



Staff Report

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Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers

Honorable Chairman and Members of the Hermosa Beach Planning Commission

Special Joint Meeting of February 3, 2021

HOUSING ELEMENT 2021-2029 STUDY SESSION

(Community Development Director Ken Robertson)

Recommended Action:

Staff recommends that the City Council:

1. receive staff presentation;
2. solicit public comments; and
3. jointly discuss and provide feedback to staff on housing policy, housing needs, RHNA, and strategies for meeting the City's housing goals, as guidance to staff in formulating the draft Housing Element Update.

Background:

State law requires that each city adopt a General Plan to guide land use and development. Among the various "elements" of the General Plan is the Housing Element, which describes City policies and programs for maintaining and improving existing housing, and accommodating development of new housing to meet the City's assigned share of regional growth under the Regional Housing Needs Assessment ("RHNA").

PLAN Hermosa was adopted in 2017 and has a "time horizon" of 25 years. However, State law requires that the Housing Element be updated every 8 years. Housing Element planning periods are sometimes referred to as "cycles." The City's current Housing Element covers the planning period extending from 2013 to 2021, which is referred to as the "5th Housing Element cycle" in reference to the five required updates that have occurred since the comprehensive revision to State Housing Element law in 1980. Every city in the Southern California Association of Governments ("SCAG") region is required to prepare a Housing Element update for the 6th planning cycle, which spans the 2021-2029 period, regardless of when the other elements of the General Plan were adopted. The due date for the 6th Housing Element update is October 15, 2021.

On December 15, 2020, the Planning Commission conducted an initial public meeting to introduce the 2021-2029 Housing Element update.

The purpose of the February 3 joint study session is to:

- provide the City Council, Planning Commission and community stakeholders with an overview of the Housing Element update process and State requirements;
- solicit comments from the City Council, Planning Commission, and community stakeholders regarding housing needs in Hermosa Beach and potential strategies for addressing those needs;
- discuss potential strategies for complying with the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA), including housing for all household income categories; and
- specifically include housing for large families with five or more persons and for persons with special needs to include reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities, transitional housing, supportive housing, residential care facilities, emergency shelters and “navigation centers.”

Analysis:

The staff report for the December 15, 2020 Planning Commission meeting provides background information regarding the Housing Element update and RHNA requirements and is attached to this report.

One of the most critical components of the Housing Element update is an analysis of potential sites for housing development to demonstrate how the City can accommodate its RHNA allocation. If sufficient sites are not currently available, actions are required to create additional capacity for housing, such as rezoning residentially-zoned property for higher density or rezoning non-residential property to allow residential use or mixed use.

Based on SCAG’s draft RHNA allocation of 556 units and staff’s preliminary analysis of potential sites for housing development, it appears that existing housing capacity is insufficient to fully accommodate the RHNA allocation. Potential strategies for increasing opportunities for new housing could include the following:

- Incentives to encourage development of accessory dwelling units (ADUs)
- General Plan land use and zoning amendments to allow residential development in areas currently restricted to non-residential use. Examples of such areas could include:
 - commercial areas along major boulevards;
 - civic Center area; and
 - institutional uses such as governmental facilities or religious organizations.

Public Outreach to Identify Housing Needs

State Housing Element law requires local government to make a diligent effort to achieve public participation of all economic segments of the community. The City has sought public participation to identify community housing needs in the following ways:

- legal Public Notice of the Special Meeting of City Council and Planning Commission;

- Easy Reader January 28, 2021 advertisement of special meeting with request for input on Hermosa Beach housing needs;
- City website page www.hermosabeach.gov/housingelement <<http://www.hermosabeach.gov/housingelement>> with housing survey, Housing Element information, meeting dates, and City contact information;
- email notification to Housing Element interest list;
- email distribution to those signed up for City alerts;
- social media outreach encouraging housing survey and meeting notification; and
- interviews with community stakeholders, including school districts, employers, senior services providers, and churches.

There will be multiple future opportunities for public participation, including for CEQA determination, at the Planning Commission for review of a draft Housing Element document, and City Council prior to approval. The City's Housing Element web page at www.hermosabeach.gov/housingelement <<http://www.hermosabeach.gov/housingelement>> will be updated and public outreach actions will update community and interested parties on progress and occasions for public input.

General Plan Consistency:

PLAN Hermosa, the City's General Plan, was adopted by the City Council in August 2017. Since the State requires General Plan Housing Elements to run on separate cycles, the Housing Element was not updated as part of PLAN Hermosa. Under state law, the next 8-year Housing Element cycle is beginning and the Housing Element will be updated in 2021. The new Housing Element must be consistent with goals set out in PLAN Hermosa and will be included in it once adopted.

Attachments:

1. December 15, 2020 Planning Commission Staff Report
2. Frequently Asked Questions
3. December 15, 2020 Presentation to Planning Commission

Respectfully Submitted by: Christy Teague, Senior Planner

Concur: Ken Robertson, Community Development Director

Legal Review: Mike Jenkins, City Attorney

Approved: Suja Lowenthal, City Manager