

**CITY OF ALBANY
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Date: 1/7/2008

Reviewed by: _____

SUBJECT: Staff Presentation on the Preparation of an Update to the Housing Element portion of the City's General Plan including Discussion of Associated Housing Policies.

REPORT BY: Jeff Bond, Planning & Building Manager
Ann Chaney, Community Development Director

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

For information and discussion only. No action required.

BACKGROUND

State law mandates that all local governments prepare and maintain policies to address the state's housing needs. From the City's perspective, one of the most significant components of state policy is the requirement that the City adopt and maintain a Housing Element as a chapter of its General Plan. The Housing Element specifies policies necessary to attain the City's allocation of housing.

The City of Albany's current Housing Element was approved in 1992 as part of the comprehensive update to the City's General Plan (Attachment 1). Since that time, draft updates have been prepared by the City and reviewed by the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The recent updates, however, have not been formally adopted by the City nor approved by HCD.

In 1999, the City of Albany's share of the allocation was 277 units of housing, of which 174 units were required to meet affordability thresholds. For 2007, the City of Albany's share of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation is 276 housing units, of which 159 units will be required to meet affordability thresholds. January 22, 2007 and September 4, 2007 Council staff reports are attached for reference (Attachments 2 and 3).

DISCUSSION

At the Council meeting, staff is planning to make a PowerPoint presentation on the Housing Element, including a description of the mandated contents of the Housing Element and the process associated with preparation and certification of the Housing

Element by the City and by the State Housing and Community Development Department (HCD).

In summary, the Housing Element must include four main elements:

- Review of the previous Housing Element;
- Assessment of housing needs;
- Inventory of Potential Sites for housing development; and
- Analysis of City regulatory framework related to developing housing.

The City must complete the preparation of the new housing element by June 30, 2009. The approval process includes compliance with California Environmental Quality Act requirements and review of a draft Housing Element by the State HCD. Given the schedule requirements of state law, it is apparent that preparation of the Housing Element will be a major work effort for the City in 2008 and 2009.

On November 25, 2007, staff made a presentation to the Planning and Zoning Commission on the Housing Element process. One of the Commission's recommendations was that a work session be organized and outside experts in affordable housing issues be invited to provide input on how the City can best meet its housing obligations.

The purpose of the Council work session is to provide Council with an overview of the Housing Element purpose, content and policy matters, and schedule. Council may wish to provide comments on the scope and process for consideration in the preparation of the update.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The 2008-2009 budget will include budget appropriation for professional services associated with preparation of the Housing Element.

Attachments:

1. 1992 Housing Element
2. January 22, 2007 staff report *
3. September 4, 2007 staff report *
4. League of California Cities "Housing Law and Policies"

* Attachments to prior staff reports available on City web page www.albanyca.org