Housing Element 2013-2021

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The City of Los Angeles continues to grow, and with that growth comes the need for more housing – not only more units, but a broader array of housing types to meet evolving household types and sizes, and a greater variety of housing price points that people at all income levels can afford. We must accommodate this residential development in a sustainable way that respects the collection of unique neighborhoods that characterizes Los Angeles, while at the same time ensuring all residents a high quality of life, a vibrant economy, and accessibility to jobs, open space, and urban amenities. The City’s General Plan lays out the strategy to meet this challenge, by directing growth to transit-rich and job-rich centers and supporting the growth with smart, sustainable infill development and infrastructure investments. By integrating the City’s housing strategy with its growth strategy the City supports economic development, reduces housing costs, minimizes environmental impacts and enhances the quality of life. At the core of this strategy are complete mixed-use, mixed-income neighborhoods strategically located across the City that provide opportunities for housing, jobs, transit and basic amenities for all segments of the population.

This 2013-2021 Housing Element of the General Plan is the City’s blueprint for meeting housing and growth challenges. It identifies the City’s housing conditions and needs, reiterates goals, objectives, and policies that are the foundation of the City’s housing and growth strategy, and provides the array of programs the City has committed to implement to create sustainable, mixed-income neighborhoods across the City. The 2013-2021 Housing Element updates the previous 2006-2014 Housing Element, keeping its general structure in place.

Housing Crisis in Los Angeles

The Los Angeles region has been at the fore of the nation’s recent housing and economic crisis. Elevated unemployment, foreclosures and continuing levels of unaffordability have altered the City's housing context since the previous Housing Element Update in 2008. The number of renters has increased significantly, putting upward pressure on rent levels. Housing prices have begun to rebound from the crash that began in 2007, yet hundreds of thousands of Angelenos are “underwater” (owing more than what the house is currently valued at) on their mortgages and many will be unable to stay in their homes. The rapid run-up in housing prices in the 2000s has meant that 60% of Los Angeles residents are paying more than they can afford for housing.
From 2000 to 2010, rents have increased by 31% in real terms, while incomes have only risen 1.2%. This helps explain why nearly a half million (62%) Los Angeles renters paid more than what they can afford for their rents in 2011 and are considered “cost burdened” (paying more than 30% of their income for housing costs). Approximately 275,000 Angelenos are paying half their income for rent, a level considered by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, to be unsustainable for most families.

While a household earning a median income in Los Angeles today can afford a home worth about $190,000, median home prices had reached more than $400,000 by the end of 2012. Many families who managed to purchase homes within the past decade may face possible foreclosures due to the combination of their mortgage being underwater and subprime adjustable-rate mortgages that could escalate beyond the affordability of the mortgage holders. Workers such as teachers, police officers, healthcare professionals and childcare workers have been priced out of the City’s homeownership market. In addition, tightened credit standards, lack of for-sale supply and continued economic difficulties have made homeownership more difficult to attain. The 37% homeownership rate in Los Angeles, well below the national rate (65%), is evidence of the challenges to achieving homeownership in this City.

While residents are paying more of their income for housing costs than ever, the resources and tools to address the housing problem have diminished dramatically. Federal entitlement spending from the CDBG and HOME programs is down 39% from 2010 to 2012 (-$47M). The 51% reduction in HOME funds has hit particularly hard, as 70% of the City’s Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF) is comprised of HOME dollars. The dissolution of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA/LA) resulted in the State appropriating approximately $104M in unencumbered low- and moderate-income housing funds, in addition to annual losses of between $23M and $50M of tax-increment financing for affordable housing. Prior to dissolution, the CRA/LA contributed an additional 5% of tax increment directly to the AHTF, which resulted in a total contribution of $57.2M since 2005; this annual contribution no longer exists. The expiration of significant one-time sources of housing funding, like statewide Propositions 46 and 1C, as well as federal housing programs like the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) funded by the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA), further exacerbate the loss in housing funding. Finally, tools to create affordable housing and leverage private investment, such as tax-increment financing (through redevelopment) and neighborhood-level affordability requirements in new construction (i.e. inclusionary zoning) are no longer available to policymakers.

The loss of existing rental units with affordability covenants also aggravates the shortage of affordable housing. Thousands of units made affordable through federal, state, and local government subsidies are likely to convert to market-rate rents because the covenants governing affordability will expire before 2021. Between September 30, 2003 and September 30, 2013, there were 4,552
housing units located in 325 projects whose affordability restrictions expired or were terminated. Another 19,888 affordable units are eligible for conversion to market-rate in the next ten years. Replacement of these units is particularly challenging in today’s environment, given the high costs of development and shrinking resources. However, the Los Angeles Housing and Community Investment Department is committed to identifying financial resources and employing non-financial strategies to preserve as many units as possible.

The number of low-income households and the pervasiveness of poverty in Los Angeles are so much greater than most urban areas, that making housing affordable in Los Angeles requires far greater subsidies than other cities generally require. Further exacerbating the situation are high development costs for both new construction and rehabilitation, which increases the need for public subsidies at the same time these sources are shrinking. Development costs for multifamily affordable housing have increased from approximately $190,000/unit in 2003 to $358,000/unit in 2012 for new construction. Costs for preserving an existing affordable housing unit through moderate rehabilitation are comparatively less at approximately $180,000.

Given the substantial cost benefits to preserving existing units as opposed to constructing a new unit, Los Angeles has long been committed to monitoring, notification, funding, and outreach activities that support the preservation of affordable housing. In the last eight years, with the formal establishment of the Los Angeles Affordable Housing Preservation Program (AHPP), a dramatic increase in preservation activity has occurred. From 2003-2011, the City of Los Angeles provided $37.5 million in local subsidies to support the preservation of 1,226 at-risk, HUD assisted apartments in 15 developments. Additionally, from 2004-2012 the City of Los Angeles issued $134.7 million in tax exempt, multi-family housing bonds to finance the preservation of 2,297 at-risk units.

While rising housing costs impacts all segments of the housing market, it is particularly dire for those with low incomes, the homeless, and those with special needs. These populations frequently face discrimination, disabling conditions, lack of transportation, and unemployment that exacerbate difficulties in accessing permanent housing. The 2011 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) estimated the homeless population in Los Angeles to be 23,539 persons on any given night.

Additional funding must be identified at all levels of government – local, state, and federal – to support the development and preservation of more affordable housing and to keep pace with the City’s housing needs. Considering that the City is expected to need an additional 82,002 new units through 2021, of which 46,590 units (57%) are designated for very low- and low-income households based on the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA), the City will face significant challenges in meeting its RHNA income distribution if it is not able to secure additional funding for affordable housing production and preservation.
Strategically Directing Growth to Meet Housing Needs Citywide

For at least 20 years the City has been pursuing a sustainable approach to accommodating long-range growth. This approach is established in the Framework Element of the General Plan, first adopted in 1995, which encourages sustainable growth in higher-intensity commercial and mixed-use districts, centers and boulevards, and in proximity to transit. These centers and transit stations and stops are depicted on the map below.

The goals and policies of the Framework Element establish a balanced approach to growth by linking it to the land uses and infrastructure that will support the type of infill development that incurs the least economic, environmental and social costs. The Housing Element helps to fulfill this strategy.

Through land use planning and financial incentives, the City encourages livable and sustainable neighborhoods that offer a mix of housing at all income levels, jobs, transit and services. Infill development strategies preserve and strengthen the character of neighborhoods and meet the needs of existing residents as the City continues to grow.

The significant investment in the region’s public transit infrastructure – rail and buses – through the passage of Measure R in 2008, presents an unprecedented asset that touches all communities and provides a strategic opportunity to plan and place future dollars near existing and planned transit.

To target growth strategically, the City is developing Community Plan updates and developing new Transit Neighborhood Plans that provide incentives to increase the feasibility of infill development near transit. Working with communities to devise neighborhood-based strategies for development, Community Plans implement the Framework and the Housing Element policies by determining the mix, location, and intensities of land uses, the infrastructure necessary to support those uses and strategies to achieve those plans.

City agencies, including the Los Angeles Housing and Community Investment Department (HCIDLA), the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA) and the Department of City Planning (DCP), are committed to bringing resources necessary to support these neighborhoods, maintaining neighborhood character and upgrading the housing stock while developing livable, affordable, and sustainable neighborhoods.

To this end, in February 2012, the Council unanimously approved the City’s first transit-oriented Consolidated Plan (ConPlan), the first in the nation, which establishes policy to fund housing and community investment activities along transit. The ConPlan is the City of Los Angeles’ strategic plan for leveraging the annual allocations of Community Development Block Grant funds.
Framework Element Regional Centers and Rail, Transitway, and Rapid Bus Stops

- Regional Centers
- 1500 Feet from Rail and Transitway Stops
- 1500 Feet from Rapid Bus Stops
- Rail Lines and Bus Transitways
- Proposed Rail Extensions
- Freeways

Sources: City of Los Angeles, Thomas Brothers, Metro, Big Blue Bus, Culver City Bus
(CDBG), Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) grants to develop viable urban communities. The recently approved transit-oriented 5-Year ConPlan will respond to present fiscal and policy challenges, as well as opportunities presented by way of transit investment. This will lay the groundwork for response in what is a paradigm shift in how neighborhood development is funded, and why neighborhood development matters in a citywide approach to recovery from the ‘Great Recession’.

It is projected that the City of Los Angeles can conservatively receive approximately $475 million over the next five years in federal entitlement resources from HUD (including program income). Given additional CDBG and HOME leveraged funds, the City can expect to boost that investment by approximately $1.8 billion over the same time period. Furthermore, ConPlan funds will be leveraged with other government and private sources including, but not limited to the City of Los Angeles’ Low Income Housing Tax Credit (TCAC) Apportionment representing up to $85 million in annual investments, the City’s New Generation Fund, a $52 million acquisition and pre-development fund for the development and preservation of affordable housing, and leveraging of former City of Los Angeles redevelopment assets.

Integrating the City’s Consolidated Plan, in effect, aligning its community investment, with its transit/transportation imperatives, the Housing Element and funding will best ensure the City achieves the equitable development and investment of the City’s neighborhoods along transit corridors.

According to the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association, living in an affordable, transit-oriented development can reduce a low-income household’s greenhouse gas emissions attributable to driving by up to 65 percent. By taking steps such as focusing affordable housing resources near transit, planning for growth to occur near transit and centers, reforming automobile parking policies and facilitating the development review process, the City will build more sustainable and healthy communities, while also helping to meet the residential, economic and mobility needs of the region.
Housing Goals, Objectives, Policies and Programs

Los Angeles’ housing goals, objectives, policies and programs are guided by the City’s overall housing vision:

**It is the overall housing vision of the City of Los Angeles to create for all residents a city of livable and sustainable neighborhoods with a range of housing types, sizes and costs in proximity to jobs, amenities and services. In keeping with decades of federal Housing Acts and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that declared housing as a human right, the City will work towards ensuring that housing is provided to all residents.**

The Housing Element policies and objectives are organized under the following four goals:

**Goal 1:** A City where housing production and preservation result in an adequate supply of ownership and rental housing that is safe, healthy and affordable to people of all income levels, races, ages, and suitable for their various needs.

Objectives within the housing supply goal are divided into five areas: producing rental and ownership housing, preservation of rental and ownership housing, forecasting changing housing needs, distributing affordable housing citywide, and reducing barriers.

The policies and programs for production include bond financing for rental housing, targeted loan programs for homeowners and land use changes to increase opportunity sites. Preservation programs include funding incentives to rehabilitate and maintain the housing stock, outreach and education as well as mechanisms to extend the affordability terms of units facing expiring covenants. The City will track its efforts through monitoring programs which assess production and preservation accomplishments against forecasted housing needs. Financing incentives and land use policies and programs, such as density bonus and allowing second units on single-family lots will be pursued to encourage the development of affordable housing across the City. And finally, the wholesale revision of the City’s Zoning Code amendments and case processing streamlining through the realignment of City Departments will facilitate housing production and preservation in general.

**Goal 2:** A City in which housing helps to create safe, livable and sustainable neighborhoods.
Objectives within this goal are delineated into the following four areas of focus: promoting safety and health, promoting neighborhoods with mixed-income housing, jobs, amenities, services and transit, promoting sustainable buildings, and promoting neighborhoods with a mix of housing types, quality design and unique character.

Policies and programs to improve safety and health include designing to prevent crime, and providing access to amenities, such as well-lit walkways to recreational spaces. Sustainable neighborhoods will be facilitated by mixing uses within projects, providing mixed income neighborhoods, locating housing in proximity to a mix of uses, and developing Transit Oriented District plans. The City will require buildings of a certain size to meet sustainability standards, will provide financial incentives to train developers in green building techniques and materials, and encourage the development of higher levels of sustainable buildings. Policies and programs to support livable neighborhoods and preserve their unique character include the development of new urban design standards and new Community Plans that accommodate growth while continuing to serve existing residents.

**Goal 3: A City where there are housing opportunities for all without discrimination.**

Two objectives will guide the policies and programs that implement this goal: ensuring access to housing without discrimination and promoting fair housing practices.

Policies and programs to address discrimination in housing include resolving discrimination cases in the rental or sale of housing, facilitating physical modifications to housing units to better serve persons with disabilities, and encouraging responsible lending practices. Fair housing practices will be encouraged through policies and programs such as providing easy access to information regarding available housing and tenants’ and buyers’ rights as well as conducting outreach and education with residents, developers and owners of all housing types.

**Goal 4: A City committed to ending and preventing homelessness.**

The issue of homelessness is divided into two areas of focus: providing an adequate supply of housing and services to homeless persons and persons with special needs, and promoting outreach and education in support of homeless persons and persons with special needs.

An adequate supply of housing for homeless persons will be pursued through a variety of policies and programs, from short-term housing such as shelter for victims of domestic violence and other homeless persons, to long-term solutions such as rental assistance for homeless persons and the development of permanent supportive housing. Efforts also include improved coordination and planning for housing and services as well as pursuing new resources. Policies and programs
regarding outreach and education include assistance in accessing housing and services, making information more easily and readily available to the general public, and working with communities to understand and accommodate the unique housing types and broad array of housing needs within their neighborhoods.

Summary of the 2013-2021 Housing Element Update Targets

Through the implementation of the policies and programs set forth in the 2013-2021 Housing Element, the City will pursue the production and preservation of housing for all residents and will strive to meet its RHNA goal of 82,002 new units by October, 2021. The following chart quantifies the units anticipated through implementation of all of the programs by income and by type of program:

**TABLE ES.1**
Quantified Objectives: New Construction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Category</th>
<th>Number of units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely low-income households (≤ 30% AMI*)</td>
<td>1,730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very low-income households (31-50% AMI)</td>
<td>3,834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-income households (51-80% AMI)</td>
<td>4,873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate-income households (81-120% AMI)</td>
<td>1,122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above moderate-income households (&gt; 120% AMI)</td>
<td>48,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>59,559</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHNA Goal</td>
<td>82,002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Difference</strong></td>
<td><strong>-22,443</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DCP

*AMI = Area Median Income

As shown in Table ES.1 above, the City projects that, under current assumptions, it will likely be unable to meet its RHNA targets for new construction. The City is projected to fall short at the affordable (below 120% AMI) income ranges, but exceed above moderate (market-rate) production levels. While the RHNA allocation suggests that more than 46,000 units affordable to households earning less than 120% AMI will be needed, we are projecting that only approximately 11,559 affordable units will be constructed within the eight year RHNA period at this range (25% of the target). The projections are based on past performance and the reduction in funding resources for some of the production programs.
In addition to the required RHNA allocation, the City intends to rehabilitate and conserve/preserve existing housing stock. Rehabilitation includes light, moderate and substantial physical rehabilitation of existing housing units in order to improve the condition of the housing units. Conservation includes the preservation of existing housing through activities that prevent the loss of housing units, such as zoning that ensures continued residential use, funding strategies and inspections through the Systematic Code Enforcement Program (CSEP). Conservation also includes the preservation of affordable housing at risk of losing government subsidies and converting to market rate housing. Units that are listed for rehabilitation may also be counted as units under conservation/preservation and vice-versa.

### TABLE ES.2
**Quantified Objectives: Rehabilitation and Conservation/Preservation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Level</th>
<th>Rehabilitation (# of Units)</th>
<th>Conservation/ Preservation (# of Units)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Low-Income</td>
<td>2,123</td>
<td>2,373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low-Income</td>
<td>1,048</td>
<td>2,432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Income</td>
<td>1,001</td>
<td>2,948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate-Income</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above Moderate Income</td>
<td>740,000¹</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>744,472</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,103</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ The figure refers to the number of housing units inspected every four years as part of the Systematic Code Enforcement Program, which results in compliance with maintenance, use and habitability codes. The exact income breakdown of these units is not collected, so all were placed in above moderate.

In addition to the housing units reflected in the above tables, the City is committed to implementing a number of programs that preserve and maintain significant additional housing that cannot be quantified using the State’s definition. These include the maintenance and conservation of multi-family buildings by preserving residential and SRO hotels, completing urgent repairs and enforcing nuisance abatement. In addition, these numbers do not reflect the funding and maintenance of short-term housing for homeless persons or rental subsidies provided through various U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding sources.

### Conclusion

Housing is critical to the economic and social well-being of the City and its residents. Where we live and how much we have to spend on housing affects the economy, our mobility, health, access to jobs, amenities, educational opportunities and just about everything else.
The City of Los Angeles, through its housing objectives, policies and programs aims to treat housing as central to the City’s future. The need for affordable housing will only intensify as the City’s population continues to grow. However progress has recently been made to address the housing crisis through the mobilization of leadership from the City and the housing community. Good news has also come in the form of increased commitments to end homelessness. Los Angeles stands as a leader in having decreased homelessness in recent years, although much more has to be done. Also, sustained residential code enforcement has led to significant reductions in overcrowding and poor housing conditions.

A rebounding housing market in 2013 brings additional pressure on affordability, but also many opportunities. The next eight years of the Housing Element (2013-2021) will witness rapid build-out of the region’s transit network, much of it concentrated in the City of Los Angeles. New sources of funding related to addressing climate change and health, as well as potential new state and federal housing funding, potentially offer a way forward in line with the City’s smart growth approach to housing.

Housing Element: Purpose and Process

Housing Element and the General Plan

The Housing Element is required by California State law to be a component of every city’s General Plan because housing needs are recognized as a State-wide concern. Pursuant to State law, the Housing Element must identify the City’s housing needs, the sites that can accommodate these needs, and the policies and programs to assure that the housing units necessary to meet these needs can be provided. The primary goal of the Housing Element is to provide policies, objectives and programs that encourage a range of housing opportunities for all income groups.

The General Plan is a city’s “constitution for development,” the foundation upon which all land use decisions are to be based. The City of Los Angeles’ General Plan consists of a Framework Element and twelve issue-focused Elements. The Framework establishes the vision for the City’s future, and the long-range strategies, goals, objectives, and policies to implement that vision. Each of the topic-specific elements provides a more detailed expression of that vision. While the Framework Element includes chapters that address multiple urban issues, the Housing Chapter specifically addresses housing issues, and establishes the City’s goals and policies to address these issues and to guide future actions. The 2013-2021 Housing Element update embodies these goals and policies and identifies the more detailed strategies the City will implement to achieve them. The update also ensures that housing goals are integrated and consistent with all of the other Elements of the General Plan.
Statutory requirements for the Housing Element are delineated in California State Government Code Section 65580 – 65589.9. Due to SB 375 (2008), the Housing Element is now required to be updated every eight years (was five) in accordance with a specific schedule of dates established by the State. The current Housing Element therefore covers the period of January 1, 2013 – October 1, 2021.

Public Participation in the Preparation of the 2013-2021 Housing Element

Pursuant to Government Code Section 65583(c)(6)(B), “The local government shall make a diligent effort to achieve public participation of all economic segments of the community in the development of the housing element...” The 2013-2021 Housing Element Update was prepared over a period of 14 months by an interdepartmental team of twelve City departments and with the participation of a variety of housing stakeholders.

Early in the process, a Task Force of housing experts was created to provide information and expertise on the range of housing issues, needs, policies, and programs necessary to achieve the City’s RHNA goals. The Task Force established four subcommittees to address specific issues and more than 100 additional people participated in these meetings. The Task Force and its subcommittees met over a four-month period from June through October, 2012 and submitted comprehensive recommendations to City staff regarding the housing needs of Los Angeles along with suggested policies and programs that will be most effective in ensuring that these needs are met. Drafts of text were shared online using Google Docs to allow Task Force members to make comments and agree or disagree with other comments in real time. Each recommendation was reviewed by City staff and virtually all unanimous points have been incorporated into the draft Housing Element in one way or another.

The Department of City Planning (DCP) created a website to provide ongoing information about the Housing Element as it was being prepared. Staff PowerPoint presentations and meeting minutes of the 14 Task Force and subcommittee meetings were maintained on a Housing Element Update website at http://sites.google.com/site/lahousingelement. Background information on the Housing Element and links to documents of interest were also posted.

Prior to the release of the Draft Housing Element, DCP participated in community meetings throughout the City to discuss the Housing Element with the public and to elicit further input. These meetings included seven regional and citywide Neighborhood Council organizations, the Central City Association, the Valley Industry and Commerce Association, the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, the Beverly Hills and Greater Los Angeles Association of Realtors and the American Institute of Architects (SF Valley Chapter). In addition, staff
presented on with a focus housing preservation issues to a committee of community organizations representing some of the most impoverished Los Angeles neighborhoods organized by Community Health Councils, Inc.

The draft Housing Element Update was made available for 72 days for public comments and review. Near the conclusion of the comment period a combined Open House/Public Hearing was held on Saturday July 27, 2013, along with a webinar video feed to encourage the greatest amount of participation. The Open House/Public Hearing was advertised via special mailings to community and business organizations as well as interested parties, to the members of the Board of Directors of the 95 Certified Neighborhood Councils in the City, and to approximately 140 news publications, including those oriented towards the City’s neighborhoods and ethnic communities. Fifteen information boards were created, which attempted to summarize the major themes of the Housing Element. The Boards were converted to PDFs, optimized for internet viewing and posted on the project website for the public's benefit.

Approximately 47 members of the public attended the Open House/Public Hearing for the draft Housing Element. The Public Hearing featured 26 speakers, including housing advocates, members of Certified Neighborhood Councils, disability rights advocates and the public at large. An audio recording of the Public Hearing was made public and posted on the project website, at the request of those who could not attend the event.

In addition to the 26 comments made at the Public Hearing, an additional 28 letters and emails were received during the initial comment period. The major issues raised by the public were summarized in detail in the Staff Report to City Planning Commission, which was also made available on the project website. Commenters were concerned about various issues, including the preservation of existing affordable housing units (particularly near light-rail transit lines), the protection of neighborhood character, issues around accessibility and affordability of housing for persons with disabilities, concerns around the inventory of sites for housing and locating new funding sources to produce affordable housing. Many of the concerns were addressed in a revised version of the Housing Element draft, with changes identified in a “track change” document prior to City Planning Commission.

Following the staff public hearing a staff report was prepared and submitted to the City Planning Commission and the Affordable Housing Commission. Additional public hearings were held before the City Planning Commission and the Affordable Housing Commission, the City Council’s Planning and Land Use Management Committee, the City Council’s Housing Committee and the City Council.
Summary of the 2013-2021 Housing Element Update

State housing element law requires that each City and County identify and analyze existing and projected housing needs within their jurisdiction and prepare goals, policies, programs and quantified objectives to further the development, improvement, and preservation of housing.

To that end, State law requires that the housing element:

- Identify adequate sites to facilitate and encourage the development, maintenance and improvement of housing for households of all economic levels, including persons with disabilities;
- Remove, as legally feasible and appropriate, governmental constraints to the production, maintenance, and improvement of housing for persons of all income levels including persons with disabilities;
- Assist in the development of adequate housing to meet the needs of low and moderate income households;
- Conserve and improve the condition of housing and neighborhoods, including existing affordable housing;
- Promote housing opportunities for all persons regardless of race, religion, sex, marital status, ancestry, national origin, color, familial status, or disability; and
- Preserve for lower income households the publicly assisted multi-family housing developments within each community.

While fulfilling the statutory requirements of State housing element law, the policies and programs herein also foster on-going partnerships among City departments, with other governmental agencies, and with the private sector to respond to ever-changing housing demands and market conditions. Finally, the Update provides policy guidance to decision-makers at all levels of City government.

Housing Element Organization

The Housing Element of the General Plan is organized into six chapters. Each chapter is further organized into sections that address specific topics described below:

Chapter 1. Housing Needs Assessment - Provides a comprehensive overview of the City’s population, household, and housing stock characteristics, and an analysis of these factors in order to identify housing needs of the variety of household types and special needs across the City. The analysis highlights low rates of housing affordability and the creation and loss of existing low-cost housing. In addition, demographic changes such as the increase in the senior population and decrease in young families and children were assessed.
Chapter 2. Constraints on Housing Maintenance, Improvement, and Development

Addresses regulations and conditions that constitute constraints to housing production and preservation, including governmental regulations, infrastructure requirements and market conditions such as land, construction and labor costs as well as restricted financing availability.

Chapter 3. Inventory of Sites for Housing

State housing element law requires the City to show that it has adequate land zoned to accommodate expected population growth. For the 8-year plan period (2014-2021), the number of housing units estimated to be needed in Los Angeles is 82,002. The figure is called the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). The Inventory of Sites for Housing identifies over 20,000 parcels suitable for additional residential development without the need for any discretionary zoning action by the City. While these sites could accommodate over 300,000 units, it is estimated that fewer than 10,000 units are likely to be developed each year during the Housing Element Update planning period. With less than 5,000 units developed in 2012, the City will need to double housing production to meet projected housing demand.

Chapter 4. Opportunities for Conservation in Residential Development

State housing element law requires cities to identify opportunities for energy conservation in residential development. The City has broadened this analysis to include energy conservation, water conservation, alternative energy sources and sustainable development which supports conservation and reduces demand. These efforts reduce development costs and improve the long-term affordability of housing units. The enactment of the LA Green Building Code and other regulations like the Low-Impact-Development Ordinance have greatly strengthened City efforts towards sustainability. Specific City programs include providing rebates for energy efficient appliances, shifting the time of energy use, using alternative sources of energy (i.e., solar power), installing green roofs, requiring more sustainable landscaping and site design and adopting General Plan land use designations and zoning that create higher-density, compact, infill development near transit.

Chapter 5. Review of the 2006-2014 Housing Element

Preparation of the Housing Element Update included the essential step of evaluating the previous 2006-2014 Housing Element in order to identify progress and evaluate the effectiveness of previous policies and programs. The review shows that nearly 50,000 housing units were built, fulfilling less than 50% of the City’s RHNA goal of 112,876 units for the previous Housing Element period. The economic and housing crisis faced in the second half of the decade obviously played a major role in decreasing housing production during much of the period. The review showed that the goals, objectives and policies of the previous Housing Element remain relevant and important, and this Housing Element Update builds upon them, reconfiguring and refining some of them to better focus the City’s strategy. The goals, objectives and policies continue to be organized around four issues: housing supply; livable communities; housing opportunities; and ending homelessness. Similarly, the evaluation of programs provided insight into which efforts were more...
effective than others. As a result, many programs have been reconfigured so that going forward, so that more will be accomplished and a more accurate accounting can occur through the Housing Element’s Annual Progress Report.

**Chapter 6. Housing Goals, Policies, Objectives and Programs** - The objectives, policies and implementation programs under each goal speak to the diverse housing needs across the City. The City’s approach to alleviating housing needs and of creating sustainable mixed-use, mixed-income neighborhoods across the City aim to provide opportunities for housing, jobs, transit and basic amenities for all segments of the population. Each program was crafted to meet particular housing needs of the City, whether they are renters or homeowners, or populations with special needs.