



**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
PLANNING DIVISION**

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**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN-STRATEGIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT**

Meeting: June 6, 2022

Subject

Report from staff and EMC Planning Group regarding the proposed community engagement and Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) plans for the Housing Element update process.

Recommended Action

Receive report and provide guidance to staff on plans for additional community engagement and for engagement consistent with compliance with State Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) requirements.

Discussion

Background

On March 1, 2022, EMC Planning Group (EMC) provided a status update to the City Council on the overall progress of the Housing Element update and the Stakeholders Group selection process. The Council continued the Housing Element update and Stakeholders Group discussions to its March 8 special meeting where the Council moved to form the ad hoc Community Engagement Plan-Strategic Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee), consisting of two Councilmembers, the Planning Commission Chair and Housing Commission Chair, with the purpose of the Advisory Committee being: 1) to provide guidance to staff on the creation of a Community Engagement Plan and, 2) the creation of an Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) Engagement Plan, which would include West Valley Community Services (WVCS) bi-weekly meetings and focus group meetings to include the protected groups identified in the Housing and Community Development (HCD) Department guidance on AFFH.

Additionally, the Council's motion creating the Advisory Committee stated that applicants for the proposed Stakeholder Group would have the opportunity to provide input on the AFFH Engagement Plan.

Analysis

Overview of CEP-Strategic Advisory Committee Meetings

The Advisory Committee held its first meeting on March 30, 2022. Three subsequent Advisory Committee meetings were held on the following dates: April 7, April 25, May 16.

At the March 30 meeting, EMC and its team of sub-consultants made a presentation focusing on the purpose and requirements of AFFH and approaches on how to engage the community in an inclusive and equitable manner. An updated memorandum from EMC is included in this report as Attachment A. EMC also solicited input from the Advisory Committee regarding which local special needs populations and other groups should be the focus of City outreach efforts. The Advisory Committee identified several special needs populations and other groups, including:

- Seniors, particularly seniors with limited mobility;
- Individuals with autism (through the Center for Autism and Related Disorders);
- Individuals with developmental disabilities;
- Persons of all income levels, including moderate-income residents who cannot afford market-rate housing in the Cupertino area;
- Employees of local employers who reside outside the area;
- Public service employees who reside outside the area;
- School employees and district representatives to determine school enrollment trends

At subsequent meetings, the Advisory Committee reiterated that these groups should be the focus of City engagement efforts and also cited other groups that should be included in community engagement and outreach efforts, specifically: the County Sheriff and Fire Departments, housing developers, veterans, Project Sentinel (a non-profit fair housing-focused organization) and Parents Helping Parents (a non-profit working with families with special needs children and adults).

Additionally, during the April and May meetings the Advisory Committee suggested several approaches to expand outreach and community engagement efforts, including:

- Producing and distributing flyers that incorporate QR codes (with website links) at key city locations, such as the Library and Senior Center, and grocery stores;
- Placing banners at prominent public locations and rights-of-way, similar to what the City of Saratoga did as part of its Housing Element update;
- Having staff attend local events, such as farmers' markets and weekend festivals;
- Utilizing City staff from a wider range of departments in order to maximize community engagement.

Staff has acted on several of these items, such as, developing flyers to promote a community meeting held on May 23, attending the April 23 Earth and Arbor Day event to provide Housing Element-related information to the public, expanding the number of City staff involved in community engagement and increasing the frequency of providing updates through City mediums, such as The Scene and Items of Interest.

Community Meetings

On May 23, a hybrid community meeting, allowing for both virtual and in-person attendance, was held at Community Hall. The meeting was coordinated by City staff, EMC and West Valley Community Services (WVCS) and featured four panelists with lived-experiences and/or special needs, including developmental disabilities, homelessness, housing insecurity, and adjustments to civilian life following military service. Over 100 people registered to attend the meeting, with approximately 70 participating; three-quarters attended virtually. A draft report about the meeting is attached as Attachment B. This meeting was the first of a minimum of three focus group community meetings that will be held this summer. The second such meeting is scheduled for early July, the exact date and location to be determined, and will focus on housing-related issues germane to seniors and students. It is expected that a third community focus group meeting will be scheduled in late-July.

Community Engagement Completed

One of the goals of the Advisory Committee has been to focus on the most effective means available to reach out to residents and the groups referenced earlier in this report. Through the end of May, the outreach that has been done to date, including outreach for the Stakeholders Group, is summarized, below:

- The week of January 10-14, 2022: mailing postcards to all Cupertino households (over 21,000 postcards) to inform residents about the Housing Element update and introducing them to the engagocupertino.org website and the range of information located there.
- January 19: sending letters of interest to over 400 property owners whose properties could potentially be viable housing sites per Housing and Community Development (HCD) Department criteria to gauge owner interest. As of May 31, there have been 54 property owners who have requested inclusion of their properties on the sites inventory. Staff will be doing a second mailing in early June to the property owners who did not respond.
- Since December 2021, providing regular monthly updates on the City's "Items of Interest" and "The Scene" newsletters.
- Using social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter and Nextdoor to inform residents about upcoming Housing Element update meetings.
- Attending the January 24, 2022 Senior Advisory Committee and the March 9, 2022 Block Leaders meetings to provide an overview of the Housing Element update

process and to inform meeting attendees about sources of information regarding the update. Staff will be regularly attending standing City meetings like this to provide updates throughout the Housing Element update.

- Attending the April 23 Earth and Arbor Day event held at Library Park to inform residents and attendees about the Housing Element update and informing residents that their input is valuable and necessary. Staff will attend similar events over the summer.
- May 23 community meeting focus group discussed above.

Next Steps

Staff, in conjunction with EMC, looks forward to the Advisory Committee's further input on how to most effectively engage the Cupertino community, its special needs populations, and to ensure that the City complies with State-mandated AFFH requirements.

The next community meeting will be scheduled in early July, following the July 4 holiday. In the interim, staff will be meeting with representatives of Project Sentinel, Parents Helping Parents and other groups providing assistance to local special needs populations.

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Attachment A – EMC Memorandum

Attachment B – Draft Housing Element Report Summarizing May 23 Community Meeting

Attachment C – WVCS Survey included in April 25 meeting materials