

## Housing Element Update Townhall Meeting Q&A

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The first Housing Element Townhall meetings to kick start the community outreach were held on November 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 (English) and 7:30 (Spanish). A total of 68 individuals participated in the virtual events and presented a number of questions that are included in the following summary. For more details on the meetings such as the video and presentations, please refer to the City's Webpage at: <https://www.costamesaca.gov/city-hall/city-departments/development-services/planning/housing-element-update>

### **RHNA – Regional Housing Needs Assessment**

#### 1. What is the status of the City's RHNA allocations appeal?

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) adopted the Draft RHNA Allocations for southern California on September 3, 2020. The City as well as many other cities in the region received a very large RHNA allocation for this Housing Element cycle. The City has appealed the Draft RHNA allocation. Based on initial information from SCAG, the City is anticipating an Appeal Hearing in January 2021. The City will be informed of any changes to the RHNA allocations after the January 2021 Appeal Hearings.

#### 2. How many dwelling units have been allocated to Costa Mesa?

Costa Mesa has been allocated a total of 11,733 housing units over the next 8 years.

#### 3. What is the RHNA allocations breakdown based on income and can they be adjusted?

The 11,733 units are divided into four income categories as shown below. The City can go beyond the requirement for very low and low income categories but these minimums are set by the state. Very low and Low income category housing are the most challenging to develop because of the high price of real estate in Orange County.

Very Low Income: 2,912 units

Low Income: 1,790 units

Moderate Income: 2,084 units

Above Moderate Income: 4,947 units

#### 4. Does permanent supportive housing count towards lower income categories?

In most cases, newly developed Permanent Supportive Housing can count towards the City's RHNA allocation at the income levels that units are being rented at. Units must meet the Census definition of a dwelling unit (for instance, group homes where tenants only lease a room may not qualify) and fall within the set income ranges for the very-low, low, moderate, and above moderate levels. Every project is a little different and additional project-specific information will be needed in the future to determine if units may qualify.

#### 5. Are there requirements for the number of housing types as there is with income?

There are no requirements for the number of housing types to be built in the next 8 years; however, the Housing Element includes provisions to address the housing needs of a variety of household types such as seniors, larger families, assisted living, etc.

6. Does the City have a contingency plan if the appeal is not approved?

If the appeal is not approved, the City will need to proceed with the plan for the addition of 11,733 units over the next 8 years.

7. Why did the City have a very low RHNA during the 5<sup>th</sup> Housing Element Cycle?

The methodology used to calculate the RHNA allocations are adjusted each cycle to address the housing need at that particular cycle. With the 5<sup>th</sup> Cycle, many cities in Orange County received low RHNA numbers based on vacancy and other factors that were reflective of the recession at the time.

**Costa Mesa**

1. How many City Council districts are in the City?

There are 6 districts in Costa Mesa. Please visit this link to see which District you live in:  
<http://apps.costamesaca.gov/maps/VotingDistrict.html>.

2. Are there reports on the number of recently built units?

Annual Progress Reports are available on the City website and provide information on the number of permits granted and households added. The 2018-2019 Progress Report is available at this link:  
<https://www.costamesaca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument?id=39281>.

3. Can the City engage the State to build housing on publicly owned properties such as the Fairview Developmental Center and the OC Fairgrounds?

The City can discuss opportunities with the State and add the Zoning and General Plan to allow for additional housing on these sites; however, the State holds the decision making power on those properties and the housing element cycle is for 8 years. The State process for release of public land and development is very lengthy and may not be addressed in this cycle.

4. Does the City have an inclusionary housing ordinance?

City Staff is currently reviewing options for an inclusionary housing ordinance to coincide with the Housing Element Update. The City Council will be the review and approving body on the ordinance which will also be subject to certain studies to develop potential in-lieu fees. Staff anticipates this ordinance to be ready for review by latter part of 2021.

5. How is rent control managed by the City?

The City does not currently have rent control measures. Any policies related to rent control at local level may be reviewed and addressed through the 2021-2029 Housing Element Update Process.

**Housing Element Update**

1. How will zoning be affected?

The Housing Element Update will assess how additional housing units may be added throughout the City given existing zoning. If existing zoning does not enable the City to reach its RHNA allocation, the Housing Element may recommend future consideration of rezoning.

2. [What email address can be used to reach the City’s Housing Element Update team?](#)

Please email any questions or comments regarding the Housing Element Update and future housing growth in Costa Mesa to: [housing-element@costamesaca.gov](mailto:housing-element@costamesaca.gov).

3. [Is the focus on single-family homes or multi-family rental units?](#)

The Housing Element Update will look at all types of housing throughout the City and consider opportunities for new housing development. The purpose of the community outreach is to better understand the needs and support of residents on various housing options.

4. [Will the new student housing at OCC count towards RHNA?](#)

The new student housing will not count towards RHNA as it was completed outside of the projection dates (June 30, 2021 to October 15, 2029).

5. [How will the City ensure lower income housing is built once the plan is created/hold developers accountable for creating affordable housing?](#)

The Housing Element may identify potential incentives available to developers who include affordable housing components to housing developments. Most affordable housing agreements require long-term affordability covenants; the state requires a minimum of 55 years.

6. [What can be done about the development costs?](#)

The Housing Element process will include public input regarding possible constraints due to development costs and/or fees. [How are other City committees and groups involved in the Housing Element Update?](#)

The City will be hosting Subject Matter Expert and Target Focus Group meetings to receive feedback from experts in the field on particular topics. These meetings will be posted to the City’s Housing Element Update webpage once a date is set and community members may attend.

**Other**

1. [Can higher density housing improve traffic?](#)

Higher density housing developments may mitigate additional traffic when located within walking distance from amenities, commercial and retail uses, and job centers. Housing developments that incorporate mixed-use methods (combining housing and retail uses) may also decrease the need for residents to drive.

2. [How will parks and recreation space be increased as population increases?](#)

As housing developments are proposed, park fees are assessed in order to ensure adequate recreational open space and maintenance services are provided to the community.