



City of Huntington Beach
Notice of Preparation and Notice of Scoping Meeting
City of Huntington Beach 6th Cycle Housing Element Update
Subsequent Environmental Impact Report

Date: August 4, 2021

To: **Responsible and Trustee Agencies, Interested Organizations, and Individuals**
Office of Planning and Research
County of Orange Clerk-Recorder

From: **City of Huntington Beach (Lead Agency)**
Department of Community Development
2000 Main Street
Huntington Beach, CA 92648

Subject: Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Subsequent Environmental Impact Report and Notice of a Public Scoping Meeting for the **City of Huntington Beach 6th Cycle Housing Element Update (2021-2029) Project**

Location: Citywide

Notice of Preparation Review Period: August 5, 2021 to September 7, 2021

Scoping Meeting: To be held virtually via ZOOM on Thursday, August 19, 2021, 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Further information below.

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21165 and the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (CEQA Guidelines) Section 15050, the City of Huntington Beach (City) is the Lead Agency responsible for preparation of the Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) addressing potential impacts associated with the City of Huntington Beach 6th Cycle Housing Element Update (2021-2029) Project ("Project").

NOP Public Review Period and Comments

Given the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent to the City at the earliest possible date, but no later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

In accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21080.4 and the State CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, this Notice of Preparation is being circulated for a 30-day comment period between August 5, 2021 and September 7, 2021. Comments in response to this notice must be submitted to the City through close of business on September 7, 2021.

The City is requesting comments and guidance on the SEIR's scope and content from Responsible and Trustee agencies, interested public agencies, organizations, and the general public (pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15082). The City requests each Responsible and Trustee agency's views on the environmental issues relevant to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the Project, in a manner consistent with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b). Your agency may use the SEIR prepared by the City when considering any future permits or approvals from your agency. This NOP includes a project description and a list of the environmental issues to be examined in the SEIR.



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All parties that have submitted their names and mailing addresses will be notified as part of the Project's CEQA review process. If you wish to be placed on the mailing list or have any questions or need additional information, please contact the lead agency contact noted below.

The City requests your careful review and consideration of this notice, and invites **written comments** from interested agencies, persons, and organizations regarding the preparation of the SEIR. Please send your written comments to:

Nicolle Aubé, AICP, Senior Analyst
Department of Community Development
City of Huntington Beach
2000 Main Street
Huntington Beach, CA 92648

Phone: (714) 374-1529
Fax: (714) 374-1648
Email: nicolle.aube@surfcity-hb.org

Please include the name, phone number, email, and address of a contact person in your response. If comments are submitted by e-mail with attachments, it is recommended that the attachments be delivered in writing. Virus protection measures and variety of formats for attachments can limit the ability for the attachments to be delivered.

The NOP can also be accessed online at:

- <https://www.huntingtonbeachca.gov/housing-element-update/>
and:
- <https://www.huntingtonbeachca.gov/government/departments/planning/major/major-projects-view.cfm?ID=99>

Additionally, copies of the NOP are also available for review at the following locations:

- Huntington Beach City Hall, Department of Community Development, 2000 Main Street, Huntington Beach, CA 92648; Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 3 p.m.
- Central Library, 7111 Talbert Avenue, Huntington Beach, CA 92648; Hours vary, see website: <https://www.huntingtonbeachca.gov/government/departments/library/>

Scoping Meeting

The City will hold a public Scoping Meeting to solicit comments on the scope of the SEIR on Thursday, August 19, 2021, 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., via ZOOM. Oral or written questions or comments regarding the Scoping Meeting or any environmental issues to be considered should be directed to Nicolle Aubé at the contact information above.

To join the ZOOM meeting please follow this link:

<https://kimley-horn.zoom.us/j/92837108200?pwd=WENUNkRGZ1NLbUY4VFZLdjJkOXBxUT09>

Meeting ID: 928 3710 8200

Passcode: 606804

To participate via telephone, dial: 888-475-4499 US Toll-free

Meeting ID: 928 3710 8200



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Special Accommodations. Should you require special accommodations at the public Scoping Meeting, such as for the hearing impaired or an English translator, please contact the City of Huntington Beach no later than August 17, 2021. (see contact information above).

Project Summary

Project Setting/Location

Incorporated in 1909, the City of Huntington Beach is a seaside community that encompasses approximately 28 square miles in the County of Orange. Huntington Beach is located on the Pacific Coast, west of Interstate 405, and approximately 35 miles south of downtown Los Angeles and 90 miles north of the City of San Diego. With a population of approximately 196,874 persons¹, Huntington Beach has the fourth largest population in Orange County.

A. Project Overview/Description

The Housing Element is a State-mandated policy document that is a component of the Huntington Beach General Plan. The Housing Element provides direction for implementation of various programs to meet existing and projected future housing needs for all income levels within Huntington Beach. It provides policies, programs, and actions that support and create the framework for production, preservation, and maintenance of the City's housing stock for all income levels.

To comply with State law, a city's or county's Housing Element must be updated to ensure the city/county policies and programs can accommodate estimated housing growth need identified by the Council of Governments. Huntington Beach is located within the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) region comprised of Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, Imperial, and Ventura counties. The Housing Element is updated every eight years and is based on the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocation for the current planning period. SCAG is in the 6th Cycle planning period, which covers years 2021-2029.

Background

Huntington Beach's current 5th Cycle Housing Element was adopted in September 2013 for the 2013-2021 planning period and subsequently certified by the State of California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) in October 2013. In May 2015, HCD decertified the City's Housing Element following an amendment to the Beach and Edinger Corridors Specific Plan (BECSP). In February 2020, the 2013-2021 Housing Element was amended and adopted by the Huntington Beach City Council, and certified by HCD in March 2020. The City is currently developing the respective actions and programs for the current 6th Cycle planning period. To meet HCD statutory deadlines, the local Huntington Beach approval process must be completed by October 15, 2021, inclusive of environmental review pursuant to CEQA.²

¹ Department Of Finance. 2021. [E-1 Population Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State — January 1, 2020 and 2021.](https://www.dof.ca.gov/forecasting/demographics/estimates/e-1/) <https://www.dof.ca.gov/forecasting/demographics/estimates/e-1/> (accessed July 2021).

² State law includes a 120-day grace period after this deadline.



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6th Cycle Housing Element Update Components

The 6th Cycle Housing Element Update consists of five main components:

1. Assessing City-wide Housing Needs and Opportunities;
2. Drafting Goals, Policies, Programs, and Objectives;
3. Preparing the 6th Cycle Housing Element;
4. Preparing the CEQA - Environmental Review Document; and
5. Coordinating with HCD to Obtain State Certification.

Completion of these components and the local adoption process are envisioned to occur between March 2021 and February 2022. The Housing Element Update process has and will continue to include various public engagement opportunities, such as a Citywide workshops, geographic area-specific meetings, subject group meetings, targeted focus meetings, and public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council.

Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA)

The RHNA is mandated by State law to quantify future housing growth needs throughout California. This informs the local planning process by addressing existing and future housing needs resulting from estimated growth in population, employment, and households. SCAG is responsible for oversight of the RHNA process for the six-county region of Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, Imperial, and Ventura counties. The SCAG Regional Council adopted the Final RHNA Methodology for the 6th Cycle on March 5th, 2021 and HCD approved the methodology on March 22, 2021. Huntington Beach is allocated 13,368 dwelling units to accommodate the existing and projected regional housing needs at various income levels detailed in the table below. As required by State law, the General Plan Housing Element must identify the City's ability to accommodate the RHNA allocation through the identification of available sites and appropriate zoning. The 6th Cycle RHNA allocation for Huntington Beach is as follows:

City of Huntington Beach	
6th Cycle RHNA Allocations by Income Category	
Income Category	RHNA Allocation
Very Low (0% to 50% of AMI)	3,661 units
Low (51% to 80% of AMI)	2,184 units
Moderate (81% to 120% of AMI)	2,308 units
Above Moderate (more than 121% of AMI)	5,215 units
TOTAL	13,368 units
RHNA = Regional Housing Needs Assessment; AMI = area median income	
Source: SCAG. 2021. SCAG 6 th Cycle Final RHNA Allocation Plan. https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/6th-cycle-rhna-final-allocation-plan.pdf?1625161899 (accessed July 2021).	

Available Sites and Capacity Analysis

The Housing Element must demonstrate the City's ability to accommodate the RHNA either through the production of housing or the availability of properly zoned land that can accommodate additional growth. If adequate sites cannot be identified based on the existing zoning for the sites, the City is required to rezone sites that can accommodate the remaining need at a minimum density of 30 dwelling units per acre, which is the default density set by HCD. The City is not required to build dwelling units to meet its



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RHNA allocation, only to identify potential sites and create the framework to provide the market with the opportunity to develop these dwelling units.

The Housing Element will explore opportunities to accommodate the RHNA through current production (construction of dwelling units), entitled (approved but not constructed) dwelling units, and the availability of properly zoned land that can accommodate additional growth. The Housing Element will further identify and address potential and actual governmental and non-governmental constraints on the development of housing for all income levels.

B. Required Approvals

The Housing Element is a component of the Huntington Beach General Plan that will be adopted by City Council by Resolution at a duly noticed public hearing. Additionally, HCD will review the Housing Element Update for compliance with applicable statutory provisions. A General Plan SEIR will be prepared in compliance with CEQA. The SEIR would be certified by City Council.

The following discretionary actions are required by the City:

1. Draft 2021-2029 Housing Element Update Adoption: To amend the Huntington Beach General Plan.
2. General Plan Amendment: For Housing Element adoption and rezoning program implementation.
3. Zoning Text Amendment: For rezoning program implementation.
4. Zoning Map Amendment: For rezoning program implementation.
5. SEIR and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program Certification: To become part of the Huntington Beach General Plan.

Other Project activities or actions required by other agencies:

1. Local Coastal Program Amendment (subject to certification by the California Coastal Commission): For rezoning program implementation.
2. California HCD review and certification of the Huntington Beach Housing Element Update: California Government Code Section 65585 requires that all California localities adopt housing elements, as part of their general plans, and submit draft and adopted elements to HCD for review of consistency with State law.

Environmental Issues to be Evaluated in the SEIR

The City of Huntington Beach, the Lead Agency for the 6th Cycle Housing Element Update (2021-2029) and SEIR, is subject to environmental review under CEQA. State CEQA Guidelines Section 15063 provide that if a lead agency determines that an EIR will clearly be required for a project, an Initial Study is not required. In this case, the City has determined that a SEIR will need to be prepared based on the Project's potential to create short-term, long-term, and cumulative impacts associated with the future development facilitated by the Housing Element Update Project. Note that a Housing Element does not propose development, however, it does propose land use and policy changes that would facilitate future development in the City.



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The Project has the potential to have significant impacts on several environmental factors. Using the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Environmental Checklist as a guide, the following environmental topical areas will be addressed in the SEIR:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- 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
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire

The Hazards and Hazardous Materials section of the Draft SEIR will discuss the potential impacts associated with housing development on sites identified as hazardous materials sites, known as the Cortese List, pursuant to California Government Code Section 65962.5. Because the Housing Element Update is Citywide, numerous sites are within the Project area. Interested parties can research individual sites using the various resources found at the following links:

<https://calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/> or <https://www.epa.gov/enviro/sems-search>.

Attachments:

Exhibit 1 – Regional Map

Exhibit 2 – Local Vicinity Map



EXHIBIT 1: Regional Map
6th Cycle Housing Element Update and EIR

