

New eComment for Planning Commission Hybrid Meeting 8/15/23

Laura Pena submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Planning Commission Hybrid Meeting 8/15/23

Item: a. REPORT 23-0481 STUDY SESSION TO DISCUSS HOUSING ELEMENT RELATED GENERAL PLAN MAP CHANGE (GPA 23-01), ZONING MAP CHANGE (ZC 23-01) AND ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT (TA 23-02), TO EFFECTUATE PROGRAMS IN THE HOUSING ELEMENT (Community Development Director Carrie Tai)

eComment: Dear Planning Commissioners and Staff – I have reviewed the Proposed Zoning Text Amendment and find there are elements in the Mixed-use Development Section that will impede the ability of commercial property owners to build housing on our smaller lots. After attending the five hour Public Hearing on the Housing Element (HE) last Tuesday, Mayor Jackson stated, “we need housing, plain and simple...our economic viability centers around that young person who can live here, work here and play here.” Our city council unanimously adopted the HE last week so we could be in compliance with our state requirements, but we can do more by recommending building standards that create opportunities for housing instead of barriers to prevent it. I’ve heard from many community members how we are “all built out” or “too dense” in our city. Considering we rank as the 21st dense city in California that would almost make sense to come to that conclusion and state it as a meaningful data point. But here is where we need context. According to the Hb Economic and Market Study Update (2021), our daytime population as a percentage of our residential population has declined by 13% compared to Manhattan Beach (+12%) and Redondo Beach (-10%). Our downtown commercial business feel this density decline especially during the off season. So we have an imbalance, our residential zones are very dense but our commercial zones lack the necessary foot traffic to support a robust economy. If we want to encourage actual housing development in our mixed-use commercial corridors, considering the small lot footprints in our downtown, I recommend removing the following barriers: Bicycle Parking Standards: As written, the current proposal is problematic regarding security, size and accessibility as well as reductions and modifications. In regards to security, it is not reasonable to mandate all four below components for long-term bicycle parking. I can only presume it was meant to select one as an option. Plus, requiring the rack or stand to be in view of an attendant does not make sense for properties in our small downtown lots. A. Security: Long-term bicycle parking must be in: i. An enclosed bicycle locker; ii. A fenced, covered, locked or guarded bicycle storage area; iii. A rack or stand inside a building that is within view of an attendant or security guard or visible from employee work areas or within secure/restricted bicycle storage room; or iv. Other secure area approved by the Director. In regards, to size and accessibility to require five feet clearance from vehicle parking spaces would basically eliminate any possibility of having both car and bicycle parking in the same area considering the small footprints in our commercial spaces. In regards to reductions and modifications, I support the Chamber of Commerce written letter to the Planning Commission regarding substituting four bicycle spaces for one car space to encourage a more pedestrian-oriented, mobile downtown. I would also like the commission to take in to consideration the unique constraints imposed on the commercial properties located outside the Parking Impact Zone. As always, I appreciate your thoughtful consideration as you help our community build a prosperous future for the greater good. Best, Laura Pena “If you plan cities for cars and traffic, you get cars and traffic. If you plan for people and places, you get people and places.”