County of San Diego

Socially Equitable Cannabis Program Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Public Scoping Meeting

Planning & Development Services

October 12, 2023

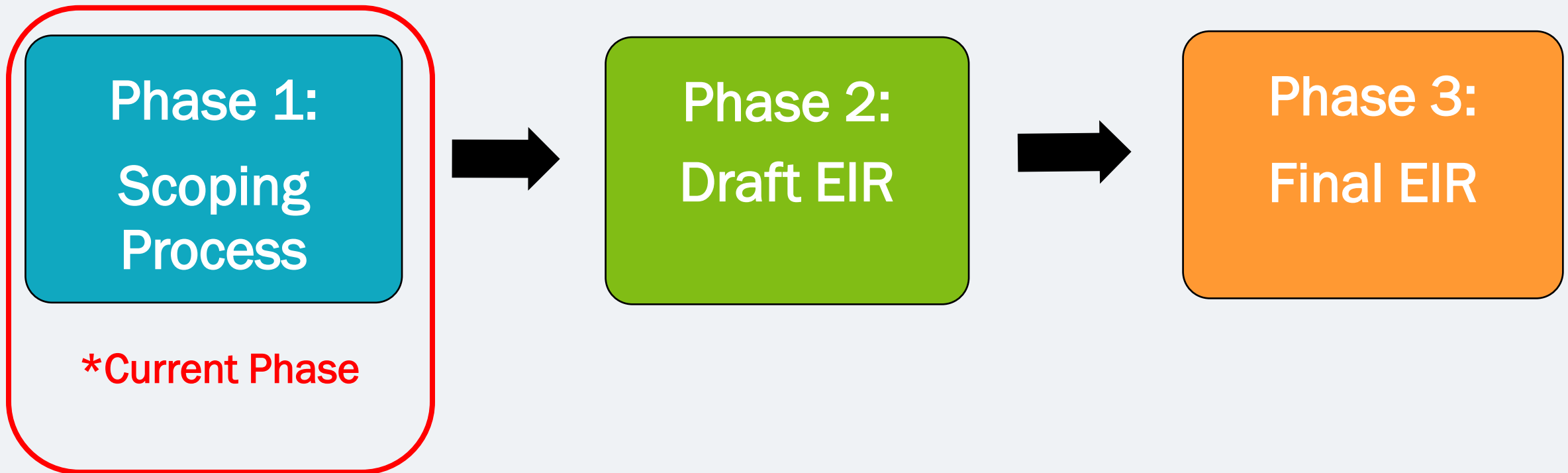# Project Contact Information

PDS.LongRangePlanning@sdcounty.ca.gov

(858) 505-6677

www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/pds/Cannabis.html

Presentation Overview

Phase 1: Scoping Process

*Current Phase

Phase 2: Draft EIR

Phase 3: Final EIR

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Presentation Overview

Summary of Socially Equitable Cannabis Program

Introduction to CEQA

Scope of the Environmental Impact Report

Opportunity to Provide Input

Summary of Cannabis Program

State Cannabis Regulation

- Permitting of commercial cannabis operations (medical and adult use) is regulated by the California Department of Cannabis Control (DCC) under the California Code of Regulations Title 4, Division 19

Cultivation
(growing of cannabis)

Distribution
(transportation of cannabis products)

Processing
(harvesting & packaging of cannabis crops)

Retail
(sale of cannabis products)

Testing
(laboratory analysis of cannabis)

Microbusiness
(at least 3 activities at one location)

Manufacturing
(conversion of raw cannabis to products)

Temporary Cannabis Events

Current County Cannabis Regulation

Since 2017, County restricts cannabis operations to 5 existing facilities

Existing cannabis facilities regulated under:

- **County Zoning Ordinance** (Section 6861 Nonconforming Cannabis Facilities)
- **County Code of Regulatory Ordinances** (Title 2, Division 1, Chapter 25)

Board Direction

January 27, 2021:

Socially Equitable Cannabis Program

Purpose:

- Bring the region in line with the will of San Diego voters

- Establish a pathway for adult-use cannabis access in unincorporated areas

- Provide a new economic opportunity for communities and residents

- Help combat the illicit market

- Help rectify the injustices caused by cannabis criminalization

Board Direction

January 27, 2021: Proposed Project

Licensing & Permitting System

- Cultivation
- Retail (*including onsite consumption lounges*)
- Manufacturing
- Distribution
- Testing
- Microbusiness
- Temporary events

Social Equity Program

- Provide greater opportunities for individuals negatively or disproportionately impacted by cannabis criminalization to secure a County operating permit

Regulatory Requirements

Develop amendments to:

- County Code of Regulatory Ordinances
- Zoning Ordinance

Board Direction

January 27, 2021: Proposed Project (cont.)

CANNABIS ACTIVITY/USE TYPE	ZONE		
	Agriculture	Commercial	Industrial
Retail		X	X
Cultivation	X		
Manufacturing			X
Distribution			X
Testing			X
Microbusiness License	X	X	X

*Cannabis facilities must observe setbacks of 600-ft from state-defined "sensitive uses" (school grades K-12, daycare or youth center)

Board Direction

June 15, 2022: Project Alternative

Board directed additional items for inclusion in the Cannabis Program

- Expand definition of "sensitive uses"

- Increase setbacks to 1,000 feet

- Prohibit cannabis billboards within 1,000 feet of sensitive uses

CEQA Process Summary

What is CEQA?

Purpose of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

- Evaluate project's environmental effects
- Reduce significant effects, where feasible
- Public and agency involvement and disclosure
- Informed decision making

If there is a potential for significant impacts, EIR is prepared

Significant impact is a substantial and adverse change in physical environment
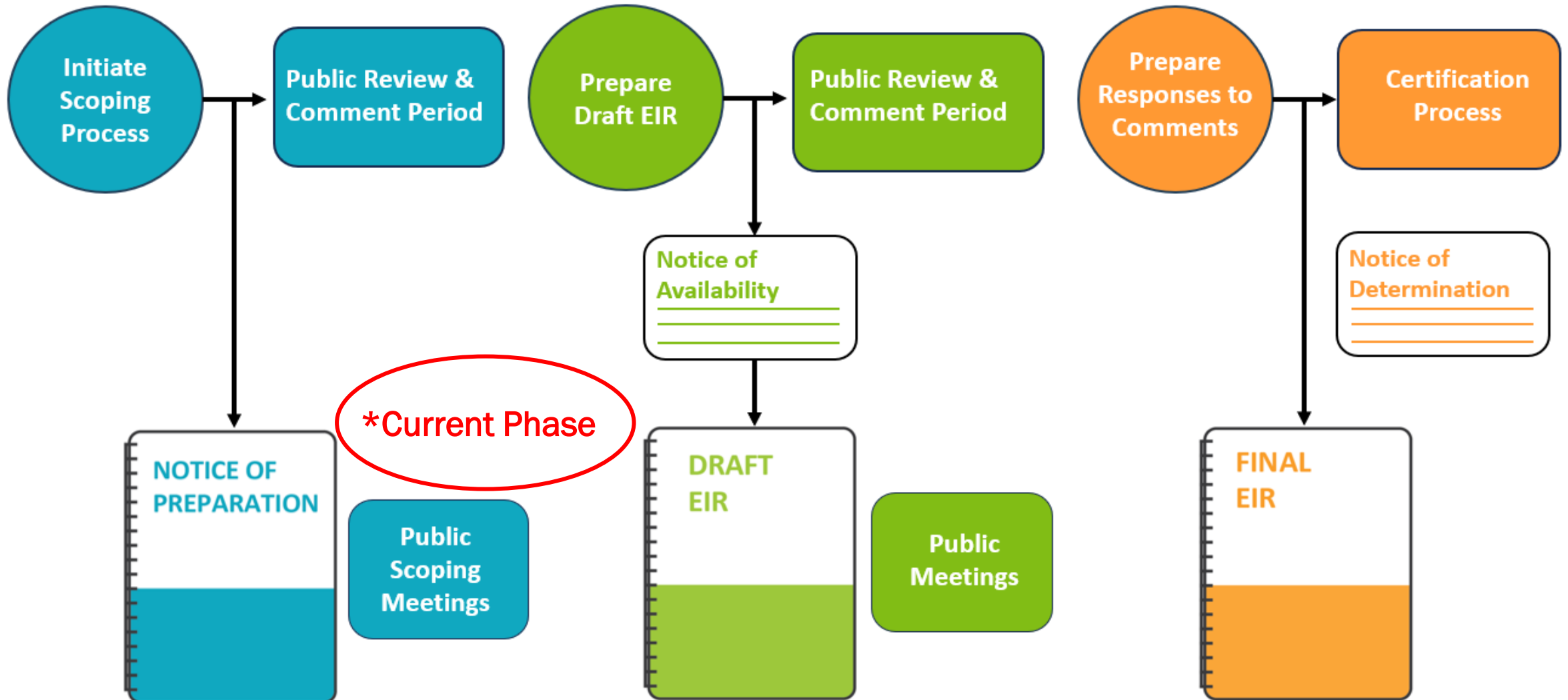
What is CEQA?

What CEQA does...

- Discloses information about the effects a project could have on the environment

- Identifies mitigation measures

- Describes feasible alternatives to the proposed project

- Solicits agency and public input throughout process

What CEQA doesn't do...

- Does not require mitigation for existing environmental conditions

- Does not advocate for the project under evaluation

- Does not require project denial due to significant environmental impacts

- Does not address economic and social issues (e.g., property values)

CEQA: EIR Process Overview

CEQA: Scoping for EIR

Purpose: Solicit input and comments on the scope of the EIR, the issues it should address, and alternatives to consider

NOP Published	Scoping Meeting #1	Scoping Meeting #2	Final Scoping Comments due

Start → **End**

September 15, 2023	October 12, 2023	October 17, 2023	October 31, 2023

Contents of EIR

EIR Chapters

- Executive Summary

- Introduction

- Project Description

- Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

- Cumulative Impacts

- Alternatives

- Other Sections Required By Statute

- Report Preparers

- Appendices

EIR Environmental Assessment Categories

Aesthetics	Agricultural & Forestry Resources	Air Quality
Biological Resources	Cultural Resources & Tribal Cultural Resources	Energy
Geology, Soils, and Mineral Resources	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Hazards & Hazardous Materials
Hydrology & Water Quality	Land Use and Planning	Noise
Population and Housing	Public Services	Recreation
Transportation	Utilities & Service Systems	Wildfires

Providing Input

Tips for Submitting Your Input

Be sure your comments address the CEQA environmental analysis itself rather than simply expressing your opinion of the project

Comments are most effective when they are:

- **Specific** and focus on the scope and content of the Draft EIR
- **Relate** to the project's potential for impacts on the physical environment
- **Include** supporting evidence/facts, such as references or citations to specific websites and studies

Comments must be submitted by **October 31, 2023, by 5:00 p.m.**

The County is Seeking Your Input

Verbal comments may be offered today

Mail written comments to:
   Audrey Hamilton, Planning Manager
   County of San Diego, Planning and Development Services
   5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 310
   San Diego, CA, 92123

E-mail comments to: PDS.LongRangePlanning@sdcounty.ca.gov
   *Include "Socially Equitable Cannabis Program – NOP Scoping Comments" in the subject line

Submit comments online:
   https://engage.sandiegocounty.gov/cannabis-program-eir

Thank You!

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