

Date: August 18, 2021

To: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager



From: Oscar W. Orci, Director of Development Services



For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **General Plan Housing Element Update**

State law requires each city and county in California to have a State-approved Housing Element that must be updated and adopted on a prescribed schedule every eight years. The City is undergoing its sixth cycle with the Housing Element Update (HEU), which must be adopted by the City Council and certified by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) by October 2021. The Housing Element must demonstrate the City's ability to accommodate the projected number of housing units, including affordable housing units, needed to house existing and future City residents. The City's allocated housing unit obligation, known as the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA), is more than 26,000 units during the 2021 through 2029 Housing Element cycle.

The Department of Development Services has prepared the Draft 2021-2029 General Plan Housing Element which was available for public review and comment from July 9 through August 13, 2021. The HEU builds upon and revises the goals, policies, and programs of the existing Housing Element to support the City's effort to meet the housing needs of all Long Beach residents through 2029, when the plan is scheduled to be updated again as required by State law.

The Housing Element provides the City with a roadmap for accommodating the projected number of housing units needed to house existing and future City residents and guide future decisions that impact housing. The Housing Element aims to achieve several overarching goals, including accommodating projected housing demand, as mandated by the State; increasing housing production to meet this demand; improving housing affordability; preserving existing affordable housing; improving the safety, quality, and condition of existing housing; facilitating the development of housing for all income levels and household types, including special needs populations; improving the livability and economic prosperity of all City residents; and, promoting fair housing choice for all. The draft HUE contains policies and programs designed to help achieve these goals.

In addition to the goals, policies, and programs contained within the Housing Element, State law requires each jurisdiction to develop a Site Inventory and accompanying methodology to demonstrate that the City has the zoning capacity to accommodate its RHNA. The Site Inventory is based on the land use regulations of the General Plan Land Use Element (LUE) and provides sufficient sites to meet the City's obligations under RHNA, including its affordable housing obligations, as required by State law. Planning Bureau staff developed a methodology to identify sites that are feasible for housing development over the next eight years, and are therefore, eligible to be included in the mandatory site inventory. Sites identified on the draft HUE Site Inventory are generally located along corridors and in centers and transit stops where the LUE PlaceTypes already planned for development to occur, largely in the form of mixed-

use projects. The site inventory uses objective criteria to select sites that employ best practices and follows State guidance. The Site Inventory included the following criteria: it eliminated areas planned for low density residential uses and nonresidential uses as well as known non-developable uses such as parks, schools and other institutional uses and identified sites that have room to grow, high development potential, and also met HCD minimum size criteria. Staff provided an overview of the Site Inventory methodology and results at an April 6, 2021 study session with the City Council.

Public Outreach and Engagement

Policies and priorities of the draft HUE were informed by significant public outreach and engagement. The City has held several virtual meetings over the past year, most recently on April 28 and May 1, 2021, and provided the public with a variety of opportunities to give input on the HUE, which are detailed in Appendix A of the draft HUE (Public Participation Report). These meetings have included a virtual open house that participants can visit any time at their convenience and a call for residents to share their housing story through videos, photos, and written submissions. The draft HUE outreach process has also been multilingual and designed to address concerns about digital access through methods such as direct mailers and utility bill inserts, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the constraints to holding in-person meetings.

The public was welcomed to provide feedback on the draft HUE during the review period and were encouraged to share their housing stories by video, photo or written feedback. Comments on the draft HUE can be submitted via email to housingelementupdate@longbeach.gov.

Next Steps

All public comments will be evaluated by staff and revisions will be made to the final document based on that public input. Additionally, the Planning Commission held a study session on August 5, 2021, to hear from the public and provide input on the draft HUE. At its September 2, 2021 meeting, the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing and make a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council is tentatively scheduled to consider the Housing Element tentatively on October 5, 2021. Pursuant to State Law, the City Council must approve the Housing Element by October 15, 2021, although future revisions may be necessary to obtain certification from the HCD.

The draft HUE, additional information about the project, and instructions for providing input are available on the Development Services website at: longbeach.gov/housingelementupdate.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Alison Spindler-Ruiz, Advance Planning Officer, at (562) 570-6946 or at Alison.Spindler-Ruiz@longbeach.gov.

CC: CHARLES PARKIN, CITY ATTORNEY
DOUGLAS P. HAUBERT, CITY PROSECUTOR
LAURA L. DOUD, CITY AUDITOR
LINDA F. TATUM, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
KEVIN JACKSON, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
TERESA CHANDLER, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
REBECCA G. GARNER, ADMINISTRATIVE DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
MONIQUE DE LA GARZA, CITY CLERK
DEPARTMENT HEADS