

Overview

This Housing Element builds upon the goals, objectives, policies and programs in Larkspur's current Housing Element, which was adopted in 1990. As demonstrated in projects such as Cape Marin, Larkspur Courts Apartments, Edgewater Place and the recently approved Drake's Cove/Drake's Way projects that included over 50% affordable housing, the City has supported quality affordable housing in Larkspur. In addition, the Central Larkspur Area Specific Plan (CLASP) provides for housing and retail commercial mixed use opportunities close to shopping and transit in and adjacent to downtown Larkspur.

Larkspur's 'fair share' of the regional housing need is a total of 303 units between January, 1999 and June, 2006 (extended to 2007 by SB 491, Chapter 58, Statutes of 2003), with the following income breakdown: 56 units affordable to *very low income* households (18.5% of the total); 29 units affordable to *low income* households (9.6% of the total); 85 units affordable to *moderate income* households (28.1% of the total); and 133 units affordable to *above moderate income* households (43.9% of the total). Larkspur's progress to date (since January, 1999) in meeting those needs includes the approval of 26 very-low income units, 18 low-income units, 1 moderate income unit, and 29 above-moderate income units. This Draft Housing Element continues to support a multi-faceted approach to housing that fulfills the ABAG goals for affordable housing, maximizes the chances for broad community consensus, and builds upon these successes.

This is a *Draft Housing Element* that has been prepared based on discussions around housing needs and strategic programs and opportunities for addressing those needs. Community input provided on the preliminary strategic programs and opportunities helped to shape the *Draft Housing Element*, which is available for further community review. The State of California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) will also review the *Draft Housing Element*. Steps in the review process have and will include at a minimum:

- (1) **Planning Commission/City Council-Hosted Work Sessions and Staff-Hosted Workshops** to review housing strategy options as presented during several City Council workshops.
- (2) **Joint City Council/Planning Commission Work Session** to review the results of the Staff-Hosted Workshops and to review the housing strategy options.
- (3) **Preparation and Distribution of the Draft Housing Element** for additional review by the public and State law required review by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).
- (4) **Response to Comments from HCD and the Public**, with possible modifications to the Draft Housing Element based on comments.
- (5) **Planning Commission Public Hearings** and recommendations to the City Council for adoption of the updated Housing Element.

- (6) **City Council Public Hearings** to adopt the Planning Commission-Recommended Draft Housing Element.

Larkspur's Housing Element must be sensitive to the many converging and competing interests, desires and views in the City relating to development of all types of housing while preserving the historic character of Larkspur's neighborhoods, open space and fragile natural resource. All persons are encouraged to sign-up on the Housing Element Mailing List. The major actions proposed by this Housing Element are:

1. To identify sites with a high potential for development or redevelopment for affordable, market-rate, or inclusionary housing while taking into account the characteristics of the community and environmental constraints.
2. To identify several other resources and incentives to promote the development of affordable housing including residential second units and in-lieu fees.
3. To identify funding mechanisms and available market-rate units for purposes of converting to affordable housing.
4. To amend the Zoning Ordinance to discourage the conversion of existing residential units to commercial or office space or other uses.
5. To investigate the feasibility of a Job/Housing Linkage Fee Program.
6. To implement actions toward the completion of the Central Larkspur Area Specific Plan.
7. To encourage mixed residential/commercial development where mixes of uses is feasible and appropriate and encourage the construction of senior housing as part of mixed use developments.
8. To allow for live/work units in the City's commercial and industrial Districts.
9. To revise the City's Inclusionary Housing Policy to increase the inclusionary percentage and to be more explicit about the levels of affordability to be provided.

For ease of use, Appendix A contains a list of potential housing sites considered in this Housing Element.

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