



NOTICE OF PREPARATION City of Belmont Housing Element

Date: July 6, 2021

To: Reviewing Agencies, Interested Parties, and Organizations

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the City of Belmont Housing Element Update, and Scheduling of a Scoping Meeting on Wednesday, July 21, 2021

The City of Belmont (City) is preparing an update to the Housing Element of the City's General Plan and has determined that a Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be necessary to evaluate environmental impacts of the Housing Element Update pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). In compliance with CEQA, the City will be the Lead Agency and will prepare the Program EIR. The City is requesting comments and guidance on the scope and content of the Program EIR from responsible and trustee agencies, interested public agencies, organizations, and the general public (CEQA Guidelines Section 15082).

This Notice of Preparation (NOP) provides a summary of the Housing Element Update project; includes the City's preliminary identification of the potential environmental issues to be analyzed in the EIR; and provides information on how to comment on the scope of the EIR.

Notice of Preparation Public Review Period: July 6, 2021 to August 5, 2021

The City requests your careful review and consideration of this notice, and it invites any and all input and comments from interested agencies, persons, and organizations regarding the preparation of the Program EIR. Comments and responses to this notice must be in writing and submitted to the Lead Agency Contact through the close of business on August 5, 2021. If applicable, please indicate a contact person for your agency or organization. If your agency is a responsible agency as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15381, your agency may use the environmental documents prepared by the City when considering permits or approvals for action regarding the project.

Lead Agency Contact:

Jennifer Rose, Economic Development & Housing Manager
City of Belmont Finance Department
One Twin Pines Lane, Suite 320
Belmont, California 94002
Housing@belmont.gov

Written Comments: Please submit written comments within 30 days of the date of this notice to any of the below by 5:00 p.m. on August 5, 2021:

- Comment on specific draft Housing Inventory Sites at: <https://tinyurl.com/kt33jev8>
- Email: Housing@belmont.gov
- Regular Mail: City of Belmont, One Twin Pines Lane, Suite 310, Belmont, CA 94002. Attn: Housing Element Update

Public Scoping Meeting: The City will hold a virtual scoping meeting to provide an opportunity for agency staff and interested members of the public to submit verbal comments on the scope of the environmental issues to be addressed in the EIR. The virtual scoping meeting will be held on **Wednesday, July 21, 2021** at 6:00 p.m. For more information and to register to attend the scoping meeting, go to <https://www.belmont.gov/our-city/city-government/meetings-agendas-minutes>. The scoping presentation will be available to view after July 26, 2021 on <https://www.belmont.gov/departments/community-development/housing/housing-element>.

Project Background: The City must undertake an update to its Housing Element as mandated by the state. To that end, the City is beginning preparation of its Sixth Cycle Housing Element Update, which will result in a series of zoning modifications to accommodate the City's anticipated Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). For the last RHNA cycle, the City was allocated a total of 468 units to be accommodated in its Housing Element inventory of adequate sites.

Project Location: The Housing Element Update will encompass the entirety of the City of Belmont and will specifically affect the draft housing opportunity sites shown in Figure 1. A significant majority of the draft housing opportunity sites are located within the El Camino Real/Old County Road corridors and Belmont Village Specific Plan (BVSP) area.

Proposed Project: The Housing Element update presents a comprehensive set of housing policies and actions for the years 2023-2030 and will encompass the entire city of Belmont. The Housing Element update will be based on the City's latest RHNA estimates, which determined that the City needs to plan for approximately 1,700 residential units, plus a buffer of some number of units to ensure ongoing compliance with the No Net Loss provisions of State housing law. The City expects to exceed the growth forecasts in its 2017 General Plan and Belmont Village Specific Plan by 2022. The City believes that by initiating the CEQA process early, it can support the Housing Element update process and any related amendments to the General Plan and Belmont Village Specific Plan. Due to the anticipated increase in residents beyond current forecasts, the City has determined that a Program EIR will be the best document to comply with CEQA.

As a built-out City, Belmont may be required to find additional sites – some in areas not previously targeted as opportunity sites – as well as upzone¹ other areas. The City anticipates an upzoning effort targeted along the entire El Camino Real corridor, and a new corridor planning effort focused on Old County Road. For purposes of the EIR, the City will evaluate sites that could accommodate up to a total of 3,400 residential units.

Project Alternatives: The EIR will evaluate a reasonable range of project alternatives that, consistent with CEQA, meet most of the project objectives and reduce or avoid potential environmental effects, including a required No Project Alternative.

Potential Environmental Effect Areas: The EIR will describe the reasonably foreseeable and potentially significant adverse effects of the proposed project (both direct and indirect). The EIR also will evaluate the cumulative impacts of the project when considered in conjunction with other related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future

¹ Upzoning refers to rezoning parcels to allow higher-density housing.

projects. The City anticipates that the proposed project could result in potentially significant environmental impacts in the following topic areas, which will be further evaluated in the EIR.

- Aesthetics/Visual
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services and Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire
- Cumulative Effects
- Growth Inducing Effects

When the Draft EIR is completed, it will be available for review at the City's offices located at One Twin Pines Lane, Suite 310, Belmont, CA 94002 and online at: <https://www.belmont.gov/departments/community-development/housing/housing-element>. The City will issue a Notice of Availability of a Draft EIR at that time to inform the public and interested agencies, groups, and individuals of how to access the Draft EIR and provide comments.

If you have questions regarding this NOP or the scoping meeting, please contact Jennifer Rose at (650) 595-7453 or via email at jrose@belmont.gov



Carlos de Melo, Community Development Director

6/30/21

Date

Figure 1

