

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**Division of Housing Policy Development**

1800 Third Street, Suite 430
P. O. Box 952053
Sacramento, CA 94252-2053
(916) 323-3177
FAX (916) 327-2643
www.hcd.ca.gov



November 2, 2004

The Honorable H. Abram Wilson, Mayor
City of San Ramon
2222 Camino Ramon
San Ramon, CA 94583

Dear Mayor Wilson:

RE: Review of the City of San Ramon's Adopted Housing Element

Thank you for submitting San Ramon's housing element received for review on August 4, 2004. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65585(h), the Department is required to review adopted housing elements and report our findings to the locality.

As you know, the Department's February 9, 2004 review found the draft revisions (with the inclusion of supplemental revisions) addressed the statutory requirements of housing element law. The City's housing element, adopted by the City Council on July 27, 2004, includes all revisions as described in the February 2004 review. Therefore, the Department is pleased to find the adopted element in compliance with State housing element law (Article 10.6 of the Government Code).

As you are aware, limited vacant land resources in concert with high land and construction costs has made the task of providing viable affordable housing development opportunities especially challenging for many jurisdictions in the East Bay. As indicated in the February 9, 2004 review, while rezoning sites is critical (Implementation Policy 11.8-I-3), successful implementation of mixed-use development strategies within the identified "housing opportunity areas" is equally important to the City to accommodate its regional housing need. Given mixed-use development is a new concept for San Ramon, the City should be diligent and expeditious in developing and adopting mixed-use standards and providing fiscal and regulatory incentives to encourage and promote mixed-use development as described in Implementation Policies 11.10-I-4 and 11.10-I-5. Further, because allowable maximum densities can impact the feasibility and affordability of housing development, the Department continues to strongly urge the City to allow higher densities (e.g., 20-25 dwelling units per acre or higher) as part of San Ramon's forthcoming comprehensive zoning ordinance update (as referenced in Policy 11.10-I-4).

Pursuant to Government Code Section 65400, the City should monitor, evaluate, and report on the effectiveness of its housing and community development implementation actions, with an emphasis on Implementation Policies 11.8-I-3, 11.10-I-4, and 11.10-I-5 and any others that will assist the City in accommodating its regional share need for all income groups, including the local workforce. The annual implementation reports are required to be completed and submitted to the local legislative body and this Department by October 1.

Also, for your information, upon completion of an amended or adopted housing element, a local government is responsible for distributing a copy of the element to area water and sewer providers (Government Code Section 65589.7). This section of law requires public and/or private water and wastewater providers give priority in their current and future resource or service allocations to proposed housing development projects which help meet a locality's share of the regional need for lower-income households.

In closing, we are appreciative of the hard work and cooperation that City staff, including Mr. Phil Wong, Planning Services Director, Ms. Brooke Littman, Housing Programs Manager, and Ms. Debbie Chamberlain, Senior Planner, provided during the course of our review. The Department looks forward to following the City's progress and achievements through its forthcoming General Plan implementation reports. If the Department can provide further assistance in implementing the City's housing and land-use strategies, or answer any questions, please contact Don Thomas, of our staff, at (916) 445-5854.

In accordance with requests pursuant to the Public Records Act, we are forwarding copies of this letter to the persons and organizations listed below.

Sincerely,



Cathy E. Creswell
Deputy Director

cc: Phil Wong, Planning Services Director, City of San Ramon
Brooke Littman, Housing Programs Manager, City of San Ramon
Mark Stivers, Senate Committee on Housing & Community Development
Suzanne Ambrose, Supervising Deputy Attorney General, AG's Office
Terry Roberts, Governor's Office of Planning and Research
Nick Cammarota, California Building Industry Association
Marcia Salkin, California Association of Realtors
Marc Brown, California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation
Rob Weiner, California Coalition for Rural Housing
John Douglas, AICP, Civic Solutions
Deanna Kitamura, Western Center on Law and Poverty
S. Lynn Martinez, Western Center on Law and Poverty
Alexander Abbe, Law Firm of Richards, Watson & Gershon
Michael G. Colantuono, Colantuono, Levin & Rozell, APC
Ilene J. Jacobs, California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc.
Richard Marcantonio, Public Advocates
Martin R. Engelmann, P.E., Contra Costa Transportation Authority
David Booher, California Housing Council
Sue Hestor, Attorney at Law

Paul Campos, Home Builders Assoc. of Northern California
Shannon Dodge, Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California
Eve Bach, Arc Ecology
Allison Brooks, Livable Communities Initiative
Charlie Carson, Home Builders Association – Northern Division