

AGENDA ITEM 7A

TO: Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Long Range Planning Division

DATE: October 20, 2021

SUBJECT: LUS21-00002 Housing Element Update Administrative Draft

The Housing Element is a comprehensive plan for promoting safe, decent and affordable housing within the community. It is one of seven state mandated element of the General Plan. The state of California requires the Housing Element to be periodically updated in conjunction with Regional Housing Need Assessment (RHNA) cycle in order to plan for future population growth and housing needs and to address changes in housing laws.

An administrative draft of the Housing Element Update for the 6th Cycle RHNA for 2021-2029 has been prepared for the Planning Commissions review. For the 6th RHNA Cycle, Torrance was allocated 4,939 units compared to 1,450 units allocated for the previous 5th RHNA Cycle. A summary of the RHNA allocation by income level is provided below.

Income Level	% of County AMI*	6th RHNA 2021-29 Units	5th RHNA Cycle 2013-20 Units
Extremely Low	30% or less	810	190
Very Low	31-50%	811	190
Low	51-80%	846	227
Moderate	81-120%	853	243
Above Moderate	120%+	1,619	600
Total		4,939	1,450

*AMI = Area Median Incomes

The key components of the Housing Element Update include a Housing Plan that outlines goals, objectives, policies and programs for providing and preserving housing; a sites inventory and strategies to demonstrate that there are adequate sites within the city to accommodate the RHNA allocation; an evaluation of constraints to the production and preservation of housing; significant changes in housing law since the last Housing Element update; an assessment of affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH); and a summary of the City's community outreach efforts. The sites inventory must identify vacant and underutilized properties that already permit residential uses or that will need to be redesignated and rezoned, if necessary, to allow residential uses. For lower income housing, sites must allow a density of at least 30 dwelling units per acre and be between a half acre to 10 acres in size to be deemed adequate.

Due to the limited availability of vacant and underutilized land in the City, the Housing Plan proposes several programs to accommodate the RHNA:

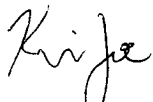
- Start with leftover vacant/underutilized sites from the 5th Cycle Housing Element
- Identify entitled projects not expected to building permits until July 1, 2021

- Identify “pipeline projects” (projects in the application phase)
- Estimate potential accessory dwelling units (ADUs) development based on recent trends and incentives
- Identify additional opportunities, which may or may not require changes to the General Plan Land Use Element and/or Zoning designation/Code including the following:
 - a) Facilitate affordable housing on religious institution properties pursuant to AB 1851;
 - b) Housing Corridor Study;
 - c) Downtown Revitalization and Connectivity Plan;
 - d) Develop a program to facilitate ADU construction; and
 - e) Facilitate stand-alone residential uses and mixed-use residential uses in designated commercial areas and key commercial corridors.

The State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) is responsible for certifying each jurisdiction’s Housing Element to ensure it complies and is consistent with housing element law. There are penalties, both legal and financial, for non-compliance. Housing Elements that are not certified must be updated every four years versus every eight years. There are benefits to having a certified Housing Element, which include being eligible to apply for State grants and funds for housing and transportation improvements. State law requires that the adopted Housing Element be submitted to HCD by October 15, 2021. HCD offers a 120-day grace period from the statutory due date, which gives cities until February 12, 2022, to submit the adopted the Housing Element. Staff will be sending the draft Housing Element Update to HCD on October 15 for their initial review of the document.

The Community Development Department recommends that the Planning Commission conduct a workshop to receiving comments from the public and provide staff their comments on the draft. To remain within the grace period noted above, staff will need to collect all comments from the Commission and public at this meeting. We are hopeful to receive comments from HCD in time to allow amendments to the document for the Commission meeting of December 15, 2021. At the December meeting, staff anticipates bringing forward the revised Draft Housing Element and Initial Study/Environmental Assessment for the Commission’s review and recommendation to Council.

Prepared by,



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Respectfully Submitted,



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ATTACHMENTS:

1. Housing Element Update Public Review Draft (Limited Distributions)
Weblink to Housing Element Public Review Draft
<https://www.torranceca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/69157>