



City of Pleasant Hill

September 19, 2016

John T. Laettner, Judge of the Superior Court
Michael Simmons, Foreperson, 2015-2016 Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury
Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury
725 Court Street
Martinez, CA 94553
Also via email to epant@contracosta.courts.ca.gov

RE: City of Pleasant Hill's Response to Report No. 1614 "Where Will We Live? The Affordable Housing Waiting List is Closed."

Dear Judge Laettner and Foreperson Simmons:

In June 2016, the 2015-2016 Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury issued a report entitled Report No. 1614 "Where Will We Live? The Affordable Housing Waiting List is Closed." Below find the City of Pleasant Hill's responses to the report's findings and recommendations.

However, before addressing the specific findings and recommendations, the City would like to note an inaccuracy in the Civil Grand Jury's report. On page 18, the report states that "Pleasant Hill is the only city in the survey with no deed restricted housing." That is incorrect. The City has a number of deed-restricted affordable housing units, as we indicated in our written response to the survey that the Civil Grand Jury conducted while researching this topic. We would appreciate acknowledgement by the Civil Grand Jury of this error in the report.

FINDINGS

Finding 1. PDAs recognize the importance of housing near transportation and jobs for developing prosperous communities.

City Response: Agree

Finding 2. Plan Bay Area 2040 seeks to combine transportation, jobs and housing as a solution to the needs of our growing population.

City Response: Agree

Finding 3. While State law mandates that ABAG conduct the RHNA process, a city is not required to subsidize and/or build the units; it is only required to demonstrate that local zoning will not impede development.

City Response: Agree, State law mandates that local jurisdictions have adequate locations/areas that can accommodate their fair share of housing through appropriate zoning.

Finding 5. Inclusionary zoning programs provide incentives and regulatory waivers to builders and developers who produce both affordable and market rate homes within the same project.

City Response: Disagree. Inclusionary zoning/housing provisions do not necessarily include any incentives or regulatory waivers to builders or developers.

Finding 6. The city's Inclusionary Housing ordinance helps to provide AH in that city.

City Response: Agree

Finding 8. Inclusionary Housing Ordinances sometimes include the option for the developer to pay in lieu fees instead of constructing AH units.

City Response: Agree

Finding 9. The city supplements the shortage of funds for AH by requiring builders to pay impact fees, in lieu fees, or other construction and remodeling fees.

City Response: Agree

Finding 10. Infill costs less to service than new development because it takes advantage of the existing infrastructure.

City Response: Partially disagree. Depending on the specifics of a site, infill development might or might not cost less to construct and service compared to new development.

Finding 11. The elimination of redevelopment agencies resulted in a reduction of the number of AH units constructed in the city by eliminating a major source of funding for affordable development projects.

City Response: Agree

Finding 12. The city delegates to the builder, owner, or management company of AH properties the responsibility for gathering and validating AH clientele information, as well as maintaining lists of potentially interested buyers.

City Response: Agree

Finding 13. There is no accessible centralized information source for available AH, which compounds the problems created by the AH shortage for those who are searching for affordable housing.

City Response: Agree

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1. The city should consider increasing AH in PDAs.

City Response: The recommendation has been implemented. The City has already identified affordable housing opportunities in its PDAs.

Recommendation 2. The city should consider adopting an Inclusionary Housing Ordinance.

City Response: The recommendation has been implemented. The City has already adopted an inclusionary housing ordinance

Recommendation 3. The city should explore rehabilitating existing housing stock as AH for purchase or rental, and identify funding to do so.

City Response: The recommendation has already been implemented. The City considers requests for funding to rehabilitate existing housing stock along with other types of requests for affordable housing funding.

Recommendation 5. The city should explore increasing existing "impact fees" or "linkage fees" or enacting such fees in order to generate revenue with which to assist funding of AH.

City Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. The Planning Division will explore increasing fees during the next update of the City's Master Fee Schedule, for fiscal year 2017-18.

Recommendation 6. The city should consider designating an employee within the city's planning or housing department to coordinate with property management to maintain current waiting and interest lists of available AH and ensure information is posted on the city website, and identifying funding to do so.

City Response: The recommendation requires further analysis. It might be more efficient for government agencies and clients seeking affordable housing to be able to access a single countywide interest and waiting list rather than for each city to create their own lists.

Recommendation 7. The city should consider seeking federal, state, and local funding sources for AH.

City Response: The recommendation has been implemented. The City is continually looking for federal, state, and local funding sources for affordable housing.

Recommendation 8. The city should consider partnering with for-profit and not-for-profit builders to secure land suitable for AH, and identify funding to do so.

City Response: The recommendation has been implemented. The City is continually open to partnership opportunities with nonprofits and other organizations to create

additional affordable housing.

Recommendation 11. The city should consider undertaking an education initiative in the earliest phase of affordable planning projects in order to alleviate community concerns regarding AH, and identify funding to do so.

City Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. The City believes that it would be efficient for the County or a collaboration of cities to develop boilerplate affordable housing project education materials for cities to use with individual projects.

Recommendation 13. The city should consider identifying all infill and vacant land not in PDAs and encourage use of it for AH through tax incentives, density bonuses, etc.


City Response: The recommendation has been implemented. The City's Housing Element identifies the City's vacant and underutilized lots. Affordable housing is encouraged on these lots through the City's standard requirements and incentives.

Recommendation 15. The city should consider creating an easily accessible, on line central repository with all relevant information on deed-restricted housing units to assure that inventory of AH is maintained, and identify funding to do so.

City Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. The City will place information regarding its deed-restricted affordable housing units on the City's website.

Please feel free to contact me for additional information regarding the City's response at 925-671-5284.

Sincerely,



Andrew Murray, Assistant City Manager

Cc: Sue Noack, Mayor
Michael G. Harris, Vice-Mayor
Kenneth Carlson, Councilmember
David E. Durant, Councilmember
Timothy M. Flaherty, Councilmember
June Catalano, City Manager
Janet Coleson, City Attorney
Greg Fuz, City Planner