

## REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

**DATE:** MAY 19, 2022

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION

**FROM:** NATHAN HAMBURGER, CITY MANAGER

**BY:** DENICE THOMAS, AICP, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

**SUBJECT:** JOINT INFORMATIONAL MEETING TO DISCUSS THE GENERAL PLAN UPDATE PROCESS AND TO PROVIDE AN OVERVIEW OF TECHNICAL REPORTS ASSOCIATED WITH ADOPTION OF THE GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENTS, REZONING PROGRAM, AND CERTIFICATION OF THE SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT.

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The purpose of this meeting is to provide an overview of the general plan update process and to provide an overview of the technical reports associated with the adoption of the general plan amendments, rezoning program, and certification of the supplemental environmental impact report. My objectives are:

- Help understand what we will be asked of the Planning Commission and City Council;
- Ensure awareness and understanding of the materials that will be received and how best to utilize the information; and
- To receive feedback or materials that would be helpful via the staff report package to facilitate deliberations.

The Regional Housing Needs Assessment Allocation (RHNA) for the City of Agoura Hills is 318 affordable dwelling units in the following affordability categories: Very Low, Low, Moderate, and Above Moderate. The City's responsibility is to:

- Incorporate the RHNA into our General Plan by updating the following elements:
  - o Housing,
  - o Community Conservation and Development,
  - o Community Safety,
  - o Infrastructure and Community Services, and
  - o Natural Resources.
- Provide a zoning framework which will allow private development of the requisite affordable dwelling units and a buffer (units beyond the minimum required via

RHNA) so there will be adequate capacity/zoning available to ensure at all times our RHNA may be accommodated.

- Find the supplemental environmental impact report (SEIR) to be adequate based on state law and certify the SEIR.

As you are aware, the RHNA has increased from 115 dwelling units in Cycle 5 from October 2014 through October 2021, to 318 dwelling units in Cycle 6 from October 2021 through 2029. In January 2021, staff appeared before the Regional Housing Needs Assessment Appeal Board to appeal the RHNA and request a reduction. Staff advised the Committee the dramatic increase in units will be difficult to achieve given the fact that the city has limited sites upon which to meet the RHNA and many of those sites are within the Very High Fire Severity Zone (VHFSZ). The RHNA Committee unanimously voted to deny the appeal request.

The City does not, currently, have enough parcels of property zoned appropriately to allow for the development of the RHNA dwelling units. To address the requirements of state law and receive a certified housing element from the State Housing and Community Development Department (HCD), staff had to propose a rezoning program which incorporates development standards that meet the HCD guidelines; the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) District.

The AHO District will be an overlay which provides for a ministerial approval process and development standards intended to encourage private development and delivery of affordable units to meet our very low- and low- income RHNA dwelling units. If the property owner provides 20% very low- and low-income units as part of their development, they are entitled to (based on state law) a ministerial approval process which means they may receive over-the-counter approval for their project. In addition to a more expedited review process and relief from the California Environmental Quality Act Review (CEQA) there are development standards staff will propose to you which are consistent with HCD's guidelines and can be applied to these ministerial applications.

Staff has contracted with a consultant to prepare the SEIR for the General Plan Update. The SEIR analyzed the environmental impacts of the Cycle 6 RHNA and components of the rezoning program that could have an effect on the environment. The development standards analyzed as part of the SEIR were:

- Effect of increased density on the housing opportunity sites approved by the City Council;
- Effect of four-story multifamily buildings on the housing opportunity sites;
- Effect of a reduced parking standard on the housing opportunity sites; and
- Effect of an oak tree mitigation ratio of one-to-one on the housing opportunity sites.

The SEIR is a programmatic EIR which means, project specific impacts were not analyzed, but rather, most conservative case. The programmatic SEIR analyzed the impact of all of the housing opportunity sites developing utilizing the AHO District without subsequent CEQA review. If a property owner chooses not to utilize the AHO District, the project would be processed according to the Agoura Hills Municipal Code and adopted Specific Plans (e.g.: discretionary permits that are subject to CEQA review). It is also worth re-iterating that the development standards mentioned above apply only to those projects availing themselves of the AHO and providing 20% very low- and low-income affordable dwelling units on-site.

In preparation for the meeting, it will be helpful to our discussion if you take time to begin reviewing the SEIR. If you are unable to review the entire 1,374 pages, reviewing the Introduction, Executive Summary, Project Description, and the mitigation monitoring program will allow for a robust discussion. If you have questions or wish to speak with me about this in advance of the meeting, please feel free to reach out to me. The laws and HCD guidelines we are required to adhere to are new so this General Plan Update is different than other RHNA Cycles you may have participated in or deliberated upon. I expect questions, concerns, and comments so please reach out to me. I want to hear from Councilmembers and Commissioners to understand what you need to effectively consider this project.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

This is an informational item. Staff is seeking your feedback but no formal action is being requested at this time.