



STAFF REPORT

CITY of YORBA LINDA

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

DATE: JULY 18, 2023

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: DAVID BRANTLEY, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
PREPARED BY: NATE FARNSWORTH, PLANNING MANAGER

SUBJECT: HOUSING POLICY RESIDENT WORKING GROUP SUMMARY REPORT

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council direct staff to consider and incorporate the findings and conclusions of the Housing Policy Resident Working Group as it prepares revisions to the 2021-2029 General Plan Housing Element for the community's consideration.

BACKGROUND

The Housing Policy Resident Working Group

The failure of Measure Z in November 2022 left the City on a pathway toward losing its conditional certification of its housing element, which would have other potentially negative impacts on overall land use policy in the City. In an effort to evaluate next steps and to expand overall resident engagement on this important and complex housing policy issue, the City determined that a robust and extended resident engagement effort with a broad swath of residents would be helpful.

The City Council gave no mandate pertaining to the Working Group. City staff's concept was to talk directly with residents about the background, policy choices and tradeoffs of land use policy, and to listen deeply to their ideas and suggestions for how to best address land use in the future of Yorba Linda. Additionally, the hope was to start with a group of these residents who were willing to dedicate several hours to discussion and learning in order to gather effective feedback that recognized the policy challenges in addition to general resident sentiment.

From mid-May to late June, the City convened six meetings with a "Housing Policy Resident Working Group" made up of 17 residents. Monday, June 26 was the conclusion of six meetings with this group. Participants in the Working Group were selected by City Staff on the basis of the following criteria: 1) geographic diversity (include representatives from the entire City); 2) had previously engaged or shown interest in housing or other City issues; 3) diverse experiences and viewpoints; 4) reputation for being open-minded, thoughtful and collaborative; and 5) no prior service as either an elected or appointed City official.

DISCUSSION

The Group's Findings and Recommendations

The Working Group came to a unanimous consensus on six key observations and suggestions for the City Council to consider as it advances a new Housing Element approach for the City:

1. Retaining local control with a November 2024 ballot vote is important.
2. The City should pursue a November 2024 ballot measure to adopt zoning changes, and residents should seriously weigh the consequences if that ballot measure fails.
3. The City should deploy more tools to connect with residents on the need for adopting a Housing Element and perform the education necessary to ensure the public is informed on this complex subject. This may include engaging additional consulting resources to supplement the City's outreach efforts for this acute need.
4. A resident survey on housing issues could better inform the City's engagement efforts and should be pursued.
5. The City should leverage Savi Ranch (to a reasonable extent) to create a new residential and mixed-use Downtown-like space for Yorba Linda.
6. That the City should generally view mixed-use development as a positive and make it available where it is appropriate throughout higher density sites in the City.

Based upon numerous voices and viewpoints shared, staff assembled a model plan and presented it to the Working Group on June 26th. The net result was a more balanced RHNA allocation plan, which did not add any new sites other than within Savi Ranch and met both the income bracket requirements for housing viability while also meeting the total unit threshold required by the State. Although there was some healthy debate about certain elements of the initial model plan, clear consensus developed around the following specific recommended modifications to the housing sites/rezone plan as a starting point for guiding revisions to the Housing Element for consideration on a future ballot measure in November 2024:

1. Increase the allocation of residential units in Savi Ranch from 200 to 800 housing units.
2. Increase a Savi Ranch allowable density to 60 dwelling units per acre with a maximum five-story height limit. This density also includes a mixed-use overlay that would promote the integration of retail and high-density residential units.
3. Add an additional 8 acres of land from Bac Tran, an individual who owns several large commercial and retail properties in the Savi Ranch area, to the high-density residential zoning plan.
4. Reduce the zoning density on the site commonly known as Christmas Tree or Richfield Pines Christmas Tree Farm to 10 dwelling units per acre - a unit density reduction of over 70%.

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5. Retain zoning on Fairmont site at RM-10 and reduce the developable land to 3 total acres and also affirm the preservation of the open space adjacent to Chino Hills State Park - a unit count reduction of over 80%.
6. Reduce zoning on Bryant Ranch Shopping Center to RM-10 which would allow up to 78 housing units on the property and retain a portion of the property to remain commercially zoned. Commercial zoning on Bryant Ranch Shopping Center was identified by the Working Group as needed given the overall lack of commercial services within this area of Yorba Linda - a unit count reduction of over 70%.
7. Remove Site S3-033 (Islamic Center), Site S3-210 (Shinnyo-En USA), and Site S4-204A (Chabad Center) - congregational overlay sites.
8. Remove Site S3-034 (Eureka Property northwest of Islamic Center), S3-205A (Highland property), and Site S3-074 (Yorba Linda Preschool).
9. Retain existing zoning capacity from sites removed where residential zoning capacity already exists.
10. Add in additional existing zoning capacity without rezoning from certain single-family zoned properties and churches that are not part of the Congregational Lands Overlay.
11. Leave all other zoning unchanged, including the Congregational Lands Overlay District.

The findings and conclusions of the Working Group are reflected in the *Housing Policy Resident Working Group Report* attached hereto for the City Council's consideration. The City's outreach consultant and staff will be providing an overview of the Working Group efforts at the City Council meeting.

The Beginning of Public Engagement - Not the End

The Housing Element adoption process and the likely process of revisiting a modified Housing Element in the coming months requires an extensive, formal outreach process. Staff has indicated its intent to engage in a robust, communitywide outreach program to garner feedback from all members of the community. The work of the Housing Policy Resident Working Group was intended as a starting point for public engagement. Because of the informal nature of this group, it created a more natural back-and-forth process and more of a collaborative effort than a traditional large group public hearing offers.

Importantly, the City will be conducting additional formal public hearings and less-formal workshops in the coming months to seek broader resident feedback on a potentially revised Housing Element. Communication from the City may include, but will not be limited to:

- A dedicated informational website
- A recorded "webinar"

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- Direct mail piece(s)
- Social media posts and/or advertisements
- A scientifically valid community survey
- Educational video(s)
- Pop-up informational booths at community events

This is a tentative outline of the next steps for education and outreach around the City's revised Housing Element Plan:

- Jul - Oct 2023 — Revise the Housing Sites Inventory & Public Engagement
- Nov 2023 — Final Community Workshop with Planning Commission
- Dec 2023 — City Council Authorization to Submit to HCD
- Dec 2023 - Apr 2024 — HCD Review Complete (assumes two rounds of review — 120 days)
- Apr 2024 — Traffic Commission Review
- May 2024 — Planning Commission Review
- Jul 2024 — City Council Policy Direction and Ballot Measure Resolution
- Aug - Nov 2024 — Voter Outreach and Education Information
- Nov 2024 — Ballot Measure Vote

Next Steps

Staff requests the City Council provide feedback on the findings and conclusions of the Working Group. If they are acceptable, Council may direct staff to use those findings to guide staff's efforts to move forward with preparing draft revisions to the 2021-2029 General Plan Housing Element.

FISCAL IMPACT

None at this time.

ALTERNATIVES

The City Council may wish to provide additional guidance to staff beyond the recommendations of the Housing Policy Resident Working Group.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Housing Policy Resident Working Group Report
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