

STAFF REPORT
City of Lancaster

PH 1
05-22-12
MVB

Date: May 22, 2012

To: Mayor Parris and Council Members

From: Brian S. Ludicke, Planning Director

Subject: **Update to the Lancaster General Plan Housing Element to Address Housing Needs for Planning Period January 1, 2006 – June 30, 2014**

Recommendation:

Adopt **Resolution No. 12-22**, a resolution of the City Council of the City of Lancaster, California, adopting the update to the Housing Element of the City's General Plan.

Background:

The City Council adopted the Housing Element on August 12, 2008. This latest update of the Housing Element was recommended by the Planning Commission on April 16, 2012, (Resolution No. 12-10), and includes further revisions as directed by the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), in accordance with its letters to the City dated August 12, 2010, and April 5, 2011 (Exhibit A).

Analysis:

The Lancaster General Plan Housing Element Update evaluates existing housing programs and establishes quantified objectives and programs for the January 1, 2006, to June 30, 2014, planning period that address the housing needs of Lancaster residents. The primary objectives of the Housing Element are to provide adequate sites that will permit the provision of affordable housing for all income levels, and to identify and accommodate, to the extent possible, segments of the City population with special housing needs.

The City also prepares the Housing Element to meet State law requirements, and to achieve certification by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). Certification is an important step for the City in qualifying for many funding programs offered for local housing development.

City staff has made the following revisions in an effort to achieve HCD certification since the City Council's last review of the Housing Element on August 12, 2008:

- Inclusion of Mixed Use zoned sites to meet the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation, including housing for low-income households.

- Removal of the Conditional Use Permit requirement for multi-family uses, to provide certainty for achieving development of housing for low-income households.
- Removal of the requirement to provide additional amenities to achieve maximum density for multi-family housing developments.
- Designation of the Light Industrial zone to allow emergency shelters “by-right” (non-discretionary review), in accordance with SB 2.
- A policy to adopt a reasonable accommodations ordinance, for compliance with Fair Housing Law (that the City has implemented, with the adoption of a Reasonable Accommodation Ordinance in October 2011).
- Discussion justifying the necessity of the City’s Group Home Ordinance, and how it does not unfairly constrain the location of group home facilities in Lancaster.

With these corrections, staff recommends that the City Council adopt the revised Housing Element, to bring it into full compliance with State law, and then seek certification of the element by HCD.

CCN:BSL/jr

Attachments:

Resolution No. 12-22

Revised Housing Element (available for review in the City Clerk Department)

Planning Commission Staff Report for the April 16, 2012, Meeting

(Exhibit A) HCD Letters Dated August 12, 2010, and April 5, 2011