

CHAPTER 5

HOUSING ELEMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

As the population of the State continues to grow and pressure on resources increases, Cerritos is concerned with providing adequate housing opportunities while maintaining a high standard of living for all citizens in the community.

Recognizing the importance of providing adequate housing, the State has mandated a Housing Element with every General Plan since 1969. This Housing Element (1998-2005) was created in compliance with State General Plan law pertaining to Housing Elements and was certified by the California Department of Housing and Community Development on June 10, 2002. In compliance with State law, the population and housing numbers in the adopted Housing Element are based upon the 1990 Census and Department of Finance numbers, and not the 2000 Census. The next update of the Housing Element will be based upon the 2000 Census.

This Chapter focuses primarily on goals, policies and action plans related to housing in the City. The following sections have been synthesized from the data and analysis contained in the Housing Element, which can be found in its entirety as Appendix H.

1.1 PURPOSE

The State of California has declared that “the availability of housing is of vital statewide importance and the early attainment of decent housing and a suitable living environment for every California family is a priority of the highest order.” In addition, government and the private sector should make an effort to provide a diversity of housing opportunities and accommodate regional housing needs through a cooperative effort, while maintaining a responsibility toward economic, environmental and fiscal factors and community goals within the General Plan.

The City of Cerritos’ General Plan Housing Element articulates the City’s seven-year plan (1998 to 2005) relative to the maintenance and development of housing to meet the needs of existing and future residents.

The Housing Element, as required by State law, will provide a detailed analysis of existing housing stock, housing and household characteristics, ability of the housing industry to provide the necessary type and cost of housing, housing needs for all economic levels and for special needs groups and specific housing program development and priority.

The purpose of these requirements is to develop an understanding of the existing and projected housing needs within the community and to set forth policies and schedules that promote preservation, improvement and development of diverse types and costs of housing throughout Cerritos.

1.2 CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Public participation for the 1998-2005 Housing Element included a series of study sessions and public hearings. In addition, a public review draft was prepared and made available to the community for a 30-day review period. The public review draft was sent to the Los Angeles County Housing Authority (LACHA), eight neighboring cities, Los Angeles County, Orange County, 18 non-profit organizations and various service providers (See Attachment 1 in Appendix H). The public review draft included comments received from City staff and the Planning Commission.

1.3 HOUSING ELEMENT PLANNING CYCLE

State planning law mandates that jurisdictions within the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) region adopt and update their Housing Element by July 1, 2000. As a consequence of this due date, a series of time frames for various aspects of the Housing Element preparation are established. There are three relevant time periods identified:

- 1989-1997: the review period to measure accomplishments of the 1989 Housing Element;
- 1998-July 2005: the planning period for assessing housing construction needs; and
- 2000-2005: the implementation period for programs identified within this Housing Element.

The planning period for the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) as prepared by SCAG, is from January 1998 to June 2005. Pursuant to State law, the City of Cerritos, along with other jurisdictions prepare their next revision of the housing element to cover the period from 2005 to 2010.

2.0 AUTHORITY FOR THE ELEMENT

The Housing Element is one of the seven General Plan Elements mandated by the State of California, as expressed in Sections 65580 to 65589.8 of the California Government Code. California State Law requires that the Housing Element consist of "an identification and analysis of existing and projected housing needs and a statement of goals, policies, quantified objectives, and scheduled programs for the preservation, improvement and development of housing." The Housing Element establishes policies that will guide the City's decision-making in developing and implementing its goals through 2005.

The State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) sets forth specific requirements regarding the scope and content of City and county housing elements.

3.0 COMMUNITY FACTORS

3.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The growth trends in Cerritos show significant population growth between 1970 and 2000. Cerritos grew by 266.2 percent during this time, making it the largest growing city amidst the eight neighboring cities. The recent growth can be attributed to the fact that the surrounding cities were built out earlier and in turn had experienced greater population growth decades before. In addition, Cerritos converted large amounts of its agricultural land to housing and commercial uses in the 1960s and 1970s, allowing for rapid growth. Current data shows the population growth in Cerritos has diminished drastically over time. According to the California Department of Finance, the 2000 population is 58,063¹ persons and is projected to grow by 4,140 persons or 7.1 percent over the next 20 years.

The 2000 Census data shows Cerritos is ethnically and culturally diverse, with 58.4 percent of the population of Asian/Pacific Islander origin, 21.4 percent of white origin, 10.4 percent of Hispanic/Latino origin and 6.7 percent of Black/African American origin. The median age of the population is 34 years, however there is a growing population of seniors.

There are segments of the population that may have more difficulty finding affordable housing due to their special needs. The special needs groups in Cerritos may include the elderly, disabled persons, large families, single-parent households or the homeless. These special needs groups along

¹ The 2000 U.S. Census showed the City's population in 2000 to be 51,488, which represents a 3.3 percent decrease from the 1990 census population of 53,240.

with low-income groups should be addressed in the City's implementation of the Housing Element.

2000 Census data has the median family income for Cerritos as \$76,944. This figure represents an increase of 39.7 percent from the 1990 median family income of \$55,076. The area median income (AMI) determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for Los Angeles-Long Beach MSA 2000 counties was \$52,100, which is substantially lower than Cerritos.

NEIGHBORHOOD AND HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

The population growth in Cerritos has increased at a greater rate than the housing supply. During the period of 1990 to 2000, the estimated population increased by 4,823 persons, while the housing stock increased by 147 units. Cerritos has a high percentage of single-family residential units, comprising 93.5 percent of its housing stock. Cerritos has a proportionally larger number of owners than renters. In 2000, 84.4 percent of the households are owners and 15.6 percent are renters.

The elderly population in Cerritos has increased dramatically. From the period of 1980 to 1990, the elderly population grew by 109.9 percent. It grew another 44.1 percent during the period of 1990 to 2000. This increase suggests a high demand for senior housing. Currently there are two senior housing communities in Cerritos, Pioneer Villas and Emerald Villas. The City is currently constructing another senior complex, Avalon at Cerritos. All three of these senior housing communities contain affordable and market rate units.

Cerritos is predominately built out, with limited potential for new residential construction. As of 1998 there were approximately 17 acres of vacant land zoned for residential uses in the City. This vacant land could provide 387 additional housing units in Cerritos. The City has also identified 4.8 units of underutilized land that has potential for residential redevelopment. This land could potentially provide 32 additional housing units.

The condition of the City's housing stock may be characterized by its age. In Cerritos only 1.3 percent of the housing stock was built before 1959. A majority of the housing units, 68.2 percent, were built in the period of 1970 to 1979. This demonstrates Cerritos housing stock is young, and only a small percentage of housing units are likely to be substandard due to age. The City has developed neighborhood improvement plans and has made available various resources to maintain the integrity of Cerritos' residential communities.

4.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE HOUSING PLAN

4.1 QUANTIFIED OBJECTIVES

Based on the objectives and past monitoring reports, the City should be able to construct, rehabilitate or preserve approximately 505 units between 1998 and 2005. Eighty-eight (88) percent of the total production will be through new construction, while the remainder will be through rehabilitation. Through new construction between 1998 and 2001, the City of Cerritos has already been able to meet their 1998-2005 RHNA Very Low and Low housing need.

Table HOU-1
Quantified Objectives Summary (1998-2005)

Income Group	New Construction	Rehabilitation	Preservation	Total
Very-Low	130	30	0	160
Low	130	30	0	160
Moderate	74	0	0	74
Above-Moderate	111	0	0	111
Total	445	60	0	505

5.0 PLANNING FACTORS, GOALS AND POLICIES

5.1 CERRITOS HOUSING ISSUES

The following is a summary of housing issues in Cerritos, pertinent to the establishment of the housing program.

The City has been successful with many programs from the last housing element and Cerritos should continue these programs. These programs include:

- Density Bonus,
- Senior Housing Program,
- Reduced Development Fees,
- Homeless Shelter Program,
- City Wide Pride Program,
- Grant Program,
- Cerritos Code Enforcement Program, and
- Substandard Property Abatement Program.

The City had many programs within the last housing element that were appropriate toward the state housing goal, but which were not effective. These programs can be improved through more effective actions. Programs that need improvement include:

- Shared Housing Program,
- Equal Housing Program,
- Simplified Residential Development Review Process,
- Deferred Rehabilitation Loans,
- Senior and Disabled Citizen Labor Assistance Program,
- One-for-One Replacement Housing Program (at-risk), and
- First-time Home Buyers Assistance Program.

Population and household growth in the last decade has stabilized as Cerritos approaches buildout. Population growth has been more rapid than household growth, which suggests the average household size is increasing.

Cerritos unemployment rate has consistently been low and the number of persons in the labor force has remained stable.

Only 1.3 percent of the housing stock was built before 1959, which indicates that Cerritos' housing stock is young, and only a small percentage of housing units are likely to be substandard, due to age. Also, large portions of the housing stock are 20 to 30 years old and could need maintenance over the next five years.

There are no units "at-risk" of converting to market rate over the next 20 years, but the City should have a definite approach to housing units at-risk.

Cerritos plays an important regional role in providing housing opportunities to families and other households seeking ownership. Consequently, the City should make strong commitments toward the improvement of first-time homebuyer opportunities.

As the City continues to approach buildout, providing adequate housing sites will present a major challenge. Future residential development will rely heavily on innovative actions.

5.2 GOALS AND POLICIES

The goals and policies of the Housing Element provide the direction for the City's programs or actions. The goals and policies and subsequent programs or actions are formulated to address the existing and future housing needs of all segments of the community according to the state,

C E R R I T O S G E N E R A L P L A N

regional and county framework, in conjunction with the City's housing needs, resources and constraints.

Goal *HOU-1* *Encourage the provision of a wide range of housing types.*

Policies HOU-1.1 Facilitate the development of housing for all household types, including special needs.

HOU-1.2 Coordinate and cooperate with State, regional and local governments and agencies toward the attainment of the State housing goal.

HOU-1.3 Maintain and expand residential grant program (residential assistance program) for low-income households and special needs groups.

HOU-1.4 Require the preservation of affordable housing, when possible.

Goal *HOU-2* *Promote the minimization of constraints on housing development.*

Policies HOU-2.1 Provide incentives to affordable housing developers in the form of financial contributions, density bonus, land contributions, development standard flexibility and fee waivers.

HOU-2.2 Assist developers in the identification of suitable residential sites.

HOU-2.3 Support the development and enforcement of federal and state anti-discrimination laws.

HOU-2.4 Minimize permit and development review costs for affordable housing.

HOU-2.5 Promote flexibility in development standards for innovative developments.

Goal *HOU-3* *Preserve and enhance the quality of the existing housing stock.*

- Policies**
- HOU-3.1 Encourage the maintenance and repair of existing housing.
 - HOU-3.2 Support neighborhood associations in the pursuit of City Wide Pride.
 - HOU-3.3 Encourage the conservation of natural resources and the reduction of energy conservation through the promotion of alternative energy sources.
 - HOU-3.4 Investigate the need for a lead-based paint and asbestos hazards reduction program and establish program, if needed.

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Goal *HOU-4 Provide opportunities for home ownership.*

- Policies**
- HOU-4.1 Improve housing assistance for low and moderate-income households to obtain homeownership.
 - HOU-4.2 Utilize public and private funds to assist first-time homebuyers.
 - HOU-4.3 Foster relationships with public and private agencies to increase first-time homebuyer opportunities.

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6.0 HOUSING ACTION PLAN

DENSITY BONUS PROGRAM

Action: Continue the City’s Density Bonus Program that grants a density bonus of 25 percent, along with other regulatory concessions, to ensure lower development costs for developers that allocate at least 20 percent of the units in a housing project to lower income households, or 10 percent for very low income households, or at least 50 percent for “qualifying residents” (e.g. senior citizens). The Program ensures affordability of all lower income density bonus units for a minimum 30-year period.

Objective: Encourage the continued development of affordable housing.

Source of Funds: Redevelopment Agency 20 percent set-aside funds

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development/
Redevelopment Agency

Schedule: On-going



SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING ADDITION PROGRAM

Action: Create a program that will use Redevelopment Agency 20 percent set-aside funds to offer grants and low interest loans to single-family homeowners that would allow for the construction of housing additions. Very Low and Low Income households would be eligible for grants and Moderate Income households would be eligible for low interest loans.

Objective: Reduction in overcrowded conditions in single-family homes occupied by Very Low, Low and Moderate Income households.

Source of Funds: Redevelopment Agency 20 percent set-aside funds

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development/
Redevelopment Agency

Schedule: 2004



LARGE FAMILY HOUSING STUDY

Action: Investigate the various housing needs of large families in the community.

Objective: Determine if the City is providing enough housing for large families in the City in the Very Low, Low and Moderate Income Categories. If there is an unmet need, explore ways of meeting need through new construction, mixed-use housing and governmental programs.

Source of Funds: Redevelopment Agency 20 percent set-aside funds

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development/
Redevelopment Agency

Time Frame: 2004



SHARED HOUSING PROGRAM

Action: Establish membership with the Area Agency on Ageing-Shared Housing Program or other such organizations that assist seniors in finding roommates. The establishment of this program would allow seniors to reduce their individual housing costs.

Objective: Allow seniors the option of shared housing to reduce individual housing costs to an affordable level.

Source of Funding: Redevelopment Agency 20 percent set-aside funds or General Fund monies for program establishment. Once program is implemented there is no cost to the City.

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development/
Redevelopment Agency

Schedule: 2003

OFFICER/FIREMAN/TEACHER/CITY EMPLOYEE NEXT DOOR HOMEOWNERS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Action: Investigate potential sites and legalities of a program that would offer single-family homes at a discount to sheriffs or firemen assigned to the City of Cerritos, peace officers or firemen assigned to adjacent jurisdictions, ABC Unified School District teachers, and City of Cerritos employees. Eligible participants must have a Moderate Income (between 80 and 120 percent of the median income). Terms of the proposed program may require: 1) participants to live in the subject property as their sole residence for at least fifteen years after purchase; and 2) include a discount off the list price of the subject property in the form of a second mortgage that is the equivalent of the discounted price that will be waived after the mandatory occupancy period is satisfied. If the buyer leaves the home during the mandatory occupancy period, he/she will be required to repay the Agency a portion of the second mortgage depending on length of occupancy.

Objective: Place 10 officers, firemen, teachers, or City employees into single-family homes through program.

Source of Funding: Redevelopment Agency 20 percent set-aside funds

Responsible Agency: Community Development Department/
Redevelopment Agency

Schedule: 2005



EQUAL HOUSING PROGRAM

Action: Obtain services from the Fair Housing Council of Los Angeles County to administer the Equal Housing Program and act as an independent third-party to discrimination complaints. The City will make available literature on the Program at the Cerritos City Hall, Chamber of Commerce, Library, website and other areas that the community gathers information.

Objective: Allow persons in the City a more approachable channel for discrimination issues.

Source of Funding: Redevelopment Agency 20 percent set-aside funds

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development/ Redevelopment Agency/Fair Housing Council of Los Angeles County

Schedule: 2002



HOMELESS SHELTER PROGRAM

Action: Continued annual contribution to local homeless shelters in the region. Specifically, the continued \$50,000 contribution to the Rio Hondo shelter for the homeless and the \$20,000 contribution to the Su Casa Crisis and Support Center/Transitional Housing for battered women.

Annual review of contributions to determine if an adjustment to funding is necessary.

Objective: Continued support of homeless special needs

Source of Funding: Redevelopment Agency 20 percent set-aside funds.

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development/ Redevelopment Agency

Schedule: On-going



SENIOR AND DISABLED CITIZEN LABOR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Action: Organize additional county and local community groups and organizations to provide labor for minor housing repair and maintenance for the senior and disabled community.

Objective: Establish the program by coordinating the provision of volunteer labor to interested seniors and disabled persons.

Source of Funding: Redevelopment Agency 20 percent set-aside funds.

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development/
Redevelopment Agency

Schedule: 2003

SIMPLIFIED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

Action: The City will produce a formal review of the development process in order to further encourage the development of affordable housing through fast tracking, streamlining or consolidation.

Objective: Lessen governmental constraint for the development of housing.

Source of Funding: General Fund

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development

Schedule: 2004

Review of Residential Development Fees

Action: Review residential development fees to encourage the continued development of housing and to insure the development fees remain one of the lowest in the region.

Objective: Lessen government constraint for the development of housing.

Source of Funding: General Fund

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development

Schedule: 2004

LAND USE ELEMENT REVIEW PROGRAM

Action: As part of the General Plan Update, the Land Use Element will be reviewed by 2002 to determine if any non-residential zoned land can be converted to residential uses and to evaluate possibilities of higher residential land densities in an effort to investigate ways of maximizing land use and identify possible new or under-utilized sites appropriate for multifamily development.

Objective: Maximize housing development on existing land.

Source of Funding: General Fund

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development

Schedule: 2003

MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING PROGRAM

Action: After the Land Use Element is updated and a site database of vacant or under-utilized land has been created, the Redevelopment Agency will identify appropriate sites for multifamily development. The City will then discuss with the owners of the identified sites, the possibility of the City acquiring the sites for future multifamily development. The zoning requirement of multifamily development being on no less than 3 acres of land will not apply to this Program. Specifically, since multifamily developments such as the Emerald Villas and Pioneer Villas Affordable Senior Housing Projects require the creation of unique development guidelines, standard Multifamily Residential (RM) zoning requirements are not applicable resulting in the creation of an Area Development Plan (ADP). In addition to the 126-unit Emerald Villas, 98-unit Pioneer Villas, and 147-unit Avalon at Cerritos projects, the City is proposing to develop a for-sale senior housing project at the southeast corner of Carmenita Road and 183rd Street.

Objective: Construct affordable rental housing in Cerritos.

Source of Funding: Redevelopment Agency 20 percent set-aside funds

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development/
Redevelopment Agency

Schedule: 2004

HOUSING ELEMENT REVIEW PROGRAM

Action: The Housing Element will be reviewed annually to evaluate the effectiveness, appropriateness and progress of the Cerritos housing goals, programs and actions.

Objective: Implement an effective and efficient housing program that accommodates the housing needs of the population.

Source of Funding: General Fund

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development

Schedule: On-going

REDEVELOPMENT SET-ASIDE FUND TRANSFERS

Action: Research feasibility and need of redevelopment set-aside fund transfers. Explore the possible benefits of AB 2041, which recognizes the difficulty cities may have building low and moderate income housing due to the availability and cost of land. The Assembly Bill would allow cities to establish a joint powers authority that would pool their low and moderate income housing funds to allow for affordable housing to be built in their surrounding area. Determine the likelihood the surrounding cities in the immediate area would participate.

Objective: Establish feasibility and need of redevelopment set-aside fund transfers.

Source of Funds: Redevelopment Agency 20 percent set-aside funds

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development

Schedule: 2003

REGIONAL COOPERATION

Action: Work in conjunction with other municipalities and regional agencies in an effort to promote regional cooperation regarding housing needs.

Objective: Maximize regional cooperation in the region.

Source of Funds: General Fund

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development

Schedule: 2002

OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING REHABILITATION

Action: Investigate need for a low interest rehabilitation loan or grant program that would be utilized to allow citizens of Cerritos to make improvements to their homes or correct code violations on first-need criteria. If the need is present, implement program with priority for senior and disabled persons that are within the Very Low, Low and Moderate Income Groups and homeowners that have been identified as violating City housing codes that are within the Very Low, Low and Moderate Income Groups.

Objective: Determine if program is needed in the community

Source of Funds: Redevelopment Agency 20 percent set-aside funds

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development/
Redevelopment Agency

Schedule: Need evaluation – 2003, Program implementation – 2005

CITYWIDE PRIDE PROGRAM

Action: Continue to support and expand the City Wide Pride beautification program and other neighborhood associations in an effort to maintain the City's existing housing stock by encouraging residents and property owners, through proactive enforcement and positive reinforcement, to maintain their property.

Objective: Maintenance of existing housing stock

Source of Funding: General Fund

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development

Schedule: On-going

REHABILITATION REBATE PROGRAM

Action: Continue Rebate Program, while increasing the maximum grant amount from \$300 to \$2,500 in an effort to maintain the existing housing stock in the City. Priority status will be given to homeowners that have been identified as violating the Cerritos Municipal Code and that are within the Very Low, Low and Moderate Income Groups.

Objective: Annually provide \$37,500 in grant monies/15 grants to the community.

Source of Funding: Redevelopment Agency 20 percent set-aside funds

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development/
Redevelopment Agency

Schedule: 2003

CERRITOS CODE ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM

Action: Continue proactive enforcement of existing Municipal Code provisions relating to the appropriate use and development of properties throughout the City.

Objective: Improve quality and prevent deterioration of existing neighborhoods.

Source of Funding: General Fund

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Safety and Services

Schedule: On-going

SUBSTANDARD PROPERTY ABATEMENT PROGRAM

Action: Continuation of Program that allows for the removal of sub-standard properties and properties in continual violation of the Municipal Code which threaten the health, safety and welfare of the community.

Objective: The removal of unsafe properties that cannot be economically rehabilitated.

Source of Funding: General Funds

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development/Building Department

Schedule: On-going



AT-RISK PRESERVATION

Action: Preserve government assisted units at-risk of conversion to market rate uses.

Objective: Have program in place for eventual preservation of affordable units.

Source of Funding: Redevelopment Agency 20 percent set-aside funds

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development

Schedule: 2005



ENERGY CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Action: Implement a program that educates the public regarding energy conservation and promotes the use of alternative energy sources through financial reimbursement programs.

Objective: Encourage the use of alternative energy sources.

Source of Funding: General Fund

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development

Schedule: 2005



LEAD-BASED PAINT AND ASBESTOS REDUCTION PROGRAM

Action: Evaluate the need for a lead-based paint and asbestos reduction program. If a need exists, implement a program that offers financial reimbursements to affected housing unit owners.

Objective: Eliminate lead-based paint and asbestos from the housing stock.

Source of Funding: General Fund

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development/Building Department

Schedule: Need evaluation – 2002, Program implementation – 2005

FIRST-TIME HOME BUYERS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Action: Determine if there is a need for a First-Time Home Buyers Assistance Program. If need exists, investigate possible consulting firms with whom to contract out that can coordinate and administer such a program. The program, if necessary, would target households that are in the Low and Moderate Income Groups.

Objective: To increase ownership opportunities for prospective first-time homebuyers through financial assistance.

Source of Funding: Redevelopment Agency 20 percent set-aside funds.

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development/Redevelopment Agency

Schedule: Need evaluation – 2002, Program implantation – 2004

DOWNTOWN REBOUND PLANNING GRANT

Action: Apply for a Downtown Rebound Planning Grant.

Objective: To conduct a feasibility analysis and create an action plan regarding increasing housing through removing barriers and promoting infill housing, mixed-use developments and transit corridor development in Cerritos "downtown" area, with an emphasis on creating the maximum amount of affordable housing under the Downtown Rebound Planning Grant guidelines.

Source of Funding: State of California Department of Housing and Community Development

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development/Redevelopment Agency

Schedule: Spring 2003

AB 1290 - Redevelopment Agency Implementation Plan

Action: The Redevelopment Agency Implementation Plan (AB 1290) will be reviewed on an annual basis to evaluate the effectiveness, appropriateness and progress of the Cerritos Redevelopment Agency.

Objective: To evaluate the effectiveness of the Implementation Plan.

Source of Funding: Redevelopment Agency

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Development/
Redevelopment Agency

Schedule: Ongoing

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