



Date: April 24, 2020

To: Thomas B. Modica, Acting City Manager *T.M.*

From: Linda F. Tatum, Director of Development Services *LT*

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **General Plan Housing Element Update**

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In a memorandum dated January 15, 2020, the City Council was provided with information regarding the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) and its impact on the City. Subsequent to that memorandum, Development Services staff has begun work on the General Plan Housing Element, a 17-month project mandated by state law. Each city and county in California is required to prepare a Housing Element with documented updates, for each new RHNA. The current cycle, Cycle 6 of the Housing Element for 2021-2029, is underway and all updates are required to be adopted and submitted to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) by October of 2021. This memorandum sets forth the components and tasks associated with the Housing Element as well as the proposed public outreach approach.

### **Contents of the Housing Element**

The last three state legislative sessions substantially modified and expanded the requirements for updating the Housing Element. As modified, Housing Elements are required to include:

- Evaluation of progress over the prior cycle;
- Analysis of housing needs and conditions;
- Identification and analysis of any special housing needs (such as for the elderly or disabled);
- Evaluation of any restricted-income affordable housing at-risk of losing its affordability;
- Evaluation of governmental constraints to housing production;
- Evaluation of non-governmental constraints;
- Inventory of potential housing development sites sufficient to meet RHNA;
- Housing objectives and programs;
- Implementation schedule; and,
- Evaluation of affirmatively furthering fair housing (such as de facto housing segregation).

Most of these elements were required in past housing element cycles; however, the level of detail and complexity has been increased. Potential sites, for example, must now include disaggregated information by affordability, type, and past sites listed (if not developed, these sites cannot be reused without specific findings). The largest change comes in reporting, with complex reporting from the City of housing development applications, building permit issuance, and completion and occupancy information is now required. The City Council will see this updated reporting in the annual performance report (APR), which will be transmitted by memorandum in April. The updated Housing Element will build upon the now-ongoing reporting requirement. In its entirety, the contents of the Housing Element are required to simultaneously be built on public input and engagement, while meeting the strict standards in established law, and also being reviewed by HCD.

### **Approach to Preparing the Housing Element**

Development Services staff and a consultant team will update the Housing Element and associated changes to zoning and other development regulations. This planning effort will build upon both the Everyone Home Task Force and the Affordable and Workforce Housing Study Group efforts. Preparing the Housing Element involves two related tasks: (1) preparing the General Plan Element; and, (2) within a limited time period establishing the tools to implement the plan. These tools and programs include adjustments to impact fees, zone changes, creation of new density bonus and other incentive programs, inclusionary zoning, pursuing additional revenue sources for affordable housing, outreach to potential developers, and other related actions to facilitate housing production.

Many of the actions necessary to complete the Housing Element update are already underway as part of implementation of the Land Use Element. For example, the Land Use Element contemplates capacity for 28,524 new units by 2040, whereas the Housing Element must accommodate 26,440 units by 2029. Programs focused on accelerated zoning changes, limiting impact fees, increasing development incentives, and reducing barriers to housing production will be necessary to meet these requirements. The adopted land use blueprint (focused on commercial corridors and in downtown) has already been established in the Land Use Element.

Current efforts underway by Development Services to increase housing production include:

- Implementation of recommendations from the Everyone Home Task Force and Affordable and Workforce Housing Study Group;
- Omnibus zoning code updates;
- Zoning code audit;
- Zoning changes in Uptown (the UPlan project);
- SB2 funded rezoning of the Anaheim Corridor and PCH; and,
- The Southeast Area Specific Plan (SEASP), currently pending with the California Coastal Commission.

### Outreach Approach

Outreach tasks will be completed by City staff with support from the consultant team. The preparation of the Housing Element, the City's share of the regional housing need (RHNA), and the necessity to demonstrate enough zoning capacity in an adequate inventory of housing opportunity sites is a legal requirement and not subject to change; therefore, the outreach and engagement process will focus on seeking community consensus around how those mandates, goals, and provisions can be achieved. The goal of the proposed outreach program is to reach an inclusive cross-section of the City's population, so that feedback can inform the plan. Outreach is intended to be extensive but will be limited in time to the statutory deadlines for completing the plan. Major outreach components include:

Approach	Participants
Working/Advisory Committee	Members of prior expert panels (Everyone Home Task Force and Affordable and Workforce Housing Study Group)
Small Group Listening Sessions (1-2 per Council District)	Residents
Citywide Workshops (2)	Residents, business owners and employees, developers, social service providers and other stakeholders
Focus Groups (12 +)	Market-rate and affordable developers, housing advocates, social service providers, homeless individuals, commercial property owners (landlords), major employers, non-English speakers, renters, college students and youth, and others
Pop-Up Events (3 or more)	Attendees at farmers markets, cultural festivals, community fairs, transit stations and other locations
Study Sessions (1-2 each for Planning Commission and City Council)	City Council, Planning Commission and the general public
Housing Solutions Survey	Sample of residents representative of the City's demographic makeup
Social Media and Online Engagement Campaign	Residents
Arts and Culture Campaign	Artists, photographers, and city cultural institutions through shared exhibits and discussions
Capacity Building Campaign	Nonprofit organizations interested in neighborhood empowerment, housing issues and train the trainer opportunities

### Next Steps and Schedule

The Department currently lacks the human and financial resources necessary to complete and subsequently implement the Housing Element work efforts. This shortfall will be addressed through a pending update of the Department's fee schedule, as well as in the Department's 2020-2021 budget request. In the meantime, as the Housing Element is a legally mandated requirement, other work efforts are being delayed.

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Work has already commenced on the data gathering and research portions of the larger Housing Element project. Public outreach events will begin later this spring, or as soon as the Safer at Home Order related to COVID-19 has been lifted, and continue through the calendar year. It is expected that a draft of the Housing Element will be released to the public in March 2021, with a Planning Commission hearing in August 2021, and a City Council hearing in late September 2021.

If you have questions regarding this matter, please contact Christopher Koontz, Planning Bureau Manager, at (562) 570-6288 or [Christopher.Koontz@longbeach.gov](mailto:Christopher.Koontz@longbeach.gov) .

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