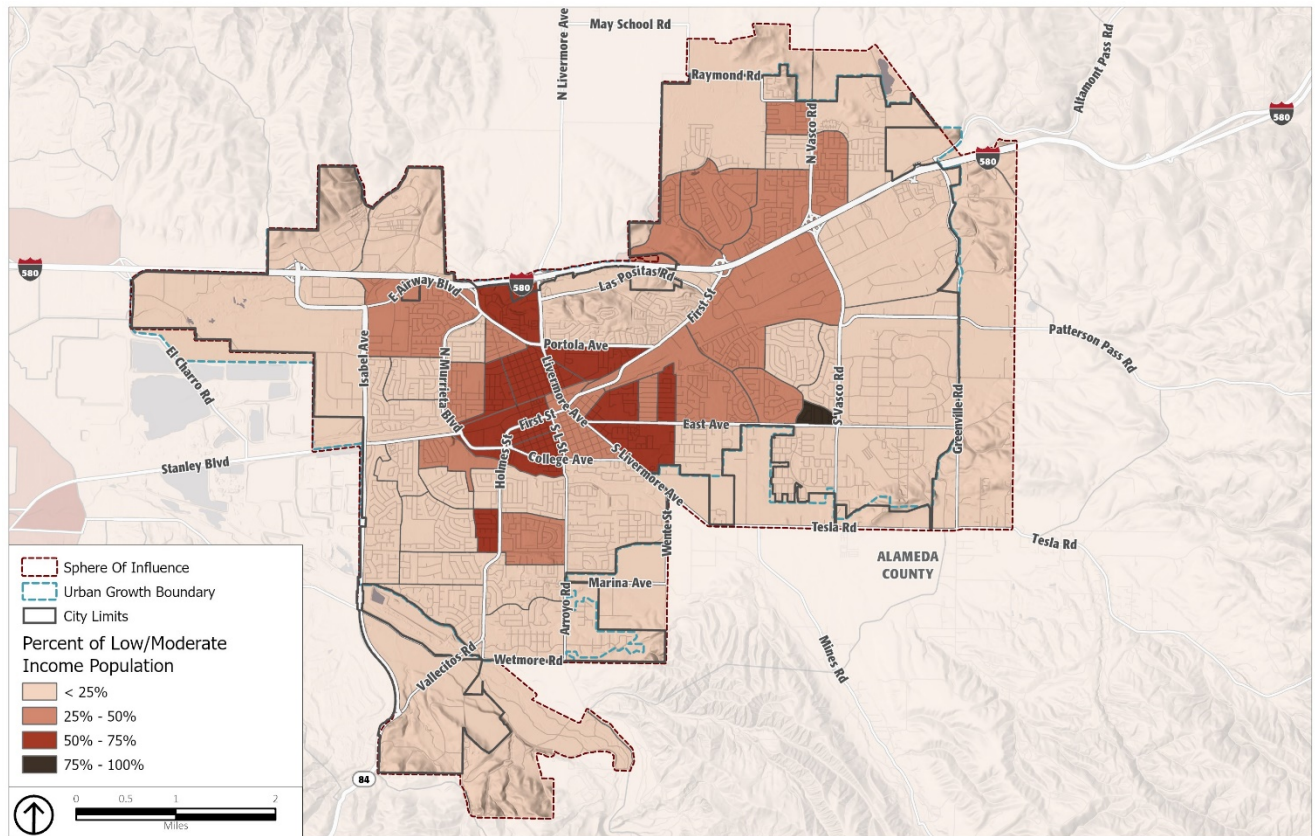
Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) 2019; City of Livermore, 2021; Esri, 2021; PlaceWorks, 2021

Renters and Rent-Burdened Households

Renter-occupied households constitute approximately 28 percent of all Livermore households[1] and are concentrated in and around central Livermore and areas to the east. "Rent burdened" means paying 30 percent or more of household income in rent. Many areas of Livermore show rental households as rent-burdened. Of all rental households in Livermore, nearly 46 percent are rent-burdened.

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) 2019; City of Livermore, 2021; Esri, 2021; PlaceWorks, 2021

Youth and Students

As part of its final recommendations, the City Council Equity and Inclusion Subcommittee identified youth as a priority group for the City to improve services and programs for, as well as exploring career development and training opportunities for students. One of the key issues identified for youths was need for mental health support and resources to address feelings of alienation and discomfort around skin color and gender identity. Youth, defined as anyone who is under 18 years of age, make up approximately 23 percent of the population.[2] Engagement through the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District (LVJUSD) and Las Positas College will help outreach to this key group.

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[1] US Census, Population Estimates 2019,
https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/livermorecitycalifornia/PST045219
[2] US Census, Population Estimates 2019,
https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/livermorecitycalifornia/PST045219

People with Disabilities

The US Census American Community Survey counted over 7.500 people in Livermore, or about 8 percent of the population, as living with a disability. As defined by the Census, this could include hearing difficulty, vision difficulty, cognitive difficulty, ambulatory difficulty, self-care difficulty, and independent living difficulty. People with disabilities may face unique challenges in finding accessible and affordable housing, getting around town, or staying safe during a disaster. The City will generally, upon request, provide appropriate aids and services leading to effective communication for qualified persons with disabilities so they can participate equally in General Plan Update activities, including qualified sign language interpreters, documents in Braille, and other ways of making information and communications accessible to people who have speech, hearing, or vision impairments. Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a General Plan Update activity should contact the City's ADA Coordinator at (925) 960-4170, (925) 960-4104 TDD or adacoordinator@cityoflivermore.net as soon as possible but no later than three (3) business days before the scheduled event.

Commitments to the Community

Through the General Plan Update process, City staff and the consultant team commit to operating based on the following commitments to the community:

Inclusion. Promote inclusive and meaningful participation by all groups by ensuring that meetings are accessible in terms of language, time, and location; establishing meeting agreements between participants when necessary; promoting healthy and respectful conversations; addressing the public's concerns or grievances soon after they arise; and using facilitation methods that support and encourage all participants' contributions, particularly those coming from underserved communities.

Access, Design outreach events and activities to be accessible for all residents by: providing translation of meeting materials; interpretation at events; childcare; amenities such as food and bus passes when possible; and holding meetings at locations and times that are easily accessible for people to attend.

Transparency and Responsiveness. Make the planning and outreach process transparent to the community by communicating the overall timeline, roles of the project team and people, the decision-making processes, and how community feedback will be incorporated into the project and process. Ensure the project team responds promptly to any concerns and recommendations by the community soon after they are voiced through report backs, written notes and letters, and online announcements.

Accountability. Ensure the planning process promotes accountability to the community such as taking responsibility to report, explain, or remedy past inequities; connecting budgeting decisions and funding to objectives and policies identified in the General Plan; scheduling regular report-backs to the community to explain how their input was incorporated into decision-making; and continually evaluating the success of the engagement process and taking action to improve the process to be more equitable and accountable over time.

Broad and Balanced Participation. Ensure the engagement process includes a wide range of viewpoints from different community stakeholders in a manner that balances the demographic and economic composition of the community by ensuring voices of residents and stakeholders in underserved segments of the community are heard just as strongly as privileged and affluent segments of the community.

Honor and Include Local Community Knowledge. Honor and acknowledge community members as holders of local knowledge by creating a process where they can provide critical input on the project, organize and lead meetings, and help identify the objectives and goals for the planning process.

Long-Term Commitment. Develop and plant the seeds for long-term relationships to foster an engaged community with the General Plan and future planning activities related to the General Plan. Promote long-term commitment through communication, accountability, and transparency.

Source: SB 1000 Implementation Toolkit by California Environmental Justice Alliance and PlaceWorks

Engagement Techniques

The General Plan Update will include events and activities in a variety of formats, but all will be based on the following techniques to cultivate understanding and consensus.

Consensus-Oriented Decision Making. Utilize a consensus-oriented decision making process for making group decisions and resolving disputes, which is an approach that seeks to arrive at a final decision that everyone can agree to or at least can have confidence that their input was considered.

Education. Promote education and capacity building among participants and community members to learn more about project issues, about each other's interests, about types of solutions and reasons for considering them, and barriers to help people understand the technical aspects of General Plan issues.

Interest-Based Facilitation. Utilize interest-based facilitation to achieve consensus in decision-making and dispute resolution during group meetings, where the facilitator works with participants to distill and identify issues and interests so that they are separate from personal positions in the community and process. This method is effective for arriving at mutually satisfactory outcomes among community members by enabling people to see when their interests are met.

Meaningful Questions. Ask and frame questions that support a high-level of public participation and promote empowerment by framing as decision-making questions when possible.

Open Outcomes. Create a process that remains open to a variety of outcomes and goals so that it can be informed by feedback by the community and not have outcomes be precluded with pre-determined ideas of where the General Plan should go.

Source: SB 1000 Implementation Toolkit by California Environmental Justice Alliance and PlaceWorks

Health and Safety Precautions

The COVID-19 health pandemic has complicated public events with public gatherings presenting inherent risks for transmission of the disease by just mere proximity between people. To best ensure the safety of participants at in-person events, the project team will plan to make available personal protective equipment (PPE), such as disposable masks and gloves; hand sanitizer; frequent wiping of event materials with alcoholic wipes; and ensure social distancing along with other safety measures following protocols established by public health agencies.

Engagement Activities

Based on PlaceWorks experience in Livermore and other communities, we have observed that the following strategies can increase the participation of the broader Livermore community as well as the groups identified above as Target Audiences.

Community-Based Organization (CBO) Partnership

CBOs have an established presence and network within the communities they serve and have built trust and relationships with those communities. Partnership between the General Plan team and a CBO will open the opportunity for the General Plan to reach out directly to these communities, which are communities typically underrepresented in conventional planning efforts. For Livermore, the project team will be seeking to partner with a CBO that is willing and able to help provide on-the-ground outreach to the Spanish-speaking community. CBO(s) would strengthen the outreach process by helping ensure a culturally targeted and/or multilingual approach; serving as "ambassadors" between the General Plan team and community members; vetting background data and technical analyses to ensure they reflect and are understandable by community members; and providing input on goals, policies, and actions. Additional CBOs and organizations are listed at the end of this Plan.

- **Messaging**. Work with PlaceWorks and City staff to hone the words and images we use to communicate about the General Plan so they are understandable and relevant to the target audiences identified above.

- **Sensitivity.** Provide ongoing input to PlaceWorks and City staff on time, place, and methods of outreach and engagement to ensure our materials and events are accessible and welcoming, including to those who may mistrust government, who have little or no experience interacting with local planning processes, or who may have had negative experiences in the past.

- **On-the-Ground Outreach**. Conduct on-the-ground outreach by speaking directly with community members one-on-one and in small groups about the General Plan update; meeting with local residents at local events and destinations, such as food distribution events, health clinics, community centers, houses of worship, local businesses, and parenting classes, among other opportunities.

General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC)

The GPAC will be a group of 19 community members who represent the diversity of the Livermore community, including ranges in age, race, ethnicity, neighborhood, ability, living situation, employment, and advocacy. The GPAC is important because it is a formally recognized, non-governmental body within the General Plan process comprised of community members who will be able to directly inform the General Plan itself. The GPAC will review and provide feedback on work products, serve as liaisons between the team and the community, and advise the team on effective outreach and engagement. It is not a decision-making body.

Events and Activities

Citywide Workshops. Workshops are larger events and are a well-established tool for extended conversations and consensus building. They are opportunities to engage the public on different topics and in different neighborhoods, using a variety of interactive strategies and have served past Livermore

planning efforts well. Workshops most often include a presentation of material, a question-and-answer period, and a small group breakout time for facilitated discussion and exercises.

Community Events. Community events are smaller, less formal engagement activities that seek to connect more directly to segments of the community by "going to where people are". Community events happen in familiar, comfortable settings with a casual presence or activity. We will prioritize community events to happen in underserved communities where equity is a key issue. Potential community events for the General Plan are listed below:

- **Pop-ups.** Pop-up events are often outdoor booths that people can voluntarily approach. Pop-up events might take place before or after worship services, at social service locations, at culturally specific markets, or at larger community celebrations like events organized by faith-based and community organizations, the Livermore Rodeo, Día de Los Muertos celebrations, Hispanic Heritage Day, and the Farmers' Market. Pop-up events can be designed to happen at or around a single table, with visuals, maps, and/or handheld surveys that simply and quickly convey concepts and allow easy and fun but still useful community input.
- **Neighborhood or community organization meeting.** At neighborhood or community organization meetings, the General Plan team would coordinate with the organizations to attend a regular meeting. Team members would offer a presentation, answer questions, facilitate discussion, and explain further opportunities for involvement.
- **Self-guided open houses.** Self-guided open houses could be installed at local libraries, City Hall, or other venues and could feature posters or other graphics to explain the project. These events can be up for days or weeks and allow people to explore the information at their own pace and without face-to-face contact. They are best for informing rather than gathering feedback or making decisions.
- **Youth outreach.** Youth outreach could include art projects, youth-only, or youth-led workshops and small group discussions. These events are usually most effectively coordinated through local schools and/or recreation service providers. Teachers may make participation a requirement (e.g., for a high school social science class) or offer extra credit for students who participate.

Tribal Consultation. Native American groups and individuals with an interest in the city will be identified and reached for consultation in the General Plan process. The project team will submit notification letters to identified groups and individuals to notify them of the General Plan process and invite for government-to-government consultation if desired.

City Staff Outreach. City staff may conduct additional outreach and directly meet with GPAC, attend neighborhood meetings or pop-up events; make presentations to community organizations, give interviews to local media outlets; create social media postings; and operate the City-operated "Plan Van" at various events and locations.

Virtual and Media Strategies

Virtual Events. Virtual events are the online equivalents of in-person workshops and community events. These events would be facilitated typically over video-conferencing platforms, such as Zoom™ where participants can log into the event through their mobile device or computer. Virtual events will most often be planned alongside in-person events to offer an online alternative accessible to people who would be unable to attend the in-person event due to time conflicts, physical distance, or other barriers. To be an

effective alternative, virtual events would usually be planned at different dates and times then the in-person event. However, there may be opportunities for standalone virtual events without need for an in-person event. Hosting events virtually has been critical during the COVID-19 health pandemic, allowing participants to attend a project meeting safely without risk of contact with others. Virtual events could feature online activities to facilitate conversation and capture comments. Although these practices expand options for participation, they should be utilized and designed with the user and target population in mind, as not all groups are able to access technology in the same way. It will be important to use platforms that are widely used and easy to access, such as Google Meet and Facebook Live. If Zoom is used for any virtual events, it will also be streamed to channels such as Facebook to increase access.

Online Activities. As a complement to physical materials and face-to-face outreach, online activities employ a range of proprietary and off-the-shelf tools to engage community members through digital technology and enable their participate in the General Plan Update process in an accessible and convenient manner. These tools can be generated from advanced online platforms designed for these purposes and can be used to create digital wall boards, online surveys, prioritization exercises, map-based activities, and other tools that allow participants to submit their thoughts and comments over mobile devices and computers.

Surveys. Surveys allow for remote response and participation at the convenience of participants. Surveys can be delivered over phone or distributed in paper and online and would ask questions seeking feedback on the key issues the General Plan should address along with other related topics. Like online activities, surveys can augment in-person event activities by providing an online platform for people unable to attend the event to still provide their comment and feedback on the topics presented at the event. As part of the visioning exercise of the General Plan project, an initial, communitywide survey will be created to ask community members to share their thoughts and comments on what Livermore should embody in 2045.

Documentary Art Project. The General Plan Update will include a documentary art project that involves one or more local artists and/or documentarians. The scope of the project will be determined in concert with the selected artist(s) and could include photographs, videos, and/or audio to be presented online only and/or exhibited in local museums, Downtown storefronts, or other physical venues. The goal of the art project will be to highlight the rich diversity and shared humanity of Livermore's residents and how General Plan topics like housing, health, mobility, and equity affect their lives, and to provide a non-traditional way of communicating about the General Plan to reach residents who may respond more readily to visual or other media rather than written exercises or reports.

Stakeholder Interviews. The General Plan team will conduct interviews with stakeholders with direct experience in economic development and housing issues in Livermore through one-on-one or group phone interviews or meetings. The project team will develop criteria for identifying appropriate stakeholders to interview.

Barriers to Engagement

The project team will continually assess outreach and events for barriers and constraints. A preliminary list of common barriers in public events are identified below:

- **Language.** It is important for people who speak languages other than English to be able to access General Plan Update materials. For speakers of all languages, planning terms and acronyms can often be unfamiliar and discourage community members from getting or staying involved. The materials for the General Plan update need to be accessible both with common terms and through translation into other languages, particularly Spanish, Simplified Chinese, and Farsi. Events will be made accessible for non-English speakers by: making the website, social media, and online event and registration pages translatable; translating outreach materials such as event fliers and survey instruments; providing live translation through attendance by multilingual staff or professional translation services at in-person and virtual events; and coordinating with CBOs to ensure translations are appropriate, culturally sensitive, and understandable to non-English-speaking audiences..

- **Location accessibility and transportation needs.** An event located in a facility that is not compliant with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and is inaccessible for people with wheelchairs, hearing or visual disabilities, or other forms of disabilities, is a physical barrier to participation. Relatedly, locations that can only be accessed by a personal vehicle would make it difficult or impossible for people who do not have cars to go to the location. In-person events will be located at ADA-compliant facilities and will be reachable by multiple modes of travel.

- **Technological and digital accessibility**. Digital tools carry the risk of being unwieldy and too complicated to navigate and use, especially by those who are uncomfortable or do not understand how to participate in activities on computers and mobile devices. The digital divide (i.e. the gap in access to information, communication, and broadband technology) may preclude low-income people, people of color, elderly and other important community members from accessing complex technological engagement such as webinars. Since these tools require computers and mobile devices, they would be inaccessible to people who do not have such devices. Online activities will follow ADA and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), be easy-to-use, and provide clear instructions on use; and printed or in-person alternatives will be available when possible. Digital tools will also be compatible with mobile devices to widen access. Numerous mechanisms will be considered for engagement to reach the most impacted and hard to reach populations, including social media tools such as Facebook Live or Google Meet which may be more accessible and widely used than videoconferencing technologies.

- **Timing of events.** People have different schedules, and one time of day or day of the week will likely not work for everyone. This is especially true for underserved communities where residents may be working multiple jobs. Events and activities will be scheduled on strategic days and times that can work for different segments of the community to respond to different schedules.

- **Childcare.** Families often find it difficult to attend events because they must tend to their children. Activities for children will be provided so that parents can attend an event with their children.

- **Competing needs.** Choosing to attend an event for planning may not rank high on a resident's to-do list, which can be attributed to busy personal schedules or not knowing what the event is about. Drawing people out who have never participated in a planning event before is a challenge. Offering food at events is an essential practice for honoring attendees' time, addressing participation barriers, and helping build community. , Offering light snacks or seeking the services of food vendors, can make events attractive to attend. Another technique for creating engaging and inviting events is to include incentives to attend events, such as providing gift cards or holding raffles, as rewards for attending events or participating in activities.

- **Lack of trust in governance.** Planning and governance at the federal, state, and local levels have not always acted in the interest of the health and wellness of the community. There is a history of planning decisions that have had intentional or unintentional negative impacts on communities, which are often disproportionately experienced by communities of color, low-income households, non-owner households, and other marginalized communities. Rebuilding trust in planning and governance will take time. To help with this goal, the project will meaningfully engage residents and use language and messaging that does not alienate communities; and will actively work with community-based organizations to build trust and communication with sensitive segments of the community. The process will demonstrate transparency, sincere commitment, and responsiveness. Additionally, some immigrant communities and families with mixed documentation status can be fearful of engaging with governmental institutions, so partnering with trusted community messengers is essential.

Evaluation and Tracking Success

Establishing a method for evaluating the effectiveness of reaching groups identified as part of the Target Audience is important for measuring how equitable and inclusive the General Plan Process is. At each outreach event and activity, the General Plan team will collect voluntary demographic information of participants to measure effectiveness of reaching all demographic groups across Livermore and track our progress in reaching these target audiences by comparing the demographic profile of participants to the demographic profile of Livermore as a whole, based on US Census data. We will also ask how they found out about each event in order to evaluate effectiveness of different outreach channels between website announcements, eblasts, social media, flyers, communication from a CBO, hearing from friends or family, and other channels. The General Plan team will continually evaluate the effectiveness of the outreach program and adjust the engagement approach and strategies as necessary to ensure broad participation.

To document results of demographic tracking throughout the project, the General Plan team will place results in periodic outreach summary memos, which will be prepared at the conclusion of established phases of outreach.

The City will also partner with trusted community leaders and community-based organizations to co-design and receive feedback on the engagement process and adjust engagement tactics accordingly.

Attachment A

General Plan Update Outreach Schedule

This section provides a high-level schedule of outreach events for the General Plan Update.

Visioning

August – November 2021

- General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) meetings
- 1 citywide workshop
- 1 virtual workshop
- 2 community events
- 1 communitywide survey
- 1 online activity

Research and Analysis

September – December 2021

- GPAC meetings

Land Use Alternatives

January – September 2022

- GPAC meetings
- 3 citywide workshops
- 3 virtual workshops
- 6 community events
- Online activities

Policy Development and Evaluation

August 2022 – February 2023

- GPAC meetings
- 1 citywide workshop
- 1 virtual workshop
- 3 community events
- Online activity

Housing Element

January 2022 – November 2022

- GPAC meetings
- Stakeholder and service provider consultations, including fair housing organizations, affordable housing providers, social service providers, community group representatives and others.

- 1 virtual workshop
- 3 community events
- Focus groups at affordable housing developments
- Mobile survey

General Plan

February – July 2023

- GPAC meetings
- 1 citywide workshop
- 1 virtual workshop
- 3 community events
- Online activities

Attachment B

Outreach Partners in Livermore

List of organizations identified by the City of Livermore to engage as part of the General Plan Update.

- Abode Services
- Asbury Church
- Axis Health
- Centro Legal de la Raza
- Cityserve of the Tri Valley
- Community Resources for Independent Living
- Cornerstone Church
- Crosswinds Church
- Cultura y Bienestar La Familia
- East Bay Housing Organization
- Echo Fair Housing
- Eden Housing
- Hispanic Heritage Center
- Hively
- Housing Consortium of the East Bay
- Innovation Tri Valley Leadership Group
- Interfaith Housing
- Livermore Area Recreation and Park District
- Livermore Downtown Inc.
- Livermore Heritage Guild
- Livermore Homeless Refuge
- Livermore Housing Authority
- Livermore Libraries
- Livermore Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District
- Livermore Winegrower's Association
- MidPen Housing

- Muslim Community Center of the East Bay

- Open Heart Kitchen

- Partners for Change

- Pedrozzi Foundation

- Senior Support

- Shepherd's Gate

- St. Michael's Church

- Stockmen's Association

- Tri Valley Anti Poverty Coalition

- Tri Valley Haven

- Tri Valley Interfaith Interconnect

- Unitarian Universalist Church of Livermore

- VFW Post 7265