



PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION DIVISION

MEMORANDUM

Date: July 8, 2009

To: PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

From: Julie Caporgno, Chief Planning and Transportation Official

Subject: Continuation of the Housing Element Study Session

On June 24, 2009, the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) conducted a study session to discuss the process and schedule to update the City's Housing Element focusing on the PTC's role in developing the element. The PTC continued the item to the July 8, 2009 agenda to allow time for further PTC comments and for staff to address several questions raised by Commissioners including:

- Applicability of the Attorney General's 2005 opinion regarding housing provision requirements
- Clarification of Chapter 19 of the Municipal Code regarding the PTC role and responsibilities for the Comprehensive Plan
- Approach for modifying the vision of the Housing Element
- Feedback from the state regarding the City's timeframe for submittal of its Housing Element

The study session is scheduled for 6:00 to 7:00 p.m., at which time the regular meeting will begin. Attached are the staff report and Housing Element schedule that were provided for the June 24th meeting. One correction to the staff report is noted. On page 3, the timeframe for the Comprehensive Plan should indicate a 2020 horizon. The Comprehensive Plan EIR will analyze impacts of new housing growth projected citywide through 2020 not 2015. No additional materials previously distributed for the June 24th meeting are provided. If the PTC or the public needs to review the complete packet of materials distributed for the June 24th meeting, it is available online at:

<http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/cityagenda/publish/planning-transportation-meetings/planning-transportation-meetings.html>.

Attachment A: June 24 PTC Staff Report with change in bold
Attachment B: Housing Element Schedule



ATTACHMENT A

PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION DIVISION

STAFF REPORT

TO: PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: Catherine Siegel
Advance Planning Manager

DEPARTMENT: Planning &
Community Environment

DATE: June 24, 2009

SUBJECT: Housing Element Update: Study Session on Progress, Work Program, and Schedule for the 2007-2014 Housing Element

RECOMMENDATION

This meeting is intended to provide information only. No action may be taken by the Commission.

PURPOSE OF STUDY SESSION

The purpose of the study session is to discuss with the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) the work that has been completed to date by staff and the Housing Element Technical Advisory Group (TAG), to review the revised Housing Element work program and timeline and to discuss the anticipated schedule for PTC review, comment and action meetings on the document.

BACKGROUND

The PTC has already participated in some initial study sessions related to the Housing Element work program and key housing issues. On May 14, 2008, the PTC devoted an entire meeting to a study session on housing issues including the preservation of existing housing, density bonus law, unit sizes, senior housing and the Below Market Rate (BMR) housing program. On July 28, 2008, the PTC and City Council met in a joint study session to discuss the Comprehensive Plan amendment work program with much of the discussion revolving around housing issues. The PTC also reviewed the role, purpose and composition of the TAG and made suggestions for additional members to ensure that persons with diverse views and backgrounds would be participating. Attachment A is the updated TAG list and a description of the group's role.

DISCUSSION

Work since last fall has focused on updating the population, household and housing data required for the Housing Element, evaluation of the effectiveness of the current plan's programs and policies, and the discussions with the TAG.

Citizen Participation: The TAG is the primary avenue for public involvement in this Housing Element process. The TAG members are a diverse group representing stakeholders and organizations concerned about housing growth and policy. The TAG's primary role is to advise Planning staff on housing issues and policies, and to evaluate the impacts of various housing types and locations. In addition, two community-wide meetings will be held prior to completion of a draft Housing Element to gather input from the general public on housing issues, goals, and policies and programs. It is anticipated those meetings will be in the fall of this year and in early 2010. Staff will also convene a focus group of housing development professionals for several meetings to discuss topics such as: the effectiveness of existing and proposed Housing Element programs, local housing market conditions, suggestions for improvement to the City's codes and development review process in order to remove unnecessary constraints and barriers to the production of housing affordable to moderate and lower income households.

After an introductory meeting in November, the TAG has met monthly since January and meetings will resume again in the fall after a summer break. Topics that the TAG has discussed include: Housing Element content required by the State, local housing issues, needs, and strategies, review of current Housing Element's policies and programs, the City's Below Market Rate program and proposals from the BMR study; programs for the protection of existing housing including rental units and historic housing, strategies to encourage development of smaller units and housing near transit, services and amenities, locations where more density could be appropriate and how to link density to smaller unit sizes, appropriate parking standards and the relationship with housing affordability, how to meet the need for senior housing and site selection criteria for the housing site inventory.

Progress on Housing Element Update: Advance Planning staff has the responsibility for the bulk of the work updating the Housing Element including conducting the research, analysis and drafting the text for the revision. Staff has been focusing its efforts on review of the previous housing element, the existing housing needs data and analysis and the constraints sections. Work has been started by staff on identifying potential properties to place on the Housing Sites Inventory that are suitable for either commercial / residential mixed use or various types of residential development; and this work will continue over the summer using input from the TAG and PTC on developing site criteria for housing sites. The TAG will review and comment on the draft housing sites inventory, followed by PTC review early in 2010.

State regulations specify in great detail the required subjects which must be included in a local government's Housing Element; much of the material is an update of population, employment, and housing stock data. The section on the sites inventory must include analysis of realistic development for the individual sites. The Housing Element must also include a thorough analysis of constraints in the City's codes which act to inhibit housing or increase its development cost and propose actions which remove or lessen those constraints.

Relationship with Comprehensive Plan Update Work Program and EIR: The work program and timeline for the Housing Element update are interrelated with the Comprehensive Plan update and the schedule for the Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The Comprehensive Plan EIR will analyze impacts of new housing growth citywide through 2015, including potential housing on sites identified in the Housing Element which could produce sufficient units to meet the City's regional housing needs numbers for the 2007-2020 period. Some potential new housing sites may be identified through the preparation and review of the two area concept plans and, if so, those sites will be considered for inclusion in the housing site inventory that is a required part of the Housing Element. Currently, it is anticipated that the Comprehensive Plan amendment, including changes to the Housing Element, will be completed in 2012 since the Council extended the update process by a year during this year's budget process.

PTC Review and Comment: Attachment B is an updated schedule for completion and adoption of the 2007-2014 Housing Element update together with estimated dates for key milestones in the work program. Staff has incorporated additional meetings with the TAG along with PTC review of key sections of the Housing Element as they are prepared. This process will facilitate full PTC discussion of key issues and proposed policies and programs prior to the completed draft document coming to the PTC for its final review and transmittal to Council. Council will review the draft and direct staff to transmit it to the State for an initial review for compliance with State regulations. State comments would then be addressed by staff with any substantive comments referred to the PTC and then Council. That revised document would be analyzed in the EIR. Once the EIR draft is complete and published, formal public hearings at the PTC and Council would be held on the Comprehensive Plan and Housing Element Updates.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A: Technical Advisory Group: List of Representatives (Updated on June 8, 2009) and Description and Role of TAG
- Attachment B: Housing Element Update for 2007-2014: Revised Schedule and Key Milestones

PREPARED BY: Catherine Siegel, Advance Planning Manager

DEPARTMENT/DIVISION HEAD APPROVAL:

Julie Caporgno
Chief Planning and Transportation Official

COURTESY COPIES:

Members of the Housing Element Technical Advisory Group

**HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE FOR 2007-2014
REVISED TENTATIVE SCHEDULE & KEY MILESTONES**

Key Tasks & Milestones	2009	2010
Community Involvement & Outreach:		
Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Meetings ○ Usually held monthly	January - June September – November	January - March
Housing Developer / Professionals Focus Group ○ 2 meetings planned	October	February
Community Workshops: ○ Review Needs, Key Issues; Goals & Policies ○ Review New Draft Policies & Programs	September November	
Planning & Transportation Commission Review:		
○ Housing Needs, Key Issues	October	
○ Goals, Policy & Program Review; Mtg. #1	December	
○ Goals, Policy & Program Review; Mtg. #2		January
Housing Site Inventory (2 meetings) ○ Criteria for Site Selection ○ Review of Sites		February March
○ Review Draft Housing Element (for submittal to the State)		May
○ Review of State's Comments on Draft Housing Element (if necessary)		September
City Council Review & Action:		
○ Council Study Session		January
○ Review of Draft Housing Element ○ Direction to Submit Housing Element to State		June
○ Review of State's Comments on Draft Housing Element (if necessary)		September