

City of Culver City, California
Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: 06/30/08		Item Number: <u>J-1</u>	
AGENDA ITEM: JOINT ITEM – Review and Discussion of Draft 2008 Housing Element.			
Contact Person/Dept.: Jose Mendivil and Susan Yun		Phone Number: 310-253-5757 and 310-253-5755	
Fiscal Impact: Yes ☐ No ☒		General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☒	
Public Hearing: ☐		Action Item: ☒ Attachments: ☒	
Public Notification: Notice of Joint Study Session was mailed Citywide (over 17,000 addresses), Culver City organizations, Housing Advocates, Developers, and Attendees of the Housing Element Workshop (06/16/08); Notice of Joint Study Session was published in the Culver City News (06/12/08, 06/19/08, and 06/26/08); Master E-Mail Notification List (06/25/08).			
Department Approval: Sol Blumenfeld (06/12/08)		City Attorney Approval: Carol Schwab (by H. Baker) (06/25/08)	
Fiscal Impact Review: Jeff Muir (06/25/08)		City Manager Approval: Jerry Fulwood (06/25/08)	
<u>RECOMMENDATION:</u> Staff recommends the City Council and Planning Commission hold a joint study session to review the draft 2008 Housing Element, hear public comments, and provide direction to staff as deemed appropriate. <u>INTRODUCTION:</u> The Housing Element is one of nine elements comprising the City of Culver City's General Plan (seven of which are mandatory per State law). The General Plan is a comprehensive, long term general plan for the physical development of the City. The intent of the General Plan is to communicate the City's strategic thinking and philosophy for the future to residential and business communities and to provide for the physical, social, and economic needs of the City and its people. In essence it is the City's vision; the Culver City Municipal Code enacts that vision with specific legislative language. The Housing Element specifically addresses the City's vision as it relates to housing. It is the primary planning guide to identify and prioritize the housing needs of the City and outline the goals, policies, and programs to address those needs while balancing community character, objectives and resources. As a planning document and like the other elements of the General Plan, the Housing Element along with its goals, policies, and programs is not part of the Culver City Municipal Code or an enforcement document. Further, it is the only element that the State is mandated to review. The Housing Element is not a construction document or a document that			

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dictates or requires the City to build housing. Rather, it is a planning tool that demonstrates to the State how the City is able to address its housing needs.

BACKGROUND:

All cities and counties in California are required to adopt a comprehensive General Plan to govern land use planning decisions. State law requires that the General Plan contain seven mandatory elements, including a Housing Element. The Housing Element is the only General Plan element that is required to be updated regularly, at six-year intervals. In addition, State law mandates that cities submit their Housing Elements to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for review and certification prior to adoption. Per State law, the Housing Element must demonstrate how the City will address new housing, rehabilitation of current housing stock where necessary, and preservation of existing affordable housing.

The City's current Housing Element was adopted in 2001 and was subsequently certified by the State as meeting all the requirements of State law. The new Housing Element covers the period 2008-2014. This Housing Element "cycle" commenced in July 2007 when the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) approved the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocation for the period 2006-2014 (sometimes referred to as a "planning period or cycle"). The RHNA identifies the new housing needs for all economic levels in each city and county within the six-county SCAG region¹ during this planning period.

After receiving Culver City's RHNA new housing needs allocation from SCAG, staff hired a consultant (Conexus) to assist in drafting the Housing Element. In addition, a Joint City Council/Planning Commission Housing Element Subcommittee was formed so that there would be a forum for feedback, status updates, and guidance on policy issues throughout the Housing Element update process. Over a period of several months, staff, the consultant, and the Subcommittee met several times to review data and survey results; analyze draft Housing objective, policy, and program language; and finalize the draft Housing Element.

The purpose of the Joint Study Session is to allow the public to review and comment upon the Draft Housing Element and to allow the full body of the City Council and Planning Commission to also review and comment upon the draft Housing Element. At a future Council meeting and subsequent to tonight's Joint Study Session, the City Council will consider an item authorizing staff to submit the draft Housing Element to HCD for its review.

¹ The SCAG region is comprised of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Imperial and Ventura counties.

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DISCUSSION:

The following discussion summarizes the chapters and appendices of the draft Housing Element and elaborates on two key components of the document – RHNA and Chapter V which contains the Housing goals, objectives, policies, and programs.

Summary of Draft Housing Element Chapters

The Draft Housing Element consists of the following major components:

- Chapter I is the Introduction describing the context of the Housing Element as a part of the City's General Plan, and how opportunities for public involvement were provided;
- Chapter II is an analysis of the City's demographic and housing characteristics and trends;
- Chapter III is an evaluation of land, financial, and administrative resources available to address the City's housing needs;
- Chapter IV is a review of potential constraints, both governmental and non-governmental, to meeting the City's housing needs;
- Chapter V is the Housing Action Plan for the 2008 – 2014 planning period, including housing goals, policies and programs;
- Appendix A is a review of the City's accomplishments and progress in implementing the 2001 Housing Element;
- Appendix B is a land inventory analysis that addresses HCD's requirement that the City demonstrate it has the land capacity to accommodate the number of new units allocated per the RHNA process;
- Appendix C is an analysis of at-risk affordable housing units;
- Appendix D is a glossary or definition of key housing terms.

All the chapters in the document address various components that HCD will consider during its review of the draft Housing Element. Some of these components cover topics such as policies and programs that will demonstrate how the City is able to accommodate new housing, housing rehabilitation, and housing preservation; constraints to housing; analysis of resources available to the City; general demographic information; and public outreach.

Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA)

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One key focus of the Housing Element is the City's RHNA allocation. As stated above, the current Housing Element planning cycle began when SCAG approved, or allocated, Culver City's share of the SCAG region wide RHNA. For Culver City it is 504 new housing units for the 2008-2014 planning cycle. SCAG estimates that this number of new units will be needed to address the future population growth of Culver City during the new planning cycle. Further, SCAG distributed the 504 units by affordability or income level – Very Low, Low, Moderate, and Above Moderate (or Market). The allocation of new units by income level was calculated by using the City's income distribution as reported in the 2000 U.S. Census. The RHNA discussion begins towards the end of Chapter II of the draft Housing Element and continues at the beginning of Chapter III.

In its review HCD will be looking to see how the City can accommodate the construction of 504 new units. HCD does not necessarily require cities to build housing to satisfy these RHNA numbers but will look carefully to the Housing Element for a realistic plan that demonstrates the City's land capacity to meet its RHNA goals. Chapter III summarizes several tables in Appendix B into one Land Inventory Summary Table. This summary table and the more detailed tables in Appendix B demonstrate that the City has the land capacity to accommodate its RHNA allocation. Staff and the consultant conducted a land inventory analysis of approved mixed use developments that are currently in plan check, proposed mixed use projects currently under review by staff, vacant commercial sites, underdeveloped residential sites (that could accommodate medium density apartments and condominiums), underutilized commercial sites that could accommodate mixed use, sites that are part of the Redevelopment Agency Comprehensive Housing Strategy, and a general survey of all commercial lots that could accommodate mixed use under the revised mixed use ordinance.

This survey demonstrated that the City's land capacity can accommodate approximately 9,085 new units. This does not mean all these units will be built; it simply demonstrates to HCD that at least 504 units can be built over the next planning cycle (2008-2014). The land inventory analysis showed that given parcel sizes and the allowed densities depending on the Zoning designation for a given parcel, at full build-out, more units could be built than what SCAG allocated to the City. Due to the large number of units that potentially could be built and the allowable densities (per the Zoning Code), the City's affordable housing component can also be achieved. Further the Redevelopment Agency Comprehensive Housing Strategy, which sites are part of the land inventory analysis, specifically has the goal of building affordable housing units. Market forces and cost of construction will dictate what is actually constructed and HCD recognizes that the City does not have control over these forces and that the City is not a housing developer.

Chapter V of the Draft Housing Element

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The keys to achieving the City's new housing construction, housing rehabilitation, and affordable housing preservation needs are the Housing goals, policies, objectives, and programs (also referred to as measures) that are found in Chapter V. HCD will be analyzing this chapter to see how the City drafts overall Housing policy that strives to achieve new construction, rehabilitation, and preservation.

Chapter V sets forth the City's three housing goals which are overarching statements that address the need to preserve the peaceful small-town environment of the City's neighborhoods (Goal 1), call for a variety of housing opportunities that enhance economic vitality and prosperity (Goal 2), and promote access to affordable housing for all income levels (Goal 3). Further, Chapter V lists and describes housing objectives and the policies that implement those objectives, as well as housing programs (also called measures). These policies and programs will support the construction, maintenance and improvement of housing stock during the next six years; they will assist in addressing the three housing goals. The new Housing Plan builds on the plan from the previous Housing Element and recommends refinements, where appropriate, to address new opportunities or changed circumstances.

The following is a summary of the draft Housing Element objectives and policies:

Objective 1 - Housing Maintenance

Several policies address the maintenance of housing in order to promote availability of decent housing and to protect the overall quality of neighborhood environments. Among other things, these policies call for assistance to low-income and moderate-income households for rehabilitation and adequate maintenance of housing units, enforcement of building codes and property maintenance regulations, prevention of overcrowding, and prevention of illegal units.

Objective 2 - Housing Supply

In Objective 2, policies in the draft document address opportunities for development of a variety of housing types while protecting the character of existing neighborhoods. These policies encourage coordination of plans in order to ensure new residential development is orderly and is effectively served by transportation, transit – including the future Expo Light Rail station, community facilities, and public services. These policies call for mixed use where appropriate, new housing to support a balance of jobs and housing, and preservation of the character and scale of established residential neighborhoods.

Objective 3 - Housing Affordability

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Policies implementing Objective 3 are meant to provide rental and home ownership opportunities within a range of income levels. Specific policies promote, among other things, inclusion of affordable housing units in new housing developments by use of the Density and Other Bonus Incentives application process, affordable housing development, and conservation of existing affordable housing.

Objective 4 - Housing Access

Policies for this Objective strive to improve access to quality housing for all members of the community, including those in need of temporary housing and emergency shelters. Specific policies promote, among other things, housing opportunities for families of all income levels to maintain the family-oriented character of the City, assistance for first time home buyers, fair housing and non-discrimination in housing sales and rentals, barrier free housing for persons with disabilities, and assistance for homeless persons.

The following is a summary of the draft Housing Element Housing programs (also referred to as measures):

Measure 1 - Continue Current Housing Programs.

A series of current Housing programs that implement Measure 1, are recommended to be continued by staff and provide for the implementation of a variety of programs assisting City residents with the purchase or rental of housing and further, provide for the promotion of maintenance and rehabilitation of housing units.

Measure 2 - Programs to Facilitate Additional Housing.

Housing programs under this measure have been devised to facilitate new or additional housing. Some of these measures assist in implementing the City's Comprehensive Housing Strategy.

Measure 3 - Housing Division Administrative Activities.

The Housing Element contains administrative service programs that will assist affordable housing developers and preserve affordable housing opportunities.

Measure 4 - Regulatory Incentives.

Regulatory incentive measures are included that foster the development of affordable housing.

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Measure 5 - Distribute Public Information.

The last series of programs or measures in the draft Housing Element call for the distribution of public information material for residents and developers about housing programs and activities. By providing this information, these measures foster the policies of the Housing Element including the Comprehensive Housing Strategy.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Public participation is an essential part of the planning process in Culver City. An initial public workshop was held in the Council Chambers on February 26, 2008. In addition, as described below in the "Conclusion" section, there will be an opportunity for public input at the future City Council Authorization meeting, a Planning Commission Adoption Hearing, and a City Council Adoption Hearing. For each of these meetings there will be a City-wide residential mailing and notification of Culver City organizations, housing developers, and Westside Housing advocates.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

There is no fiscal impact associated with the review and discussion of this item this evening; this is part of the General Plan update and does not require action on the part of the City that would necessitate expenditure of City funds at this time.

CONCLUSION:

Staff requests that the City Council and Planning Commission review the Draft 2008 Housing Element, hear public comments, and provide direction to staff regarding any desired revisions to the document. A revised draft element will then be brought back to the City Council for review and authorization for submittal to HCD. Following HCD review, a revised draft Housing Element will be prepared addressing HCD comments, and public hearings will be scheduled before the Planning Commission and City Council for final review and to consider adoption.

MOTION:

That the City Council:

Conduct a study session to review the draft 2008 Housing Element, receive public comments, and provide direction to staff as deemed appropriate.

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That the Planning Commission:

Conduct a study session to review the draft 2008 Housing Element, receive public comments, and provide advice to the City Council as deemed appropriate.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Housing Element (delivered to Council and Commission under separate cover)