Date: September 12, 2022

To: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager

From: Christopher Koontz, Acting Director of Development Services

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: Report Back on Senior Housing

On July 19, 2022, the City Council directed the City Manager to report back within 60-days on the status of Senior Housing in the City of Long Beach (City). This memorandum provides that status and outlines options that City Departments and the City Council may take in the future to further support the need for safe, dignified, affordable housing for seniors.

Seniors in Long Beach

According to the 2020 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates using census tracts, there are more than 54,000 Long Beach seniors aged 65 and above with another estimated 27,050 residents aged between 60 and 64 that will reach senior age in the coming decade. This group is not monolithic and includes a diversity of ages, race and ethnicity, income, household size and composition and live in a variety of housing types. By most measurements, the senior population in Long Beach has grown modestly over the last ten years, and based on local and national trends, is expected to continue to grow over time.

Many seniors have special needs or concerns. There are an estimated 13,474 seniors who live alone. In addition, there are 18,249 seniors who have a disability. While seniors are often assumed to be retired, that is not always possible or preferred, and 11,354 seniors have worked in the past 12 months. Lastly, there are 10,802 senior rental householders and of these there are 6,865 (64 percent) who spend over 30 percent of their income on gross rent (contract rent plus utilities). A more detailed demographic picture is presented in Attachment A.

Among the most vulnerable seniors are those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Based on the most recent homeless count there are 938 homeless individuals over the age of 55, and based on ACS data, there are 10,778 people aged 60 and over living below the poverty level in the past 12 months and likely at some degree of housing risk.

Recent Affordable Senior Housing Developments

The City has excelled for many decades at facilitating the development of affordable housing for seniors. Despite regulatory changes at the State and federal level beyond the City’s control that have shifted affordable housing finance away from senior projects and toward homeless and special needs housing, the City has continued to produce new affordable senior units with our housing development partners. Recent projects are listed in the table below:
Project Name | Location | Affordable Units
--- | --- | ---
Senior Arts Colony | 200 E. Anaheim Street | 198
Ramona Park Apartments | 2900 E. Artesia Boulevard | 60
Immanuel Place | 3215 E. 3rd Street | 24
The Beacon | 1201 Long Beach Boulevard | 158
Federation Tower | 3799 E. Willow Street | 49 (preservation and rehab)
Long Beach Senior Housing | 901 E. Pacific Coast Highway | 67 (under construction)

Through the Long Beach Community Investment Corporation (LBCIC), local, federal and State funds, the City continues to make new funding available each year for the development of affordable housing, including senior units.

Recent Market-Rate Senior Housing Developments

The City’s land-use policy which documents and zoning allow and encourage the development of senior housing, can range from fully independent apartments within an age-restricted building to assisted living and full memory or special senior care settings. The relative financial performance of this type of development and the willingness of banks and other financial institutions to lend to or invest in senior housing development is beyond the City’s control. As a result, the recent development of market-rate senior units has been limited, the projects that have been proposed or constructed are listed below. These projects listed as approved have obtained entitlements but have not yet started construction:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regency Palms</td>
<td>117 E. 8th Street</td>
<td>32 units of assisted living (52 beds) 24 units of memory care (30 beds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regency Palms II</td>
<td>810 Pine Avenue</td>
<td>78 units of assisted living (approved)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunrise Long Beach</td>
<td>3340 Los Coyotes Diagonal</td>
<td>86 units of assisted living (approved)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prior Studies

In preparation of this memorandum, City staff reviewed and incorporated the findings and direction from past studies and efforts, which are summarized below:

Strategic Vision 2030 – The City Council recently received a presentation regarding the City’s Strategic Vision 2030 on August 16, 2022. The plan identifies actions to address the City’s need over the coming decade. Implementing actions include public and private real estate investment in all areas of the City with focused investment in areas and people that have historically experienced disinvestment (1.4); six actions specifically focused on housing (3.1 through 3.6); and actions to assure the City’s older adults have the resources and support they need to be as healthy and independent as possible as they age (6.4).
General Plan Housing Element 2021-2029 – The Housing Element is the primary policy document for analyzing and addressing housing needs within the City, including seniors among other identified special need groups. The Housing Element was certified by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) in early 2022. In addition to documenting and analyzing housing needs, the implementation section of the Housing Element includes measures to provide incentives for accessible and affordable housing (Policy 1.2); preserve mobile home parks as a unique affordable housing supply for seniors (Policy 3.9); continue programs that off-set security deposits for seniors (Program 3.1); continued build-out at Century Villages at Cabrillo (Program 4.2); support senior’s need for home improvement to maintain habitability (Program 5.3); ensuring habitability through code enforcement (Program 5.4); and, establish targets for special populations including seniors (Program 7.1).

HUD Consolidated Plan 2021-2026 (Consolidation Plan) – The most recent Consolidate Plan, the document that guides the City’s use of federal poverty eradication funds, shifts the focus of these funds to housing production, including senior housing, and away from certain legacy programs. This is reflected in Goals 1 and 5 of the Consolidated Plan and implemented through the Action Plan programs including: Community Development Block Grant Program funded Affordable Housing Land Acquisition Loan Program and the HOME-funded New Housing Development Program.

Everyone Home Long Beach Report (2018) – More than 100 individuals participated in preparing this report consisting of strategies to alleviate homelessness in Long Beach. Seniors are represented in the homeless population and are especially vulnerable to both becoming homeless and experiencing adverse health or other impacts from homelessness. The plan focuses on improving the governance, delivery of services, and creation of housing for homeless individuals.

Revenue Tools and Incentives for the Production of Affordable and Workforce Housing Report (2017) – This report was generated through roundtable discussions regarding housing production and affordability. The report outlines the City’s approach to increase housing production including senior housing. These approaches have largely been implemented including reduced parking for affordable and senior housing, updating the density bonus Ordinance including senior provisions, and completion or priority housing projects underway.

Strategic Plan for Older Adults (2016) – The Health and Human Services Department prepared this strategic plan based on a comprehensive needs assessment of seniors throughout Long Beach. While the report focuses primarily on services to seniors it does identify housing as a particular need particularly for lower income seniors, those in overcrowded conditions, and those with disabilities.

Recommendations

Based on staff’s review of the demographics in Long Beach, recent housing production and past reports and direction, the following recommendations are presented for the City Council’s consideration:
1. Continue to invest in affordable senior housing through the LBCIC, where the City invests in senior housing projects by leveraging its limited housing funds through land acquisition, construction and rehabilitation loans utilizing local, State and federal funding.

2. Continue to pursue increases in State and federal funding for affordable housing. The adopted State Legislative Agenda and Federal Legislative Agenda both include provisions supporting funding for the City’s affordable housing needs including senior housing. Increased federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding, particularly HOME Investment Partnership Program and Project-Based Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers (PBVs) would be the most effective way to increase the production of affordable senior housing. On the State side, many funding sources for affordable housing have increased in recent years, however the State’s funding focus is on housing for individuals experiencing homelessness.

3. Continue to pursue new sources of funding for affordable housing. The City Council was provided a memorandum on December 30, 2020 regarding external funding sources for affordable housing. In addition to pursuing local funding sources for affordable housing, including for seniors, the City is participating in efforts at the Gateway Council of Governments (Gateway COG) and County of Los Angeles to develop new sources of funding for affordable housing.

4. Continue to support development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as a source of naturally affordable housing. ADUs are small units built within or in the yard or garage of other single or multifamily residential properties. ADUs are of a particular value for seniors because they can be used in two distinct ways: an ADU added to the backyard of a senior’s home may provide supplemental income for a fixed-income senior as well as occasional assistance from the ADU resident with difficult or physical tasks around the property. In a different scenario, an ADU is a housing option for seniors to move out of larger housing and into newer, smaller, fully accessible, suitable and more affordable housing. As outlined in the April 28, 2022 memorandum, the Development Services Department (Department) is working on pre-approved standard ADU plans and other streamlining efforts for ADU pursuant to direction by the City Council on January 4, 2022.

5. Reform the Zoning Code through a study of removing the Condition Use Permit (CUP) requirements for senior citizen housing and related housing types that serve seniors. Currently some forms of senior housing, such as assisted living, requires a CUP and are prohibited in the R3 zones (low-medium and townhouse density). Senior housing that requires a CUP is subject to density, open space and parking standards that differ from other types of housing. While well intentioned, these development standards add to housing cost and may discourage the development of senior projects. The CUP requirement cannot simply be removed because doing so would inadvertently remove regulatory control over fraternities and some other uses that oftentimes result in community impacts. A larger more complex code amendment process would be necessary. The Department can study these reforms, however the timeline of this update cannot be estimated and has to be balanced against other priority zoning reforms.
such as implementation of the legally required Housing Element available sites inventory rezoning program.

6. Include provisions for senior housing in the forthcoming Religious Facility Housing Overlay Ordinance. The Department is currently working with a consultant to prepare a Religious Facility Housing Overlay, which is a mechanism for churches and other religious institutions to add affordable housing to their campus through a streamlined entitlement process. This Ordinance is required under Assembly Bill (AB) 1851, AB 2244, Housing Element law and the City’s certified Housing Element. The City’s approach for this Ordinance could be adjusted to include senior housing including age-restricted independent living units, and assisted living units in addition to the otherwise required provisions of the ordinance dealing with more general affordable housing unit production.

7. Increase marketing and outreach toward senior housing developers. The Economic Development and Development Services Departments can work cooperatively to market Long Beach as a location to invest in building housing and express the City Council’s desire to welcome, support and encourage additional senior housing development.

Additional City Council Questions and Direction

On July 19, 2022, the City Council engaged in an expanded and robust discussion regarding seniors, senior housing and needs to be addressed. These issues will be addressed by the Department over time however, they were beyond the scope of a feasible responsible within the requested 60-days. A summary of those additional requests is found below:

- **Evaluate a single waiting list for housing or affordable or senior affordable housing** – The City lacks the authority to force any housing provider or developer to participate in a single centralized waiting list for housing. Furthermore, when affordable housing projects are approved and funded, the prioritization of potential tenants can vary by funding source. The Department can review current practices and seek to improve the lease-up process for those projects that the City financially participates in.

- **Address the needs of those with disabilities** – New housing, particularly new affordable housing are built to very strict standards of accessibility. The City financially supports development of housing for those with physical or developmental disabilities. Additionally, market rate housing is subject to State and federal requirements for accessibility and the General Plan Urban Design Element establishes Policy UD-8 to promote universal design in new public and private development. Universal design focuses on making all units and spaces accessible and adaptive specifically because as individuals age their accessibility needs change and increase. Addressing accessibility in the existing housing stock is beyond the scope of the City’s current regulatory regime and will require more extensive research and a dedication of staff and fiscal resources that are not available at this time.

- **Consult with the Senior Advisory Commission** – The Senior Advisory Commission is staffed by the Parks, Recreation and Marine Department to provide feedback to City
departments regarding the needs of and programs for seniors. While the input of these dedicated commissioners is important, it was not possible within the timelines the City Council set to respond to this item. It is anticipated that staff will be able to visit with the commission and present this memo by December 2022 or early 2023.

• **Assure an equitable distribution of affordable senior housing** – The City has not always distributed affordable housing across Long Beach but has located new projects near transit, downtown, and areas of existing need. The need to distribute new units more equitably, including in high resource areas, is already addressed in the Housing Element, Consolidated Plan, Land Use Element and the voucher guidelines in use by the Housing Authority. Further refinement of this approach will need to wait until data is available on the effectiveness of these efforts already underway.

• **Adjust the density bonus ordinance** – New development can already take advantage of the City’s Enhanced Density Bonus Ordinance which provides additional density as well as concessions and waivers of development standards in return for providing affordable housing units. The Ordinance does not have specific provisions related to senior housing though senior projects are able to participate in the program. The Ordinance could be adjusted in the future to provide additional benefits to senior projects but that would have to be weighed in relation to any tradeoff (such as fewer individual units or family units for lower income households). Furthermore, the Ordinance only became effective in November of 2021 and there is not currently enough data available to evaluate its effectiveness.

• **Evaluate the role of mobile home parks as affordable housing** – Several mobile home parks do exist in Long Beach and can be a source of affordable housing for seniors and others. Current zoning allows for the continued operation and occupancy of these housing areas. Unlike other forms of housing, mobile homes are regulated by the HCD in addition to the City. Evaluation of retaining existing mobile homes and options for future mobile home development would require close coordination with the HCD and outside expertise not currently available to the City.

• **Expiration of existing affordable housing covenants** – Each year the City monitors existing affordable housing projects for compliance with their affordability covenants and community standards. As part of this work the City regularly discusses options with owners of buildings that may be nearing the end of their affordability period. The City has had great success in renewing affordable covenants and assisting building owners in recapitalizing affordable housing projects. The Housing Element includes a program to prevent covenants from expiring and the Department has not identified a need for further study or new program development.

**Conclusion**

The needs of seniors are unique and diverse and are largely addressed by continuing to implement the housing and development initiatives already underway. The Department will continue to pursue those programs as well as the new efforts presented in this memo. Annual
updates are provided in the form of the Department’s annual report to City Council and HCD regarding housing approvals and permits.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Christopher Koontz, Acting Director of Development Services at (562) 570-6288.

ATTACHMENT – DEMOGRAPHICS OF SENIORS IN LONG BEACH

CC: CHARLES PARKIN, CITY ATTORNEY
    DOUGLAS P. HAUBERT, CITY PROSECUTOR
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    LINDA F. TATUM, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
    TERESA CHANDLER, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
    KATY NOMURA, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
    APRIL WALKER, ADMINISTRATIVE DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
    MONIQUE DE LA GARZA, CITY CLERK (REF. FILE #22-0829)
    DEPARTMENT HEADS
Disclaimer
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Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau

2020 ACS Census
2020 Census Tract
Renter Householders (65+) Spending at Least
30% of Gross Income on Rent
Long Beach, CA
As of August 2022

Legend
City Boundary
Census Tracts
Population Count
65+
0 - 22
23 - 59
60 - 116
117 - 220
221 - 465
2020 ACS Census
2020 Census Tract
60 Years and Over whose Income in the Past 12 Months is Below Poverty Level
Long Beach, CA
As of August 2022

Legend
- City Boundary
- Census Tracts
- Population Count
  - 0 - 46
  - 47 - 90
  - 91 - 147
  - 148 - 209
  - 210 - 394

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Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau
ACSDT5Y2020.B23027_data_with_overlays_2022-08-09T171815
Calculated Field
2020 ACS Census
2020 Census Tract
65 Years and Over with a Disability
Long Beach, CA
As of August 2022

Legend

City Boundary
Census Tracts

Population Count
65+ with a Disability

0 - 48
49 - 112
113 - 207
208 - 379
380 - 758

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ACSDT5Y2020.B18101_data_with_overlays_2022-08-09T142957
Calculated Field
Legend

City Boundary
Census Tracts
Population Count 65+ Lives Alone

- 0 - 47
- 48 - 102
- 103 - 193
- 193 - 334
- 334 - 511

2020 ACS Census
2020 Census Tract
Seniors 65+
Who Live Alone
Long Beach, CA
As of August 2022

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Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau
ACSDITY2020.B09021_data_with_overlays_2022-08-09T115403