

Linda Vista-Annandale Association

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CITY CLERK
CITY OF PASADENA

July 31, 2021

To: Pasadena City Council

Re: Meeting of 8/2/2021; Agenda Item 11, Draft 2021-2029 Housing Element Review

Mayor Gordo and Councilmembers,

The Linda Vista-Annandale Association (LVAA) submits the following comments on the Draft 2021-2029 Housing Element.

- Element Scope. LVAA supports staff's position that the primary purpose of the Draft 2021-2029 Draft Housing Element is general in nature. This Element is a part of Pasadena's General Plan, and its primary goal is not to be a tool to produce Affordable Housing, but rather to indicate "where" and "how" within its own jurisdictional boundaries Pasadena will meet its infamous RHNA allocation for 2021-2029. The Draft appears to meet the basic requirements of "where" and "how", and, therefore, should be submitted to HCD for review. On the other hand, LVAA agrees with so many critics that Pasadena's RHNA allocation is infeasible, which puts stress on identifying and, in due course, implementing specific programs and detailed strategies to produce Affordable Housing.
- Consistency. The Draft HE asserts that it is "Consistent" with the Land Use and other Elements of the General Plan, including Parks and Recreation and Open Space. It appears to LVAA that the Draft HE Element may not be consistent with other Elements of the General Plan or consistent within itself. For example,
 - Open Space/Parks. Several Elements of the General Plan stress the value of Open Space and Parks to ensuring neighborhood quality of life. In proposed Goal HE-1 and Policy HE 1.6, parks and green spaces are emphasized. Yet, proposed Programs 9 (Constraints Removal) and 10 (Regulatory Incentives), and elsewhere in the Draft HE, environmental and open space policies are suggested for removal or devaluation, including waiving, or reducing considerably Residential Impact Fees – the main source of City funding along with certain Grants for parks and open space. In our opinion, more density and crowding require more parks and open space to ensure quality of life for all Pasadena residents.
 - Design Review/CEQA. Goal HE-1 and Policy HE Policy 1.3 stress healthy neighborhoods, and neighborhood character and scale, and housing project design excellence. Policy HE 2.3 calls out Environmental Sustainability. Program 5 provides for residential quality design review.

Yet, proposed Program 9 suggests modifying or reducing the Design Review process, and reducing the Commission review process, reducing, or eliminating environmental review, and reducing the public review process, all in the interest of “streamlining”.

Just like the Land Use Element, this Draft HE has some general concept for everyone and there is a “consistent” provision for practically anything. Which policy choices should be made in a consistent manner? Excellence in design, character, and scale? Then, effective, and enforceable Design Guidelines, rules, and ordinances, together with competent and thorough Design Review, are required, along with full public review.

- Dislocation and Gentrification; Home Ownership Policies. LVAA is concerned about increasing threats of dislocation of long-time Pasadena residents through rising land values, gentrification, the influence of corporate housing speculation, the influence, and effects of speculative housing developers with minimum interest in Affordable Housing, and California Legislative mandates threatening almost all single-family neighborhoods in Pasadena with speculative multi-unit development. Also, we support home (including condominiums) ownership as one valuable way to build generational and family wealth and are concerned about creating “permanent” renters who can see no way out and up to ownership in place of landlords. To counter all these influences that undermine Affordable Housing and neighborhood preservation and retention, LVAA supports all the Goals, Policies and Programs that support home ownership, and Affordable Housing and neighborhood preservation and retention, including Goal HE-3, and all Goal HE-3 Policies, and, Program 3 (Housing Rehabilitation) and Program 4 (Historic Preservation), and Program 5 (Housing Design) and Program 22 (Neighborhood and Community Preservation).
- Historic Preservation. LVAA supports Historic Preservation of one of the most cost effective and efficient methods of preserving Affordable Housing. It is always cheaper to maintain and preserve older homes than buy land and build new. Consider the current cost to build a new Affordable or Market Rate Unit in Pasadena. Further, such efforts maintain and preserve the character and scale of Pasadena. Therefore, we support Program 4, Historic Preservation, and suggest an additional aspect of the Program: a City-wide Survey and Data Base of all Eligible and Listed Historic residential assets so that Pasadena’s administration and programs can be better targeted and more effective.
 - Correction: The Historic Review paragraph in Program 5 (Housing Design) should be corrected to include Eligible Historic assets.

- Hillside Overlays -- Correction. Program 5 (Housing Design) skips several important Overlay zones that include Design and design-related requirements: the Hillside Overlay Zones. The LVAA Hillside Overlay Zone includes many design-related provisions and requirements. This section should be corrected.
- Hillsides Constraints. Program 9 provides proposals to remove constraints, a good deal of which are questionable. See above. But one category is ignored: necessary or required constraints. Such a constraint is the Extremely High Wildfire Danger status of Pasadena's Hillsides including West Pasadena and particularly the LVAA neighborhood area. Pasadena's new Fire Chief already has paid us a visit and took careful note of the extreme Wildfire danger in our hills; the narrow streets and lack of room for driving or parking; and the similarity between our area and such disaster areas as Oakland Hills. He will be suggesting soon a new Fire Emergency Plan for the Hillsides in Pasadena including the Linda Vista area, and we will be working with and cooperating with him and the Fire Department. As part of this process, it is clear and we will be asserting that ADUs in the Hillsides, particularly detached ADUs, must continue to be avoided and not permitted in the interests of Pasadena public safety. There is simply no room for more people, traffic, parking, emergency services, emergency egress, and such, if we are subject to a wildfire incident, particularly during a Rose Bowl event of any size, but particularly a large event. The Draft HE should reflect and consider and provide for this Hillside constraints situation.
- Program 11: ADUs; Program 15 (Affordable Housing Preservation). Other than in the Hillsides for Public Safety reasons, see above, LVAA's opinion is that ADUs should not be considered effective Affordable Housing unless Deed Restricted for a considerable period to provide Affordable rents. Otherwise, ADUs should pay "full freight" including business permit and Residential Impact fees as owners profit from high Market rents. LVAA does not accept the "trickle down" Affordable Housing costs theory – the more Market rate rental units including ADUs there are, somehow affordable rents result elsewhere. Further, we support all the suggested Deed Restricted programs which should be expanded.
- Program 8: Inclusionary Housing. This Program should consider increasing Inclusionary requirements and fees. The State Density Bonus Law requires Pasadena to add an inordinate amount of Market Rate housing for the wealthy for a little bit of Affordable Housing while Developers profit off all such development to a shocking degree. LVAA supports the production of genuine Affordable Housing – not, endless Market Rate buildings out of scale and out of character destroying the charm and beauty of our City while NOT really solving our housing needs.

- Program 12: Financial Assistance; Programs 13 and 14 (Ownership and Rental assistance). LVAA supports strengthening rental and home ownership financial assistance programs and supports efforts to find and implement a continuous source or sources of such funds. The State and/or County need to review and consider restoring some form of Tax Increment (Redevelopment) Financing which provided much needed financial assistance for Housing of all types. We support the creative approach to Pasadena's "Missing Middle" rental assistance Affordable Housing programs including the Tax Increment provisions. And we oppose reducing Residential Impact Fees that support parks and open space.
- Program 24 (Resource Conservation). This program and elsewhere in the Draft HE it is asserted and assumed that Pasadena has adequate infrastructure including WATER to support all this proposed Market Rate Housing production – the "magic" of conservation. There is supposed to be no net depletion of water due to what? Endless conservation? This situation must be addressed head on – where is the water, particularly, and considering current constraints, coming from? How much will Pasadena have for all of us in the future? The Draft HE, just like other Plans before it, ignores the water situation. We cannot ignore this drought and the Draft HE must discuss and analyze water, particularly as the situation applies to the production of Market Rate Housing in exchange for so little Affordable Housing.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments and concerns. In addition to our comments and concerns, we urge you in addition to consider the comments and concerns of other major Neighborhood Associations, including WPRA and Madison Heights.

Sincerely,

Nina Chomsky

Nina Chomsky, LVAA President

cc: LVAA Board of Directors

Iraheta, Alba

From: Martha Kriley <
Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 10:28 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: CITY COUNCIL MEETING FOR AUGUST 2, 2021: ITEM 11

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To Mayor of Pasadena and Members of City Council,

The following comment pertains to agenda item 11 of the Pasadena City Council meeting taking place on August 2, 2021: DRAFT 2021-2029 HOUSING ELEMENT

I am disappointed in the draft 2021-2029 Housing Element as well as in the lack of public process, which was promised, but not delivered, by the city. I have been a resident of Pasadena for 5 years. I love this city, but as a renter, I do not feel that the city loves me back, nor that we have a council that cares for my welfare.

Renters make up a large part of the Pasadena community. I hope the city council reflects on the importance of this issue and delivers on the promise of housing for all.

- The city should *adopt the charter amendment written by the Pasadena Tenant Justice Coalition*, which would provide permanent rent control and just cause eviction protections. The draft Housing Element calls for a study of rent control but *we need action, not a study*.
- The city should not divert local funds into creating private wealth for moderate income households through home ownership. The city should use all its general and unrestricted housing funds to *improve the housing opportunities and maintenance for renters and persons/households who are homeless*.
- *The city should set aside local funds to assist renters who, through no fault of their own, have been impacted economically by the COVID 19 pandemic*. Instead, the city proposes to increase funding to the Police Department, which already commands the largest share of the city's general funds. Without financial assistance, an untold number of residents of our city will be evicted. The welfare of our residents is ultimately the city's responsibility.

This comment is submitted on behalf of myself and the 62% of Pasadena's residents who are renters.

Regards,

Martha Kriley

Martha Kriley (she/her)
Aero Collective, Arch I, Assoc. AIA
Contact: _____
Portfolio: _____

Iraheta, Alba

From: melody schoenfeld <
Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 10:42 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: Hampton, Tyron; Bell, Cushon; Williams, Felicia; Dyson, Darla
Subject: Agenda Item #11 - Housing Element

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Dear Council Members,

I am a 20 year resident of Pasadena. I rent a home in Council District 1, and run a small business in Council District 2.

Unfortunately, I may have to move away from Pasadena. My landlord is moving back into the home that I rent, and finding a home that I can afford is proving very challenging. Right now my commute is only 5 minutes, but I may need to move much further away in order to find housing that's affordable. I could be spending an hour or more commuting each way, adding to traffic congestion and air pollution, and spending time I could otherwise use running my business.

I respectfully request that the City Council take this opportunity to improve this draft Housing Element to include more detailed and achievable plans for creating more housing supply. As a Pasadena resident who hopes to remain in Pasadena, your actions on this plan will impact my life directly.

Thank you,

Melody Schoenfeld

Iraheta, Alba

From: Connie Tamkin
Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 11:40 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Item #11 Housing Element
Attachments: SGV CLT logo (1).png; MHCH Logo Large Scripture and White Background (2) (1).png

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Dear Mayor and Council Members:

The Housing Element is a critical tool in which to address the housing needs of this community and in the region. I want to address the issue of perpetual affordability through the model of a Community Land Trust (CLT) as an element to be considered in the Housing Element, which is still a work in progress.

We need to ensure that affordable housing is kept permanently affordable. Preserving affordable housing is a lot cheaper than building it. One issue that has some immediacy is the expiration of affordability covenants. Property within a community land trusts keep housing affordable in perpetuity. They are a great model for affordable homeownership, equity building and stability of a community. Community Land Trusts also are a model for small multi-family property to stabilize a land lord and tenants with the potential opportunity for TOPA (Tenant Owned Property) and again ensuring affordability. A CLT can help a city achieve the RHNA goals.

In addition, CLTs address the issue of land justice and engaging all members of the community to have a voice housing policy to address historic and systemic racial inequities that have shaped the real estate market place with the opportunity to create a more inclusive and racially just city.

Specifically, within the Housing Element under the Table of Contents section : Assist in Development of Housing: the support of a CLT would help with identifying and acquisition of property that can be kept permanently affordable/ This would mean that the City backed and supported the model of a CLT as part of their plan to address affordability.

.Under the section: Improve and Conserve the Housing Stock: CLTs by their charter are about preserving affordable housing stock. As mentioned above, it is much wiser and economically more prudent to preserve housing than to have to start from scratch with land costs as well as development costs. How a city would support this preservation is by channeling resources towards community ownership (the CLT model) and supporting TOPA (Tenant Opportunity to Purchase) initiatives to stabilize and keep a community from being displaced from outside and often predatory investment; and to help a CLT acquire market rate housing with HUD funds allocated by the government for affordable housing initiatives.

Under the Non-government Restraints: There are obstacles in reaching the RHNA requirements. However, as a non profit entity, a CLT is in a position to help the City and offer creative solutions that would not be feasible by a municipality directly.

Under Site Inventory and Analysis: This portion of the Housing Element requires properties to be identified and determine the possibility of residential development. Community Land Trusts, again by their charter of work, are always looking at distressed properties, vulnerable ownership with the risk of foreclosure whether single or small multi-family property, and working class neighborhoods as opportunities to stabilize a neighborhood and assure long-term affordability. These properties could be included in the Housing Element's inventory, if in partnership with a CLT.

Under Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Sites Requirement: Cities need to document "place based strategies that create opportunity in areas of disinvestment" -- a CLT brings stability and asset building and mitigates displacement pressures by shielding housing from market forces.

The San Gabriel Valley Community Land Trust is an emerging CLT which has been birthed from Making Housing and Community Happen. It is a member of the CA CLT Network, and the LA CLT Network and is in conversation with the LA County Supervisors offices, and the Council of Government and the San Gabriel Valley Housing Trust in furthering the development of a CLT. We invite and urge the City of Pasadena to be part of the regional solution within your specific Housing Element by including the model of a CLT in your response to RHNA.

As a side note, the idea of a regional community land trust was promoted by previous Councilperson Margaret McAustin after the approval of the increase of the Inclusionary Zoning percentage from 15%-20% at the end of 2019. We are hoping to realize the vision that she cast.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Connie Tamkin
Chair, San Gabriel Valley Community Land Trust Board
Making Housing and Community Happen

Iraheta, Alba

From: Christy Moision <>
Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 12:03 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse; HousingElement
Cc: Wilson, Andy; Gordo, Victor
Subject: Draft 2021-2029 Housing Element

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Dear Mayor and City Council Members:

Please direct staff to do additional planning to address our housing affordability issues, including policies that would create less dependence on cars. Pasadena doesn't have too many residents -- it has too many cars. Addressing the housing crisis with an eye to encouraging less car ownership will go a long way towards solving both of these problems.

The necessary policy changes include:

1. Removing parking minimums so that the cost to build housing is lower, the space can be used to house people instead of cars, and the use of transit and active transportation will be incentivized.
2. Removing height restrictions, encouraging developers to build up, especially near transit stations.
3. Separate the cost of housing from the cost of parking, allowing car-free or car-light families/individuals to choose housing without paying for parking they don't need.
4. Allow different types of housing in areas currently zoned for single family homes only. We have lots of great examples of duplexes, fourplexes, courtyard apartments, etc. that do not "detract from the neighborhood character" (as is often charged). We should encourage the building of these types of housing again.

Thank you,
Christy Moision
929 S Oakland Ave

Martinez, Ruben

From: Ferne Hayes < >
Sent: Monday, August 02, 2021 12:05 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse; gor@aol.com; Gordo, Victor; Wilson, Andy; Hampton, Tyron; Kennedy, John J.; Rivas, Jessica; Madison, Steve; Williams, Felicia; Masuda, Gene
Subject: Agenda item #11: Housing Element

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Dear Mayor Gordo, Vice Mayor Wilson, and Members of the City Council,

As the very important Housing Element is being drafted, I urge you to push the needs of the unsheltered residents in our community to a higher priority.

The Housing Element must deal with unsustainable housing costs which are forcing many of Pasadena residents out of the city where they have grown up, lived, worked, and planned to raise a family.

However, visible daily are those who have already lost their homes- 527 at the last official count with nearly 300 of these having no shelter at all. The winter months of "Bad Weather" are not the only problem. Increasingly temperatures of 90 degrees and above and prospects of continued heat advisories provide high risk to those vulnerable and without shelter.

On Thursday evenings I help prepare and give out meals to those who get in line at the Pasadena Presbyterian Church. Many have no shelter. Several are actively looking for work. How is it possible to find and hold down a job when there is no stable place to get washed and dressed and no secure location to store clothes, important papers and other belongings?

Per staff report, the Planning Commission has "highlighted additional considerations to provide support for people experiencing homelessness, including adopting a safe parking ordinance, allowing the development of tiny home villages, and including a housing program to facilitate the development of "bridge" housing.

Please flesh out these recommendations so there is a commitment of analysis, strategy, and resources for accomplishment.

Thank you.

Ferne Hayes
District 7

Martinez, Ruben

From: Bert Newton < >
Sent: Monday, August 02, 2021 12:16 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: Gordo, Victor; Hampton, Tyron; Williams, Felicia; Kennedy, John J.; Masuda, Gene; Rivas, Jessica; Madison, Steve; Wilson, Andy
Subject: Item 11

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Dear Mayor and City Council,

I again want to urge this council to put the rezoning of religious land for affordable housing back on the agenda.

It is mentioned in the draft of the housing element, but with a due date of 2025 and some incorrect information about SB899, the bill that would zone religious land for affordable housing across California.

We know that there is an intention that this zoning amendment would be the first thing on the work calendar for the Planning Department in January if it is part of the housing element, but at this point, that is just a promise with no legal binding, and we all know what often happens to those sorts of promises. This is not to impugn anyone's character, it is just that all sorts of factors can derail such plans and promises when there is nothing binding to keep them on track.

Also, there is no reason that it has to wait for the housing element. It could be passed much sooner. The Planning Department was about to make a recommendation earlier this year. Why delay this another 6 months or a year? We still have no real answer to that.

Additionally, you should be aware that the state bill that will likely pass in the upcoming session is not only a one-size fits all blunt instrument, it also will zone religious land "by right." If Pasadena wants to have some control over what happens in our community, we not only need to pass an amendment quickly, we need to make it "by right."

The state is unlikely to carve out an exception for Pasadena if our amendment is not "by right."

That doesn't mean that developers will have carte blanche to do whatever they want. There will still be limits on density, according to the surrounding neighborhood, it will still go through design commission, the neighbors and community can still have input, it's just that the project cannot be stopped altogether.

And that makes sense given, not only our housing crisis, but also the need to correct the history of racist housing policy. Completely stopping development of multifamily housing adjacent to single family neighborhoods amounts to perpetuating the racial exclusion of the past.

So to both address the current housing crisis generally and the historic racist policies of exclusion specifically, we need to pass a zoning amendment to allow building affordable housing on religious land that is "by right."

It has been said recently that nothing is stopping churches from proceeding with developing affordable housing, but that is not correct. The zoning is not right for it. Most churches are either not zoned residential or are zoned at too low a density for an affordable housing development to be financially feasible. The zoning is standing in the way.

The developer for New Life Holiness Church has said that it cannot proceed without this zoning amendment.

While it is true that some churches and developers have been able to get a zoning change or variance and then build affordable housing in other cities, the process has often added years and hundreds of thousands of dollars to the cost. And such processes are not always successful. Without the zoning amendment, most projects just won't happen because nonprofit developers often don't have the money to for the long process and can't take the risk since there is no guarantee that it will happen.

Churches that have built affordable housing in Pasadena have done so mostly on land that is not part of the church campus. No churches in Pasadena have recently built affordable housing, and no building on church land is likely to happen under current zoning.

We need to change the zoning quickly to address the housing crisis, to help correct historic exclusionary racist (and classist) housing policy, and to have an ordinance that fits Pasadena.

Thank you,

Rev. Bert Newton

Making Housing and Community Happen

323.800.7050

Martinez, Ruben

From: Angela Ellington <angela.ellington@pasadena.net>
Sent: Monday, August 02, 2021 12:36 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Public Comment on Item 11

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Dear Mayor Gordo and City Council members,

My name is Angela Strong and I am a member of Pasadena Foursquare Church. I am speaking on item 11, the Housing Element.

I want to thank the Council for all you've done to create affordable housing in the City, but we clearly have not come close to meeting our RHNA goals or the vision of our City to provide "decent, safe and affordable housing for every Pasadena resident." As you know, the City is required by the state to plan for nearly 6,000 units of affordable housing over the next eight years. This goal may seem impossibly high, but the need for affordable housing is critical. That's why I feel that rezoning religious land for affordable housing is a great idea that has been needlessly delayed and should be put back on the agenda and approved as soon as possible. It should also be in the Housing Element as long this doesn't delay its implementation. A handful of churches across Pasadena are stepping up to offer their land for affordable housing, but they need the zoning to be changed so they can accomplish their vision. This zoning change will speed up the process of building the housing we need and will make the process considerably less expensive, making affordable housing dollars stretch further.

I currently live in affordable housing that is owned by my church here in Pasadena. I know that if it was not for this opportunity for housing. Not only would I probably not be able to live in Pasadena. I also would not have been able to get married when I did, because my husband and I would not have been able to afford housing. It is so important that we find every possible way to build affordable housing for all income levels.

Thank You for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Angela Strong

Martinez, Ruben

From: Margaret Munoz <margaret.munoz@usc.edu>
Sent: Monday, August 02, 2021 12:40 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Comment for Agenda #1, Today's City Council Meeting

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Hello,

I have a comment for Agenda #11 on today's City Council meeting. Please see my comment below and let me know if you have any questions!

"My name is Margaret Muñoz. I work in Old Town Pasadena and graduated from Pasadena High School. I am concerned that Pasadena's Draft Housing Element does not do enough to ensure a significantly increased supply of housing affordable to below moderate and moderate income Pasadenans and hopeful future Pasadenans. While I do not live in Pasadena currently, I would love the opportunity to live in your wonderful city in the future. As a young professional with a graduate degree, I would have trouble affording to comfortably live in Pasadena today. If I would have trouble, I cannot imagine the trouble others would face. Please consider including the following three programs/policies from the Pasadena Affordable Housing Coalition in Pasadena's housing element so that Pasadena will be affordable to families of all income levels in the future: 1) Rent Control, 2) Local Density Bonus Program near Transit, and 3) Allow a Congregational Overlay Zone. Thank you for your time!"

Thanks so much,

--



Margaret Muñoz
Master of Urban Planning '21, Sol Price School of Public Policy
University of Southern California



Create your own email signature

Martinez, Ruben

From: Banaf Rahimi <[redacted]>
Sent: Monday, August 02, 2021 12:48 PM
To: Gordo, Victor; Williams, Felicia; Wilson, Andy; Hampton, Tyron; Morales, Margo; PublicComment-AutoResponse; Rivas, Jessica; Kennedy, John J.
Subject: Agenda item #11/Housing Element

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Dear City Council and Mayor Gordo,

As an immigrant to this country, it is disappointing to see that a country that so many flock to in order to realize their dreams, has done so little to address the need for affordable housing. We cannot continue to sprawl further and further away from job centers and from the communities that people have established themselves in. By not building affordable housing within the limits of Pasadena, the local government is effectively segregating communities based on income, and indirectly based on skin color. Please direct City staff to re-do the Housing Element and identify real world targets and goals with hard, specific commitments to achieve affordable housing. The Pasadena Affordable Housing Coalition has a list of specific suggestions that should be adopted. There are several amendments that need to be made to the Housing Element, but specifically regarding parking, the parking requirements for new units should be done away with. It makes no sense that storing idle cars is placed in higher priority than housing people. We are lucky enough to have light rail running through the city, yet housing immediately close to transit stops are seriously lacking. The City and developers have done a great job of building market rate "luxury" housing, but now the hard work of building affordable housing must start. We need to flip the ratio and build 80:20 affordable to market rate housing. This change needs to happen now, and the power lies within your hands as the elected representatives of this City.

Thank you,
Banaf Rahimi
D5 resident

08/02/2021
Item 11

Martinez, Ruben

From: Cynthia Kirby <
Sent: Monday, August 02, 2021 1:29 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Agenda Item #11 - The Housing Element

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Dear Mayor Gordo and members of the City Council,

My name is Cynthia Kirby and I am a member of Union Station Homeless Services' Board of Directors and Lived Expertise Advisory Panel. A grateful Pasadenan, residing in District 5 - under the leadership of Councilmember Rivas - I am also a staff member and lay leader at First Baptist Church Pasadena. I am submitting a comment on item 11, the Housing Element.

I experienced nearly a decade of homelessness but have been housed for over six years thanks in large part to the City of Pasadena's Housing Department, Union Station Homeless Services, and decades of tireless advocacy on the part of organizations like Making Housing and Community Happen. First and foremost, I want to thank the Council for all you've done to create affordable housing in the City. Unfortunately, we have not come close to meeting our RHNA goals or the vision of our City to provide "decent, safe, and affordable housing for every Pasadena resident." As a constituent with lived experience of homelessness, I know more than most how beautiful and lofty is that goal but it can be realized if we work together and explore creative and sustainable solutions.

Because the City is required by the state to plan for nearly 6,000 units of affordable housing over the next eight years, I feel that rezoning religious land for affordable housing is an excellent first step. For the sake of expediency, this proposal should be put back on the agenda and approved as soon as possible. It should also be in the Housing Element as long its inclusion does not delay its implementation. A handful of churches across Pasadena are stepping up to offer their land for affordable housing but they need the zoning to be changed so they can accomplish their vision. When approved, this zoning change will help expedite building needed housing and make the process considerably less expensive, making affordable housing dollars stretch further.

I also urge the Council to consider allowing affordable housing to be built in commercially zoned areas. Vacant or underutilized commercially zoned areas are opportunities to build housing in areas where vacant land is hard to come across. I recommend that you check out the [Berkeley Turner Center Report on Residential Redevelopment of Commercially Zoned Land in California](#). This report shows the value of allowing commercial land to be used for affordable housing. I also recommend that you streamline the approval process for deed-restricted, affordable housing, and permanent supportive housing within 30 days of application. If we are going to meet our RHNA goals of nearly 6,000 units of affordable housing in the next 8 years, we need to make it easier for affordable housing developers to do their job.

Blessings,

Cynthia M. Kirby
Administrative Assistant
She/Her/Hers

FBC Pasadena

Pasadena, CA 91101
cynthia@fbcpasadena.com

In Pasadena as it is in Heaven | fbcpasadena.com

Iraheta, Alba

From: Blair Miller <'>
Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 1:40 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: City Council Agenda Item #11 - Housing Element

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Preparing a Housing Element is a monumental task, especially on an accelerated timeline. I want to commend staff for their effort, and thank them for their work to date.

I would like to recommend that the Council support all of the policies proposed by the Pasadena Affordable Housing Coalition, including the following specific policies for incorporation into the final Housing Element:

Remove Parking Minimums Citywide: Parking minimums increase the developer's cost for building housing, take up space that could be used for more housing units, and disincentivize the use of transit.

Local density bonus program near transit: These programs encourage developers to build more housing units – including affordable units – near major public transportation stops.

Unbundle Parking Cost from Rent or Purchase Cost: Unbundling parking costs from the cost of housing makes housing more affordable as renters can choose to rent a housing unit without paying for the cost of a parking space.

Encourage "Missing Middle" housing types: Missing middle housing are buildings (duplexes, fourplexes, cottage courts, courtyard buildings) with multiple units built in walkable neighborhoods

I would also like to recommend that Council ask the following questions about the Housing Element:

1) Is Pasadena incorporating an assumption regarding the chance that a site will be developed into its count, and if so, what is that assumption? As pointed out in this [Twitter](#) thread, most of the properties identified in the Pasadena inventory have existing uses, with no indication that use will change to housing. The analysis should be adjusted to reflect this.

2) The number of affordable housing units needed in Pasadena in the next eight years is 24 times what was built in the previous eight years. Are the strategies outlined in the Housing Element sufficient to achieve that goal? If not, what else can Pasadena do to achieve it?

3) Why is the Housing on Church Land policy not due until 2025? Discussion and analysis on that policy began over a year ago. The Housing Element should reflect more realistic goals for achievable policies, including this one.

Thank you,
Blair Miller

RECEIVED
2021 AUG -2 PM 1:46
CITY CLERK
CITY OF PASADENA

July 14, 2021

Re: The 2021-2029 Housing Element

Honorable Mayor and City Council Members,

Union Station Homeless Services (USHS) is the San Gabriel Valley's largest social service agency assisting homeless and very low-income adults and families. USHS has been working in Pasadena and the surrounding community for almost 50 years.

Over our tenure, we have seen firsthand the direct relationship between housing policies and homelessness. We have seen how past racist and exclusionary housing policies have contributed to the rise of homelessness, especially amongst African American Pasadenans. And, we have also seen good housing policies, such as the city's inclusionary housing ordinance, contribute to homelessness solutions.

For this reason, Union Station is committed to working alongside the City and other stakeholders to create a Housing Element that adequately plans to address our growing homelessness crisis. We encourage the City to look at the pipeline up homelessness from homelessness prevention, to interim-housing creation, to affordable housing creation. This whole pipeline must be developed and implemented in tandem. Without this work, we will not be able to adequately solve homelessness.

Homelessness Prevention

We appreciated that the draft Housing Element addressed rental assistance and homelessness prevention. In the past few years, we have seen an influx of renters falling into homelessness. The Housing Department estimates that 54% of individuals who are homeless in Pasadena are from Pasadena and have lived in the city for 21 years on average. However, the Housing Element does not offer new policies to prevent homelessness. We encourage that the Housing Element include:

- **Legal Right to Counsel.** Studies show that tenants who have access to free legal services are less likely to be illegally evicted and to then fall into homelessness.

Interim Housing Creation

In order to go from homelessness to permanent housing, you need bridge housing. The street cannot be the waiting room to permanent housing. The draft Housing Element does not propose any policy changes to create more interim housing in Pasadena. It mentions rapid rehousing vouchers and bad weather motel vouchers; but we know that these existing tools do not provide sufficient interim housing to address our homelessness needs. I suggest the following policies that would facilitate the creation of interim housing:



825 E. Orange Grove Blvd.
Pasadena, CA 91104
P 626.240.4550
F 626.798.1640
www.unionstationhs.org

PROGRAMS

Coordinated Entry System
Family Solutions
Holly Street Housing
Adult Center
Family Center
Euclid Villa
Centennial Place
Sources
DHS Programs

- Allow for safe parking locations by removing limitations to Pasadena's overnight parking regulations.
- Following the cities of Los Angeles and Baldwin Park, declare an Emergency Shelter Crisis and pass legislation that allows for interim housing solutions to bypass the typical zoning and permitting processes.
- Identify locations that can be used for interim housing locations
- At the minimum, please include the following language into the Housing Element: "Explore and implement alternative housing types to provide adequate types of bridge housing."

Affordable Housing Creation

According to the city's RHNA goals, Pasadena needs to allow for the creation of 5,600 new affordable housing units. To do this, the city needs to be proactive in implementing policies with teeth that incentivize and remove barriers to the creation of affordable housing. USHS suggest the following policy solutions:

- Allow the creation of by-right motel conversions. We applaud the City's Motel Conversion Ordinance, but we would love to see it used.
- Adopt a congregational overlay zone that allows for the creation of affordable housing on religious properties throughout the city. At the July 12th City Council meeting, the Planning Director mentioned that this policy would be prioritized. We would like to see this in writing because in the draft Housing Element, it currently states that the city has until 2025 to research this zoning policy.

Community Engagement

We have consistently seen confusion regarding the solutions to homelessness. We ask for the City's support to conduct public engagement and education campaigns that will create buy-in from the community for the above solutions. Myths and misconceptions around affordable housing and homelessness are so prevalent that individuals often believe them to be fact.

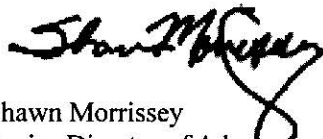
We encourage that the Housing Element include specific language around working with community partners, such as USHS, to work together to inform the greater community on this important topic. And, we also ask that the Housing Element include more specifics about this type of outreach, for example, will there be community meetings, and how often will they take place.

We appreciate that the 2021-2029 Housing Element draft clearly states that "Housing is a basic human need and right. Every person deserves access to decent, affordable homes." Hundreds of people are living in Pasadena without housing, and I implore that the city live up to its ideals and provide housing for every Pasadenan.

In closing, we must all work together to solve homelessness, and no one can do it on their own. For this reason, I am happy to see that the draft Housing Element states that housing policy changes must happen city-wide. I

personally would love to see more affordable and supportive housing in every single Pasadena council district. Because I know that cities are the strongest when they are home and provide opportunities to all people regardless of their socio-economic background. USHS looks forward to a continued partnership with the City to create a strong Housing Element.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shawn Morrissey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Shawn Morrissey
Senior Director of Advocacy
Union Station Homeless Services



RECEIVED

2021 AUG -2 PM 1:46

**M A D I S O N H E I G H T S
N E I G H B O R H O O D A S S O C I A T I O N**

686 South Arroyo Parkway Suite 199 Pasadena, CA 91105 www.mhnapasadena.org

July 9, 2021

Honorable Mayor Bill Bogaard
Housing Commission
City of Pasadena
100 North Garfield Ave.
Pasadena, CA 91101

Re: Pasadena Housing Element

The Board of Madison Heights Neighborhood Association (MHNA) is pleased to participate in the planning and shaping of the Housing Element for Pasadena. Many areas under consideration for additional housing are adjacent to our boundaries, and we appreciate the opportunity to provide the Housing Commission with our feedback.

Our organization takes the opportunity to shape the look and feel of our city seriously, and we are committed to helping get the planning right, in terms of adding additional housing, trees, community areas, and unique shopping destinations to our city. Ideally, the Housing Element will complement and continue to support what we love about Madison Heights: walkable streets, tree-lined sidewalks, a friendly neighborhood community, and historic architecture.

As a board representing over 1,700 Pasadena residents living near two transit-oriented districts (TODs), we ask you to consider the following points while preparing the Housing Element:

- 1) Parks, trees, and open space are imperative to creating great neighborhoods. We support additional housing under the premise that all varieties of housing have easy access to trees, green space, and parks.
- 2) Development setback standards are a considerable concern for our association. Minimal-to-zero setbacks do not allow for in-ground trees around the periphery of new buildings. We would like to see all setbacks increased to 10-15 feet when

developing near single-family neighborhoods. This adjustment will improve walkability, allow for in-ground tree plantings, and add an overall inviting neighborhood feel, especially near Arroyo Parkway, California Boulevard, and Lake Avenue. By allowing for more trees, we will create an environmentally friendly community, add beauty and shade, and honor our reputation as an “urban forest” city.

- 3) Drastic and disjointed increases in height and density adjacent to single-family neighborhoods must be avoided. Overall, substantial increases in density and height would be more appealing if the transition from single-family homes to multi-family complexes was done on a gradual basis.
- 4) We support reducing parking up to $\frac{1}{3}$ of typical allotments, but want to ensure that residents in new developments will **not** be allowed to park overnight on streets in our district, especially along Marengo Avenue, which currently has an exception to accommodate for older units with no parking garages. No permanent, on-street parking permits should be issued to future residents of these projects. This will also help ensure that the environmental motivation to reduce parking in new developments is not defeated.
- 5) A walkable greenway or bikeway from Art Center to Old Pasadena would be a nice way to alleviate the use of cars, especially for students and younger tenants of new TODs in the South Fair Oaks neighborhood. Adding significant density without proper support for local transportation issues is a huge point of concern for MHNA, and must be explored.
- 6) Maintaining commercial district designations for areas including Lake and Colorado is a priority for MHNA. We would like to see Lake Avenue remain at 50% commercial to retain the original purpose of the street as a pedestrian-oriented commercial street, including regional office space and local shopping. To maintain the commercial retail and service character of the South Lake Shopping Area, housing should not occupy more than 50 percent of total building floor area along Lake Avenue from Green Street south to California Boulevard. Housing would be a positive addition to stimulate and activate the area, but the floor area ratio (FAR) would need to gradually increase from 1 at California Blvd. to 2 at Del Mar.

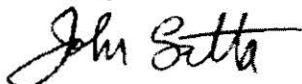
MHNA would also like to see the corners of Lake and California zoned solely for commercial use. There are aspects of our neighborhood that we would like to remain unchanged by retaining this type of zoning, which include: easy access to

grocery shopping, mountain views, and open green space where kids and families enjoy socializing. (Peet's Coffee is a great example of this.)

- 7) MHNA supports and encourages the idea of adaptive reuse. Many empty and underutilized buildings could be the key to creating additional housing units in order to meet our city's Regional Housing State Allocation (RHNA) in the most sustainable way possible.
- 8) Pasadena has been challenged to meet a state housing goal of 9,400 units, which MHNA fears is only achievable by creating concrete canyons of dense housing. It is imperative that the commission considers the reduction of quality-of-life with the addition of such huge density on our local infrastructure. We are most concerned about the potential for immovable traffic, ever-higher heat indexes, and less open space with the addition of these new housing units. MHNA does not deny the region's need for more homes in general, but the quantity requested by the state is daunting. We ask our city leaders to work with the state and exhaust every avenue to reduce the allotment to a point where we can build and grow within a more reasonable framework.
- 9) There is cause for concern that if the demand for dramatic housing growth dries up, it would be impossible to suddenly make the new inventory of construction in Pasadena disappear. Millennials currently lead the home-buying demand, but we must bear in mind that as aging seniors exit the housing market, the remaining supply could potentially outnumber the young homebuyers' demand. Changing demographics and household trends warrant important discussions on how we approach the supply of new building.

We would be pleased to meet with you, David Reyes, and other appropriate city staff and officials to discuss our proposed improvements to the Housing Element.

Thank you,



John Latta

Cc: David Reyes, Jennifer Paige, Mayor Victor Gordo, Vice Mayor Andy Wilson, Councilmember Steve Madison, Taka Suzuki and Pam Thyret

Iraheta, Alba

From: Amara Ononiwu
Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 3:35 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Housing Element Public Comment #1

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With gratitude and appreciation for the work you are doing, I offer these comments:

We want to see an explicit plan in the Housing Element that activates congregational land as a viable and creative means for meeting our housing needs.

Houses of worship have long since been safe havens in our community for all sorts of needs.

Housing should not be any different. In fact, communities of faith are on the front lines of addressing needs that lack of stable affordable housing exasperate. One of the things the pandemic taught us was that innovative collaboration was needed to address the needs of our most vulnerable populations. Few things leave us more vulnerable than not having stable, safe, housing we can afford - from the single parent, to the student, to the senior on fixed income and the average middle class worker - we are being priced out of the market.

It's time to bring in communities of faith as strategic partners... as planned contributors, not only nice to have providers along the way to other means.

To meet our needs it's going to take calculated risk, support for new ways of thinking and executing, and of course, empathy, which so many of the faith communities I know have in spades. I hope that Pasadena leads the state and supports is faith partners in policy because they support our citizens every day.

Kind regards,
Amara



Amara Ononiwu
Housing & Homelessness Outreach Coordinator
E-mail: _____
Office: _____
Fax: _____

Iraheta, Alba

From: James De Pietro
Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 3:29 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Pasadena City Council Agenda Item 11. DRAFT 2021-2029 HOUSING ELEMENT AUGUST 2, 2021

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Pasadena City Council:

At this evening's meeting, the City Council will evaluate a recommendation to authorize the Director of Planning and Community Development to submit the Draft 2021-2029 Housing Element to the California Housing and Community Development Department (HCD).

I commend the City Council and staff's work on this critical issue to address housing opportunities and affordability in Pasadena.

As you evaluate different ideas, I strongly recommend that the City Council direct staff to make changes to improve Pasadena's Housing Element, specifically that it explores and/or implements the following zoning solutions:

1. Amend zoning code to permit churches and houses of faith to build affordable housing on excess land.
2. Incentivize building affordable accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and junior ADUs by removing restrictions and fees.
3. Remove parking minimums citywide to lower the cost of housing.
4. Create an affordable housing overlay zone.
5. Provide a local density bonus program near transit.
6. Allow housing in commercially zoned areas and adaptive reuse of commercial buildings.
7. Streamline the cumbersome approval process for all affordable housing and permanent supportive housing.
8. Enact a form-based code to focus on building form, not the number of units.
9. Remove regulatory barriers to promote "Missing Middle Housing."
10. Dedicate vacant and underutilized public land (city, school district, etc.) for affordable housing.

Thank you for your consideration.

James De Pietro
Pasadena Resident of 12 Years