



Scenic Pacifica
Incorporated Nov. 22, 1957

CITY OF PACIFICA
Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement
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May 10, 2023

Paul McDougall, Housing Policy Manager
California Department of Housing and Community Development
2020 W. El Camino Avenue, Suite 500
Sacramento, CA 95833

RE: Submission of the City of Pacifica's 6th Cycle Draft Housing Element for HCD Review

Dear Paul:

I am excited to transmit the City of Pacifica's 6th Cycle draft Housing Element of the General Plan for your review. Pacifica's Housing Element development process included a 31-day public review and comment period from February 24 through March 27, 2023, after which the City took more than a month to consider these public comments, prepare responses, and revise the draft Housing Element. These steps fulfilled the public participation requirements pursuant to AB 215.

The draft Housing Element reflects many months of work by City staff and consultants, as well as extensive public engagement. The City made diligent efforts to obtain input from hard to reach communities, including by participating in a regional equity advisory group; interviewing representatives of marginalized groups; offering in-person and online engagement options; conducting pop-ups and presenting to community groups to meet people where it was convenient to them; and, providing surveys and other materials in Spanish, Chinese (simplified), Filipino, and English languages.

The City of Pacifica takes seriously its obligation to complete the Housing Element update and accommodate its 6th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) of 1,892 units. Preceding the City's efforts to prepare the draft Housing Element, Pacifica prioritized adoption of a comprehensive update to the General Plan (other than the Housing Element) in July 2022. The General Plan Update replaced an antiquated 1980 General Plan and established an essential framework to enable the City to accommodate the 6th Cycle RHNA, which is a 358% increase over Pacifica's 5th Cycle RHNA of 413 units. This included the creation of new land use designations to allow up to 50 dwelling units per acre, more than double the maximum density allowed in the densest land use designation in the 1980 General Plan. This change, combined with other General Plan policies to guide development, were essential prerequisites to an effective Housing Element Update process.

Promptly following the General Plan Update, the City shifted focus to preparing the draft Housing Element. The Housing Element Update continued the momentum of the General Plan Update with a concentrated focus on planning for more housing. The draft Housing Element includes a major rezoning program that would add realistic capacity for more than 1,600 new housing units, which combined with more than 500 units of realistic capacity created in the General Plan Update, resulted in a 31% buffer above Pacifica's assigned RHNA. Moreover, the City has placed a major emphasis on the creation of lower-income housing as demonstrated by

identification of several City-owned and Caltrans sites for all-affordable housing development. These efforts have resulted in a 52% buffer above the required RHNA for the lower-income category.

The City was able to achieve these sizable buffers by prioritizing the community's values expressed during the General Plan Update, namely prioritizing infill development, redeveloping outdated shopping centers, and achieving densities that create walkable neighborhoods and transit opportunities. These values also allowed for a balanced distribution of housing opportunity sites throughout the city. Importantly, 95% of the units planned to address the lower-income RHNA are located in Racially Concentrated Areas of Affluence (RCCA), reflecting Pacifica's commitment to Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH).

Programs in the draft Housing Element will create the conditions for significant new housing development in Pacifica over the next eight years of the RHNA 6 planning period. First, the increased densities created in the General Plan Update will be expanded to more properties in the draft Housing Element through the aforementioned major rezoning program. This will create economic incentives for the creation of housing that have not historically been present in Pacifica, especially for nonvacant commercial sites that are critical to accommodate the RHNA. Second, programs to modernize the zoning code and remove barriers to housing production will put in place development regulations that balance the needs of our community and those of affordable housing and market rate housing developers. The strong focus on housing production in the draft Housing Element will be supported by numerous other programs to create a holistic approach to housing production, protection, and preservation, and affirmatively further fair housing (e.g., AFFH).

I am proud of the Pacifica community's involvement in the Housing Element Update process and the City team's work to prepare the draft Housing Element that is before you for review. Our team is available to discuss the draft Housing Element at any time should questions arise during your review. You can reach me by email at cmurdock@pacifica.gov or by phone at (650) 738-7341.

Regards,



Christian Murdock, AICP
Planning Director

cc: City Manager
City Attorney
Melinda Coy, Proactive Housing Accountability Chief

Attachments

- (1) City of Pacifica Draft Housing Element, State Review Draft, May 10, 2023
 - a. Available at: [Primary Link](#); [Alternate Link](#)
- (2) HCD Sites Inventory, Tables A through C
- (3) HCD Housing Element Completeness Checklist