



City of Vernon

Draft Housing Element 2021-2029

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Introduction

Originally a residential community, Vernon has been a primarily, almost exclusively industrial city since the 1920's. Though over the last century there has been a transition from manufacturing toward distribution, new residential was hardly developed until a new affordable development was constructed in 2015 as a part of good governance reforms. Now, in order to ensure the long-term stability and transparency of local government in Vernon, and to capitalize upon changing economic dynamics in the residential, office, retail and manufacturing markets, the City is planning its next evolution into a community which remains a center of production, yet welcomes more residents into its borders in specific mixed-use areas defined within the Westside of the City.

The City of Vernon's 2021-2029 Housing Element arises in the middle of this shift, as a blueprint for how the City can enact this transformation over the next eight years in keeping with the City's General Plan and all legal requirements from the State of California.

Statutory Authority/Requirements

The Vernon Housing Element is an element of the General Plan required by State law to address current and future housing needs in the City (Government Code Section 65583). State law requires that Housing Elements address the following issues:

- Local governments must recognize their responsibility in contributing to the attainment of the State's housing goals.
- Local governments must prepare and implement housing elements that are coordinated with State and Federal efforts to provide opportunities for new housing.
- Local governments must cooperate with other agencies and governments to address regional housing needs.

The previous Housing Element covers from October 15, 2013 through October 15, 2021 and is part of the State's fifth cycle of Housing Element updates.

This 6th Cycle Housing Element sets policy from October 15, 2021 through October 15, 2029, defining how the city will meet requirements from the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) developed by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). Specifically, the RHNA calls for nine units to be added during the 2021-2029 planning period.

The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) is the State Agency responsible for ensuring that State housing law is being implemented at the local level. This includes review and approval of this Housing Element.

Relationship to Other General Plan Elements

The City of Vernon’s adopted General Plan Elements include the following:

- The **Land Use Element** lays out the location and distribution of existing development and permitted land uses in the City.
- The **Circulation and Infrastructure Element** identifies the planned development of the City’s transportation system and all infrastructure needs.
- The **Resources Element** promotes the conservation, development, and sustainable use of natural and cultural resources. It also addresses air quality, water quality and global warming.
- The **Noise Element** provides policy guidelines for controlling the noise environment in the City.
- The **Safety Element** addresses natural hazards, such as seismic events, and human-caused hazards, such as industrial fires.

State law requires that local general plans be internally consistent. As such, policies and programs in this Housing Element must be reflected in the other General Plan Elements when appropriate. For example, the Land Use Element helps implement housing policy since it determines where housing should be located and how it should look. The other elements of the General Plan directly and indirectly impact how housing develops. This includes policies for controlling noise, air quality and traffic, which affect the suitability and livability of housing.

Public Participation

California law requires local governments to incorporate public input when developing a Housing Element. Specifically, Government Code section 65583(c)(7) says “that the local government shall make a diligent effort to achieve public participation of all economic segments of the community in the development of the housing element, and the program shall describe this effort.”

The City of Vernon has reached out to the community to define the City's housing needs and how to address them. Given the unique makeup of Vernon's community and the vastly different efforts related to new housing and mixed-use development on the Westside of the City and the maintenance of the City's existing housing stock, the outreach process this Element has run on two tracks:

- **Westside Specific Plan Stakeholders Advisory Committee.** The development of the Westside Specific Plan has been closely coordinated with a Stakeholders Advisory Committee composed of City Council representatives, the Chamber of Commerce, business owners, property owners and brokers. In fall 2020, The Arroyo Group conducted individual interviews with eighteen potential members of the Committee. Since early 2021, when the Committee was formed, five two-hour meetings have been held. Topics of the five meetings have been:
 - Meeting #1 organized the committee and presented the baseline studies, including four areas under consideration for mixed-use development, including residential.
 - Meetings #2 and #3 established recommended goals for the project. While the primary goal was to reinvigorate Vernon's competitive advantage as a center of production, another key goal recommended by the Committee was to increase the residential population of the City. These meetings also recommended three study areas for mixed-use development: Santa Fe North, Santa Fe South, and Pacific/Hampton, and stated the Committee's opinion that housing on Santa Fe Avenue could not be undertaken without transportation and streetscape changes that would create a more suitable environment.
 - Meeting #4 involved a robust discussion of transportation changes that could be made to achieve the objective of a more suitable Santa Fe Avenue for mixed-use development.
 - Meeting #5 presented concepts for catalytic development projects, including residential projects on the Westside of the City.

As demonstrated by the topics of discussion of the five stakeholder meetings, stakeholder concerns about new housing have been taken into account at every step along the way, resulting in sufficient direction to prepare this Housing Element's recommendations related to new housing on the Westside of the City. Minutes from Westside Specific Plan Stakeholder Advisory Committee meetings are included in Appendix F.

- **Housing Commission Meeting.** City staff and The Arroyo Group conducted a meeting with the Housing Commission on December 8, 2021 to discuss the draft Housing Plan (Goals, Policies, Programs, and Sites). The Housing Commission consists of seven members (currently three business representatives, three resident representatives and one employee representative) who provide open and transparent management of the City's housing units. Minutes from the Housing Commission meeting are included in Appendix F. Key takeaways from the Housing Commission meeting included not making specific commitments about the number of housing units desired on the Civic Center site and considering traffic impacts of new housing.
- **Public Comment Period Responses.** Public comment period on the draft Housing Element was held from January 26 to February 25, 2022. The City notified Councilmembers, Housing Commission members, residents, Vernon Village Park Apartments manager, Bell Salvation Army, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, Housing Rights Center, and the South Central Los Angeles Regional Center, and made the Element available on the City's website. The City received one long-form public comment, from a resident, during the public comment period. City staff and The Arroyo Group reviewed the public comment in detail and recorded responses to each subset of the public comment on an Excel sheet. The Arroyo Group, with guidance from City staff, made edits to the draft Housing Element based on the public comment received. The edits included adding additional information and improving phrasing for ease of understanding.

Following HCD review of the draft Element, the City Council will conduct public hearings and adopt this Housing Element.

Goals and Policies

Although originally a residential and agricultural community, Vernon has been known over the past century as a totally industrial city. The 2010 United States Census reported a population of only 112 persons in 31 dwelling units, making it the second least populous city within the State of California.

In response to the extremely small population and the reported high salaries of public officials, Assembly Speaker John Perez introduced two measures in 2010 (AB 46 and AB781) to disincorporate the City of Vernon. The legislature agreed to hold off on disincorporation if the City would take steps to reform its government and increase and stabilize its population. The first step to increase the population was taken in 2015 with the construction of Vernon Village Park Apartments, a 45-unit affordable housing project. This resulted in a doubling of the population by 2020. But this number is still inadequate to insure good governance and to avoid the threat of disincorporation, as manipulation of a small number of voters by an individual or entity could allow for a relatively easy take over of control of the City.

Therefore, this 6th Cycle of the Housing Element sets forth goals and strategies to gradually increase, diversify and stabilize the population. Vernon will remain a center of production, but it will welcome more residents within its borders in specific mixed-use areas defined within the Westside of the City. This vision is illustrated by the following four goals to this 2021-2029 Housing Element:

- **Goal 1:** New, quality housing to attract and accommodate a broad, diverse and engaged citizenry.
- **Goal 2:** Attractive, livable and healthy environments for residential uses.
- **Goal 3:** Decent, safe and sanitary construction and maintenance of all housing units in the City.
- **Goal 4:** Diversity, transparency and equal housing opportunity in the ownership and occupancy of the City's housing stock.

Figure 1 presents the policies and programs that will implement these goals.

Goal	Policy	Applicable Program(s)
1. New, quality housing to attract and accommodate a broad, diverse and engaged citizenry.	Policy 1.1. Adopt a Westside Specific Plan which provides for the construction of new multifamily housing in suitable areas.	Program 8. Westside Specific Plan
	Policy 1.2. Encourage the development of appropriately placed new affordable and market-rate housing through regulatory and financial incentives, when necessary.	Program 8. Westside Specific Plan Program 10. Civic Center Residential Development Program 14. Housing Grant Application Working Group
	Policy 1.3. Launch a marketing effort to reveal the new attitude of the City of Vernon as a community which welcomes and supports new residential development.	Program 9. Westside Specific Plan Marketing
	Policy 1.4. Introduce new residential development on available City-owned property to catalyze the market for future development.	Program 10. Civic Center Residential Development
	Policy 1.5. Allow for modest increases in the density of existing housing sites.	Program 11. Medium-Density Residential Zoning Program 12. Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance
	Policy 1.6. Create a residential zoning district to bring existing housing units into conformance with the zoning code.	Program 11. Medium-Density Residential Zoning
	Policy 1.7. Permit the development of caretaker housing units on industrial properties when they do not provide a hazard to the health and safety of their residents.	Program 13. Caretaker Housing
2. Attractive, livable and healthy environments for residential uses.	Policy 2.1. Strategically locate housing sites and implement appropriate land use regulations for areas targeted for new housing so as to minimize noise, vibration, smoke, noxious gases, glare, heat, dust, odors, air pollution, and other adverse impacts associated with industrial uses, slaughtering and rendering uses, businesses that release toxic materials, and trucking and railroad facilities and routes.	Program 8. Westside Specific Plan
	Policy 2.2. Encourage development of mixed-use districts which provide adequate amenities for targeted population(s).	Program 8. Westside Specific Plan
	Policy 2.3. Promote street design adjacent to residential development which ameliorates noise, vibration and other impacts of freight travel and increases shade canopy.	Program 8. Westside Specific Plan
	Policy 2.4. Pursue grants and funding sources to remediate contaminated potential housing sites in the City.	Program 14. Housing Grant Application Working Group
	Policy 2.5. Require the development of private recreation amenities within large residential projects.	Program 8. Westside Specific Plan

3. Decent, safe and sanitary construction and maintenance of all housing units in the City.	Policy 3.1. Enforce all relevant building and zoning codes to ensure that all residential units are adequately maintained and protected.	Program 2. Code Enforcement
	Policy 3.2. Continue enforcement of environmental safety regulations to ensure that all residential units are adequately maintained and protected.	Program 6. Environmental Safety Enforcement
	Policy 3.3. Require any new residential units or those undergoing a major alteration to be equipped with air filtration systems (such as HVAC systems) and sound insulation (such as dual-paned windows) to protect residents from exposure to adverse environmental conditions.	Program 1. Maintenance of City-Owned Residences Program 8. Westside Specific Plan
	Policy 3.4. Mitigate any residential displacement impacts occurring from housing demolition.	
	Policy 3.5. Provide for the retention of housing units in the City that are physically and environmentally sound.	Program 1. Maintenance of City-Owned Residences Program 3. Preservation of At-Risk Housing
	Policy 3.6. Accommodate the needs of disabled residents through the adopted reasonable accommodation procedure.	Program 4. Housing Opportunities for Residents with Special Needs
4. Diversity, transparency and equal housing opportunity in the ownership and occupancy of the City's housing stock.	Policy 4.1. Prohibit discrimination and ensure transparency in the leasing and sales of housing in the City, particularly City-owned housing.	Program 7. Equal Housing Opportunity
	Policy 4.2. Ensure transparency in the selection and approval of tenants of City-owned housing.	Program 7. Equal Housing Opportunity Program 14. Housing Lottery
	Policy 4.3. Address the housing needs of special populations and extremely low-income households through emergency shelters, transitional housing, supportive housing and single-room occupancy units.	Program 4. Housing Opportunities for Residents with Special Needs
	Policy 4.4. Encourage the development of housing specifically for employees of Vernon businesses, while protecting against overconcentrations of housing by any one business.	Program 16. Employee Workforce Housing Program 13. Caretaker Housing
	Policy 4.5. Encourage homeownership, reasonable rent increases and other measures to promote the stability of the full-time resident population.	Program 9. Westside Specific Plan Marketing Program 10. Civic Center Residential Development
	Policy 4.6. Preserve the affordability of existing covenanted affordable housing units in the City.	Program 3. Preservation of At-Risk Housing
	Policy 4.7. Consider options to transfer the City's housing stock to small-scale private ownership, including potential purchase by existing tenants.	Program 17. City-Owned Housing Disposition Study

*Figure 1.
Housing Element Goals & Policies*

Quantified Objectives

Based on the needs, resources, and constraints in the City of Vernon, the following objectives represent the City’s objectives for addressing its housing challenges. The “New Construction” objective refers to the minimum number of new units that will be constructed using public and/or private sources over the 2021-2029 planning period. This corresponds to the City’s Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) assigned by the Southern California Association of Governments in 2020. While this is a minimum objective, the City hopes and expects to significantly exceed this objective during the 6th Cycle.

The “Rehabilitation” objective refers to the number of existing units expected to be rehabilitated during the 6th Cycle. The “Conservation/Preservation” objective refers to the preservation of affordable housing stock throughout the 6th Cycle planning period.

6 th Cycle Housing Element Objectives			
Income Category	New Construction (2021-2029)	Rehabilitation (2021-2029)	Conservation/ Preservation (2021-2029)
Very Low	5 units	2 City-owned housing units will be rehabilitated due to age	All existing covenanted affordable housing units will be preserved
Low	4 units		
Moderate	0 units		
Above Moderate	0 units		
Total	9 units		

Figure 2.

Source: City of Vernon, 2021.

Housing Programs

To implement the City's housing policies, 17 programs have been defined that will advance all the City's housing goals. As illustrated in Figure 1, these programs tie back to the goals and the policies that provide the backbone of the City's housing strategy.

An overview of each of the 17 programs is given below; detailed descriptions of each program, with action plans, are given in Appendix E.

Program 1: Maintenance of City-Owned Residences. The City owns 26 housing units in Vernon, all of which are rented. The City is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of these units, and management is overseen by the Housing Commission. All City-owned units were determined to be in good repair. The City of Vernon recently renovated 24 of their 26 City-owned units. The remaining two units, though they are in good, habitable condition, will be renovated due to age over the next eight-year planning period. The City will continue to provide maintenance to these units, thus ensuring upkeep for Vernon's City-Owned housing stock.

Program 2: Vernon Code Enforcement Program. As additional privately-owned residential units are built in Vernon the need for code enforcement will increase. At the conclusion of the 6th Cycle, the City will review the need to dedicate additional staff time to code enforcement.

Program 3: Preservation of At-Risk Housing. There is one affordable family housing development in the City of Vernon funded through Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). This development, the Vernon Village Park Apartments, is not at risk of conversion to market rate housing since the development was completed in 2015. Vernon Village Park Apartments will not be eligible to convert to market rate housing until 2070.

Program 4: Housing Opportunities for Residents with Special Needs. The Fair Housing Act, as amended in 1988, requires that cities and counties provide reasonable accommodation to rules, policies, practices, and procedures where such accommodation may be necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal housing opportunities. The City has adopted procedures in their Zoning Ordinance for housing for persons with disabilities and will provide information to residents through the City's website.

Program 5: Priority Water and Sewer Services. In accordance with Government Code Section 65589.7, after the Vernon Housing Element is

adopted by City Council, a copy will be immediately delivered to all public agencies or private entities that provide water or sewer services to properties within Vernon.

Program 6: Environmental Safety Enforcement. The City will continue to enforce health and environmental safety regulations of industrial businesses through its Health Department which can help protect nearby residents.

Program 7: Equal Housing Opportunity Program. The City shall take meaningful actions to address significant disparities in housing needs and access to opportunity for all persons regardless of all characteristics protected by the California Fair Employment and Housing Act. Actions include publicizing information about fair housing law, referring complaints, and training property owners and managers about responsible management of environmental hazards.

Program 8: Westside Specific Plan. The City is preparing the Westside Specific Plan which will enable residential and mixed-use development in focused areas within the Westside of the City. Multifamily residential development of 3-7 stories in height will be permitted by-right, and infrastructure and environmental standards will be put into place to facilitate the development of housing within the targeted areas.

Program 9: Westside Specific Plan Marketing. After the City of Vernon completes the Westside Specific Plan the City will initiate a Westside Specific Marketing program to inform developers and potential residents and customers of the new opportunity that will exist on the Westside of the City. This marketing program aims to market the Westside of Vernon as a hybrid industrial, mixed-use district which welcomes residential development.

Program 10: Civic Center Residential Development. Through this program the City will put out a request for proposals (RFP) for the Petrelli/City Yard site for development of a residential or mixed-use project which can substantially increase the residential population of the City. The process will follow the stipulations of the Surplus Land Act.

Program 11: Medium Density Residential Zoning. A large amount of housing in the City of Vernon is situated on land not zoned for residential uses. This program includes adopting a zoning designation to make all existing housing conforming. The zoning designation will also permit more than one unit to be constructed per parcel, enabling future growth.

Program 12: Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance. The City of Vernon will develop and adopt an ADU ordinance within the sixth cycle planning period. The ADU ordinance will be in conformance with State law and encourage accessory dwelling unit construction.

Program 13: Caretaker Housing. Industrial businesses in Vernon have expressed interest in permitting caretaker housing units to be constructed on their properties. The City will adopt a code amendment to allow caretaker housing to be constructed on industrial properties in appropriate locations throughout the City, as long as such housing does not injure the health and welfare of residents or other industrial users.

Program 14: Housing Lottery. Since the institution of the City's good governance reforms in the early 2010's, the City has used a lottery system to guide the lease-up of vacant City-owned residential units. The City will continue to administer this lottery system throughout the sixth cycle period.

Program 15: Housing Grant Application Working Group. The City desires to seek out grants that can expand revenue for important housing programs while providing more financial flexibility for General Fund revenues. As opportunities arise, the City will form an interdepartmental working group to identify unmet housing needs and focus on appropriate regional grant opportunities.

Program 16: Employee Workforce Housing. The Public Works Department will inform local business owners of their ability to develop workforce housing for their employees in areas appropriately zoned for residential development. It will cooperate with business owners that seek to develop employee housing in the City, while also ensuring that such housing does not comprise an overconcentration of residents employed by any one business in the electorate of the City.

Program 17: City-Owned Housing Disposition Study. To provide long-term protection against any mismanagement of City-owned housing and provide opportunities for equity building, the City will undertake a study to consider the sale of city-owned housing units including the sale of these units to current tenants. The study would address the legal and financial constraints on such actions and provide guidelines for the appropriate prices at which units could be disposed.

Appendix A: Housing Needs

Demographic Trends

Understanding where the City has been is vital to shaping how the City can move forward on housing policy. The City of Vernon's Housing Element takes into account trends in housing, population, jobs, and other factors that influence how the City has changed over the first two decades of the 21st Century. This Appendix provides a snapshot of where the City is and how it got here.

The City of Vernon has a very small population, as the City has historically been a center for industry. However, with the opening of an affordable housing development in 2015, the Vernon Village Park Apartments, the population in Vernon nearly doubled. Demographic information is not available on these new Vernon Village Park Apartments residents as the American Community Survey does not account for them in totality and the latest Census data is not completely available. This Housing Needs Appendix will integrate these new residents as much as possible; however, it is important to note our data sources are extremely limited for this segment of Vernon's population. Reliable data for the other portions of Vernon's population (City-owned and private, market-rate housing) are also limited because sample survey data, such as the American Community Survey, has a high margin of error for very small communities like Vernon. In certain portions of this Appendix, where possible, public data has been supplemented with recent tenant information for City-owned housing.

Population Growth

According to State of California Department of Finance data from January 2021 the City of Vernon is the 481st most populous city in the state, out of 482 total cities. The 2020 Department of Finance data identified 297 Vernon residents compared to the data from the 2020 U.S. Census, which identified 222 residents. Based Department of Finance data, over the twenty-year period from 2000 to 2020, Vernon's annual growth rate was 5.9% compared to 0.7% in the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) region. The 5.9% population growth rate indicates that the City of Vernon has experienced significant population growth compared to the SCAG region. This population growth is likely due to opening of the Vernon Village Park Apartments complex in 2015. According to Department of Finance data, the City's population was 123 people in 2015 and increased by 174 people for a total of 297 people in 2020.

According to SCAG's Technical Report, "Current Context: Demographics and Growth Forecast" published in September 2020, the Los Angeles County population is slated to increase by 16% from 2016 to 2045. The same report projects that Vernon's population will increase by 0% during the same period. However, it is the City of Vernon's vision that Vernon will become a destination for new residents in the coming years, resulting in significant population growth.

Age Characteristics

Vernon's housing needs are in part determined by the age characteristics of residents. As a person ages they cycle through different lifestyles, family sizes, and income levels. These lifestyles, family sizes, and income levels influence a person's preference for certain housing types along with their ability to afford different types of housing. Younger adults tend to move to apartments and condominiums which are typically relatively affordable and allow a great deal of flexibility. Middle-aged adults tend to move to larger apartments, condominiums, and single-family homes to fit their growing families and children. Seniors might move into more manageable living situations, such as smaller apartments/homes, properties shared with children, retirement communities, or assisted living facilities. While Vernon may not feature this wide variety of housing types at this time, the City of Vernon is committed to bringing more housing types and residential options into the City.

According to 2015-2019 ACS 5-year data (which does not factor in the new Vernon Village Park Apartments population), the median age of a Vernon resident is 26.5 years old, which is significantly lower than the Los Angeles County median age of 36.5 years old. According to the same data, 40.8% of Vernon's population is male and 59.2% of the population is female.

According to 2015-2019 ACS 5-year data, the percentage of the total population 19 years old and younger is 40%, which is much higher than the county share at 24.6%. Vernon's seniors make up 3.8% of the total population, which is lower than the county share at 13.3%. The same data finds that the four largest segments of Vernon's current population 25 to 34 years old, 35 to 44 years old, 5 to 9 years old, and under 5 years old, respectively. These trends indicate that residents in Vernon typically raise their families in the City, but likely move out of the City as they age. The City of Vernon's median age actually decreased as according to 2006-2010 ACS Data, the median age was 30.4 years old.

Race and Ethnicity

Over the last decade, from 2010 to 2019, the city has experienced significant increases in population. According to 2020 U.S. Census Data, which counted a population of 222 residents, for those residents who identified as one race 97 residents identified as some other race alone, 53 residents identified as White alone, 20 residents identified as Black, 15 identified as Asian alone, and 3 identified as American Indian. Unfortunately, there is no other information available for those 97 residents who identified as some other race alone, which makes up a large segment of Vernon's population at 43.7%. Additionally, 34 residents identified with two or more races. Of the 222 residents, 168 residents identified as Hispanic or Latino.

A comparison of U.S. Census Data from 2010 and 2020 found that over the past decade the White population in Vernon decreased while the population of every other race increased, especially the Latino population which increased from 48 people in 2010 to 168 people in 2020.

Foreign Born Population

According to 2015-2019 ACS 5-year data, 24 residents are foreign-born in Vernon. Of this foreign-born population, 9 residents are naturalized U.S. citizens. Eighteen of these 24 residents were born in Latin America. The population in Vernon that speaks English only at home is 26.5% of the population. Seventy-three percent of the population speaks a language other than English at home and 12.4% of that population speaks English less than "very well." For residents who speak a language other than English, the most prevalent language is Spanish which is spoken by 65.5% of the population 5 years old and up.

Employment Growth and Change

Employment trends have an important role in defining housing needs. Employment factors that impact housing needs include projected job growth that will bring more residents into the city, wage levels in the city, and demands on infrastructure that result from increased housing and employment demand. The City of Vernon has long been a city for industry. The City hopes to bring more housing to Vernon, allowing more of Vernon's workers to live locally in the City.

Based on 2015-2019 ACS 5-year data, the City of Vernon has 58 workers living within its borders. These workers work across 9 major industrial sectors, with

the three most prevalent sectors being Public Administration, Education & Social Services; and Retail Trade.

As for employment by occupation, the largest occupation among residents is management, followed by sales, and production respectively. The number of employees working in management, business, science and arts has increased most significantly over the past ten years in Vernon.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau “On the Map” data from 2021, there are 38,767 jobs in the City of Vernon. The number of jobs available in 2010 was 44,534, meaning the number of jobs in the City of Vernon has decreased over the past decade. This may be due to a shift from manufacturing to warehousing, which requires less workers.

According to 2015-2019 ACS Data, the City of Vernon’s unemployment rate was 0%. The unemployment rate likely increased during the COVID-19 pandemic; however, it is expected that the unemployment rate has recovered as of November 2021.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau “On the Map” data the number of residents who lived and worked in Vernon decreased from 99 people in 2010 to 88 people in 2019. As of 2019, 38,679 people worked in Vernon but lived outside of the city and 245 people lived in Vernon but worked outside of the city.

Household Income

Household income predicts the types and price of housing that residents can afford. According to ACS 2015-2019 5-year data, the City of Vernon’s median household income increased significantly by \$29,292 over the last decade to \$67,917. This significant increase can likely be attributed to the small sample size in Vernon. Using the same data, Vernon’s median household income closely matches the Los Angeles County median household income of \$68,044. There is no ACS Poverty Data available from recent years for the City of Vernon.

Housing Composition

According to January 2021 California Department of Finance data, there are 76 housing units in the City of Vernon, which does account for the Vernon Village Park Apartments. The city’s housing stock is approximately 69.7% multi-family (5 units or more). Single-family detached homes, at 23 units, make up 30.3% of the city’s housing stock. Compared to the SCAG region, Vernon’s share of single-family detached housing is significantly lower than the regional

SCAG average, while the share of multi-family housing is higher than the regional SCAG average.

Additionally, according to the same data the City of Vernon has an overall vacancy rate of 2.6% which is lower than the Los Angeles County overall vacancy rate of 6.4%. A healthy residential vacancy rate in the United States hovers around 7 to 8%. Very little vacant housing exists in the City of Vernon at this time.

According to 2015 to 2019 ACS data the City of Vernon's average household size is 4 people per owner-occupied household and 2.92 people per renter-occupied household. The average household size in Los Angeles County is 2.92 people per household.

Housing Tenure

Housing tenure refers to whether a household rents or owns a home. According to 2015-2019 ACS Data, there are four owner-occupied units in the City. The City's homeownership rate of 9.3% does not correspond with the City's proportion of single-family housing, because the City of Vernon owns many of the single-family homes in the City and rent them to residents. Owner-occupied units in Vernon exist at much lower rates than in Los Angeles County, which has 45.8%.

According to 2014-2018 ACS 5-year Data, the majority of owner-occupied households moved into their homes since 2014. Renter-occupied households also moved into Vernon quite recently with the majority moving in during that same time period.

Housing Age and Condition

According to 2014 to 2018 ACS 5-Year Data, the City of Vernon's housing stock was consistently built slowly over the years, spreading from prior to 1939 to 2009. In 2015, the Vernon Village Park Apartments were built.

Residential units begin to show their age after 30 years and require exterior maintenance and upkeep. In addition to exterior upkeep and maintenance, homes that are older than 30-year-old are likely to need substantial repairs, maintenance, and renovation internally. The City of Vernon has recently updated all but two of their City-owned housing stock and the City has plans to renovate the last two over the next eight year planning cycle. The private units in the City are in good quality as are the Vernon Village Park Apartments which were built only six years ago.

Based on 2015-2019 ACS Data, the majority of the housing stock in Vernon does not have issues with substandard quality. No units in Vernon lack plumbing or kitchen facilities and only three units have no telephone service available.

Housing Prices and Affordability

HUD CHAS 2013-2017 data reveals that sixteen households in the City are cost burdened, all of whom are renters. Four households, all of whom make between 30% and 50% HAMFI, are severely cost burdened, indicating that they pay over half of their income in rent.

The City of Vernon owns 26 of the City's 74 residential units. As a stipulation of the City's good governance reforms, new renters of City-owned housing pay market-rate rents according to the Small Area Fair Market Rents established by HUD for the Vernon zip codes, which are 90023, 90058, 90255, and 90270. The 2020 small area fair market rents for these four zip codes are as follows: \$1,450 for a one bedroom unit, \$1,860 for a two bedroom unit, \$2,470 for a three bedroom unit, and \$2,690 for a four bedroom unit.

The City is currently increasing the rent each year for already rented City-owned units. The City increases the rent on these units every year according to the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which is the measure of inflation. As of October 2020, these are the average rents the City charges for City-owned apartments: \$1,057.45 for two bedroom apartments and \$964.53 for one bedroom apartments. According to the same data, these are the average rents the City charges for City-owned single family homes: \$1,031.36 for two bedroom homes and \$1,361.75 for three bedroom homes.

Additionally, the Vernon Village Park Apartments are rented at affordable rates and the residents qualify through their income, meaning these residents are not rent burdened.

Homeownership

The housing market from 2000 to 2010 was incredibly volatile, especially during the 2008 financial crisis. The City of Vernon has been largely exempt from this volatile market, as the City has so few units available for homeownership. In fact, there is very little data available regarding the price of homeownership in Vernon that can be used for an accurate estimation.

While homes in Vernon likely cost significantly less than homes in the larger SCAG region, Vernon's few homeowners are paying high amounts in mortgage

costs per month. Additionally, the maintenance and upkeep costs that come along with owning older homes place financial pressure on the homeowner or property owner. These maintenance and upkeep costs add up on top of the already high mortgage costs for owners in the City of Vernon.

Extremely Low-Income Housing Needs

In 2013-2017, according to HUD CHAS data, the City of Vernon had no households that qualified as extremely low-income households, or households that earn below 30% of the HAMFI. In the absence of poverty data, this is the most accurate estimation for the number of extremely low-income households in Vernon.

The number of extremely low-income households in Vernon may have increased recently due to the opening of the Vernon Village Park Apartments. However, the extremely low-income households living in this project are not rent burdened and are living in affordable housing that is sustainable in the long-term. These households are not susceptible to the volatile private market in Southern California.

Special Needs Populations

Certain households in Vernon have greater difficulty finding safe and decent affordable housing due to special circumstances. These special circumstances typically relate to age related health issues, family characteristics, income-earning potential, physical or mental disabilities, homelessness and more. Circumstances such as these make it difficult to secure and maintain affordable housing in Vernon. Often these households have higher rates of overpayment and overcrowding due to their special circumstances. Because of these considerations, the housing needs of special needs populations such as these are considered separate from the general population's housing needs.

State housing law defines "special needs" populations as people with physical and mental disabilities, farmworkers, large families, female headed households, seniors, and people experiencing homelessness. This section will address the housing needs of each of these special need populations.

Disabled

According to Section 4512 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, a 'Developmental disability' is a disability that originates before an individual is eighteen (18) years old, continues, or can be expected to continue, indefinitely, and constitutes a substantial disability for that individual. Developmental

disabilities include intellectual disabilities, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and autism. This term also includes other disabling conditions that are closely related to intellectual disabilities or requires treatment similar to that for intellectual disabilities but does not include other disabling conditions that are purely physical in nature.

According to 2015-2019 ACS 5-year Data, 11 Vernon residents have a disability. Vernon's disabled population accounts for 8.5% of the total civilian non-institutionalized population. Nine of the eleven disabled residents are 18-64 years old while the remaining two disabled residents are 65 years old or older. Based on 2014-2018 ACS 5-Year Data, the top three types of disabilities are ambulatory, independent living, and cognitive, respectively. The top three most common types of disabilities for seniors in Inglewood are ambulatory and self-care respectively.

Additionally, people with disabilities may have a harder time finding and keeping employment opportunities. Two of eleven disabled Vernon residents are employed. This lack of employment among the disabled population means that Vernon's disabled residents are largely receiving governmental or familial support and are on a fixed income.

Farmworkers

Farmworkers are a particular concern in California due to their limited income and often unstable nature of their employment. Vernon is a fully developed, urbanized community in the midst of a major metropolitan area; the nearest agricultural lands are at least fifty miles away. According to 2014-2018 ACS 5-Year data there are no farmworkers living in Vernon.

Large Family

According to 2015-2019 ACS 5-year data, the average household size in the City of Vernon is 3.02 people. Compared to the same data for Los Angeles County, the average household size is fairly similar at 2.99 people per household. The same data for Vernon found that the majority of units feature one occupant per room. No household in Vernon experiences overcrowding. According to HCD's definition, large family is often thought of as households with five or more people. No household in Vernon features five or more people. The most prevalent household sizes in Vernon are one and two person households.

According to 2015-2019 ACS 5-year data, two-bedroom units represent the highest share of the housing stock (29 units), three-bedroom units are the

second highest share (11 units), and one-bedroom units are the third highest share (4 units). There are no four or five bedroom units in the City of Vernon.

Female Headed Household

Female-headed households have special housing needs and may have more difficulty finding decent and affordable housing. Limited incomes and time dedicated to both employment and family responsibilities create a special need for low-cost and low-maintenance housing for all female-headed households. Female-headed households with children can have particularly acute housing difficulties as women generally earn lower incomes than men. A lower income combined with the cost of childcare often leaves little remaining income for housing costs. Therefore, addressing the housing needs of female-headed households is important.

According to 2015-2019 ACS 5-Year data, there are 21 female headed households in Vernon. This means that approximately 48.8% of households in Vernon are female headed households. Eleven of these 21 households feature children under the age of 18.

There is no poverty data available for the City of Vernon, therefore it is unknown how many of these female headed households live under the poverty line. However, it is likely that female headed households in Vernon experience poverty at higher rates than other populations in Vernon and are in need of affordable housing that is large enough to house their family. Female headed households have the exact same costs as other families; however, they typically only have the support of one parent's income. The costs of childcare alone can almost fully deplete one parent's salary, leaving little room for other essentials such as social service needs, recreation programs, food, clothing, health care, housing, and more.

Seniors

Seniors are defined as residents who are 65 years or older. Persons over the age of 65 are considered a special needs group due to four main concerns:

- Income: persons over 65 are more likely to be retired and living on a fixed income.
- Health Care: elderly persons have a higher rate of illness, making health care more important.
- Transportation: many elderly persons use public transportation; and

- Isolation: many elderly persons are isolated from family members, friends, and services.

Seniors will constitute an ever-increasing proportion of this nation's population in future years according to demographers.

According to the City's information from 2021 regarding the demographics of residents in their City-owned housing, there are 12 residents who are 65 years or older. Five of these 12 residents live alone in a City-owned housing. Unfortunately, data is not available regarding residents of the Vernon Village Park Apartments, therefore, it is unknown how many more seniors reside in Vernon at this time.

While some of Vernon's seniors may live on fixed or low incomes, the City rents the City-owned housing to these seniors at affordable rates that are within their ability to afford.

Homeless

The City of Vernon is located within Service Planning Area (SPA) 7, a geographic region within the County of Los Angeles which allows the Department of Public Health to develop and provide targeted public health, clinical, and mental health services to the residents of each SPA. SPA 7 includes Vernon and surrounding cities such as Bell, Commerce, Downey, South Gate, and more. The City of Vernon was included in the SPA 7 homeless count that was undertaken in 2020 by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA). This 2020 survey for SPA 7 identified 955 homeless persons living in shelters and 3,631 unsheltered homeless persons for a total of 4,586 homeless persons.

According to the LAHSA 2020 Homeless Count, there are 70 homeless people living in the City of Vernon. Of this total, all 70 homeless individuals are unsheltered. Fifty-three individuals are unsheltered on the street, 9 individuals are unsheltered in tents, and 8 individuals are unsheltered in cars.

In accordance with State law, this Housing Element targets the Santa Fe North zone for the development of emergency shelters to address the homeless population in Vernon. The opportunities that exist within this zone to develop emergency shelters far exceed the actual homeless population in Vernon. Additionally, a large number of facilities for homeless individuals and families are located within a five-mile radius of the City. For example, the Salvation Army Shelter in the city of Bell is a regional emergency shelter offering emergency and transitional housing for up to 500 homeless adults. In addition to a place to stay, the Bell Shelter provides case management; substance abuse

rehabilitation; individual and group therapy/counseling; on-site health care, medical referrals and HIV/AIDS education; job training; on-site adult education classes and life skills classes.

Single Room Occupancy

Housing types that may accommodate the needs of extremely low-income households include transitional and supportive housing, single room occupancy units (SRO's), multi-family rental housing, factory-built housing, workforce housing and mobile homes.

The City of Vernon does not presently permit SROs. The Westside Specific Plan (Program #8) will allow such units to be established in residential mixed-use districts along Santa Fe Avenue, which is where the greatest number of these buildings exist in Vernon.

Assisted housing units at risk of conversion in next 10 years

The only assisted housing units within the City are the 45 units that belong to the Vernon Village Park Apartments. This affordable complex opened in 2015 and will not be at risk of conversion within the next 10 years, as these units are covenanted until 2070.

Projected Need (RHNA)

The Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) is mandated by State Housing Element law. The RHNA process determines the amount of housing growth each county and city must plan for in the 2021-2019 sixth cycle Housing Element. The RHNA process ensures that each jurisdiction accepts its fair share of future housing needs, not only in the City but in the region. The regional housing needs are the number of units that must be built in each jurisdiction to accommodate for the forecasted population growth over the next eight years. The RHNA process is managed by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) which determines the projected statewide housing need and growth over the next eight years. These growth projections are passed down to regional councils of government, such as the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) in Inglewood's case. SCAG develops an allocation methodology which determines each city's RHNA number, broken down across four income levels.

HCD allocated 1.34 million new housing units to the SCAG region, the largest allocation the region has ever received. Due to the City of Vernon's industrial character, the City's allocation remains small, at nine units spread across four

income levels. This allocation means that the City of Vernon must plan for a minimum of nine new units over the next eight years; however, it does not mean that the City must ensure the construction of these new units.

6th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Allocation for Vernon	
Income Level	Units
Very-Low Income (<50% of AMI)	5
Low Income (50-80% of AMI)	4
Moderate Income (80-120% of AMI)	0
Above Moderate Income (>120% of AMI)	0
Total	9

Figure A-1.

Source: Southern California Association of Governments.

Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Assessment

This portion of the Housing Needs Analysis is focused on assessing the state of fair housing in the City of Vernon, in keeping with AB 686. California jurisdictions are required to affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH) through meaningful actions “that, taken together, address significant disparities in housing needs and in access to opportunity for all groups protected by state and federal law by:

Replacing segregated living patterns with integrated and balanced living patterns.

Transforming racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity (without displacement).

Fostering and maintaining compliance with civil rights and fair housing laws.

Note: meaningful actions include actions that will promote fair housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income tenants and tenants of affordable housing, including subsidized housing.” (Government Code 8899.50 (a)(1))

This analysis analyzes five housing issue areas:

Fair housing enforcement and outreach capacity

Segregation and integration

Racially or ethnically concentrated areas of poverty

Access to opportunity

Disproportionate housing needs within the jurisdiction, including displacement risk

Fair Housing Enforcement and Capacity

The City of Vernon works with the Housing Rights Center on the City's Fair Housing Enforcement. Upon receipt of a fair housing complaint the City refers the complaint to the Housing Rights Center. The Housing Rights Center (HRC), founded in 1968, is the nation's largest non-profit civil rights organization dedicated to securing and promoting Fair Housing. The HRC's mission is to actively support and promote freedom of residence through education, advocacy, and litigation, to the end that all persons have the opportunity to secure the housing they desire and can afford, without regard to their race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, familial status, marital status, disability, ancestry, age, source of income or other characteristics protected by law.

The HRC provides fair housing services to the City of Vernon, including tenant counseling, landlord counseling, outreach, education, and discrimination investigation. Historically, the majority of housing in the City of Vernon has been owned and well maintained well by the City, with the City acting as the landlord. The small amount of private housing is likely the reason for the small number of fair housing complaints in the City. According to HCD's AFFH Data Viewer, there have been 0.21 fair housing inquiries per 1,000 people in the City of Vernon from 2013-2021. While historically there has been little private housing in Vernon, the amount of private housing units increased in 2015 with the opening of the Vernon Village Park Apartments. In addition, the number of private units in the City is expected to increase within the next eight years.

As the number of privately-owned housing units increases in Vernon, the City will take new actions to ensure fair housing enforcement and sufficient outreach capacity within the 6th cycle (Program #7). The City will publish on the City's website clear information warning entities that would potentially discriminate about the enforcement of fair housing law. The City will ensure environmental hazards are not disproportionately concentrated in low-income communities of color. The City will explore offering training to property owners and managers regarding responsible management of environmental hazards. The City will assist in outreach to tenants to inform them of their rights to live in habitable housing regardless of income, race, or immigration status. Lastly, the City will develop a code enforcement program that holds property owners accountable, when necessary.

Since Vernon's population and the number of fair housing complaints are both so small there are no discernable patterns when it comes to the impacts on protected characteristics and geographic trends.

There have been no recent findings, lawsuits, enforcement actions, settlements, or judgements related to fair housing or civil rights in the City of Vernon. This Housing Element is compliant with existing State fair housing laws and regulations.

Within the Southeast Los Angeles region, the frequency of fair housing complaints is similar to the frequency in Vernon.

Segregation and Integration

According to HCD's AFFH Guidance segregation "means a condition in which there is a high concentration of persons of a particular race, color, religion, sex, familial status, national origin, or having a disability or a type of disability in a particular geographic area when compared to a broader geographic status." Integration means a condition in which there is not a concentration of any type of persons.

The 2020 Census data found that 43.7% of Vernon residents identify as some other race alone, 23.9% identify as White alone, 15.3% identify as two or more races, 9% identify as Black alone, 6.8% identify as Asian alone, and 1.4% identify as American Indian alone. This Census data takes into account the population of the Vernon Village Park Apartments. Clearly, no one race has a majority within the City of Vernon.

However, when looking at the 2020 Census data for ethnicity, the Hispanic/Latino population in Vernon is dominant at 168 residents of the total 222. This means 75.7% of the population is Hispanic/Latino in Vernon.

The same Census data found the White alone population tends to live along the intersection of Santa Fe and Vernon, in the middle of the City along Downey Road, and in the Southeast corner of the City where the Vernon Village Park Apartments are located. The Black alone population is settled in the middle of the City along Downey and Soto Streets, as well as in the Southeast corner of the City where the Vernon Village Park Apartments are located. The residents that identify as some other race alone are located along Santa Fe, in the middle of the City along State Street and Downey Road, as well as in the Southeast corner of the City where the Vernon Village Park Apartments are located. The Hispanic/Latino population is located along Santa Fe and Vernon, in the middle of the City along State Street and Downey Road, and in the Southeast corner of

the City where the Vernon Village Park Apartments are located. Thus, the largest racial groups in Vernon live within the same areas of the city (or block groups), likely due to the fact that Vernon has such a small amount of housing that is concentrated mainly around the Vernon City Hall and the Vernon Village Park Apartments site.

Based on HCD's AFFH Viewer, the majority of Census tracts within the Southeast Los Angeles region feature a Hispanic/Latino majority. Directly surrounding the City of Vernon, the predominance of the Hispanic/Latino majority is strongest. Vernon has a less strong Hispanic/Latino predominance than surrounding communities.

Recent block group data for disabled populations within the City of Vernon is not available and tract data is not useful for discerning patterns as the entire City of Vernon is encompassed in one census tract. However, it stands to reason that disabled residents in Vernon are concentrated in the few locations within the City where housing is located. Based on 2015-2019 ACS 5-Year data from the AFFH Viewer, the City of Vernon's population is approximately 13.3% disabled. Within the Southeast Los Angeles region, the percent of each city's population with a disability remained low, ranging from 0% to 20%. Census tracts with higher percentages of disabled residents only existed to the North, in and around Downtown Los Angeles.

Based on HUD's Low to Moderate Income Population Block Group from the AFFH Data Viewer, all block groups in the City of Vernon feature a population that is 75% low- and moderate-income. This reveals that the City of Vernon's population features a high concentration of low- and moderate-income households. Based on the same data, within the Southeast Los Angeles region many cities feature similarly high concentrations of low- and moderate-income households. All census tracts within Southeast Los Angeles feature at least 50% of households that are low- and moderate-income, with some tracts averaging out as high as 91%.

Racially and Ethnically Concentrated Areas of Poverty

Racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty, also known as R/ECAPs, must meet the following definitions: 1) The area must have a non-White population of 50% or more and 2) The area must have 40% or more of the population living below the federal poverty line, or those where the poverty rate is three times the average poverty rate in the metropolitan area, whichever is less.

Based on HUD's R/ECAP data from HCD's AFFH Data Viewer Vernon's Census tract does not qualify as a racially and ethnically concentrated area of poverty. In the greater Southeast Los Angeles region a few tracts are identified as R/ECAPs, such as one tract in northeast Bell and two tracts in Southeast Huntington Park. Outside of the Southeast Los Angeles region, there are many tracts north of Vernon and west of Vernon that qualify as R/ECAPs. While Vernon and the Southeast Los Angeles region are racially and ethnically concentrated, clearly Census tracts within this region mainly do not feature concentrated poverty.

Based on the TCAC/HCD Opportunity Area Maps the City of Vernon Census tract does not qualify as a TCAC area of high segregation and poverty. According to this measurement, the threshold for poverty is 30% of the population living below the poverty line and the location quotient is essentially a measure of the concentration of race in a small area compared to a county level. Within Southeast Los Angeles many Census tracts qualify as TCAC Areas of High Segregation and Poverty. These tracts within Southeast Los Angeles fall within the cities of Huntington Park, Bell, Cudahy, Maywood, and Bell Gardens. Outside of the Southeast Los Angeles region, but surrounding the City of Vernon, many Census tracts to the North and West qualify as TCAC Areas of High Segregation and Poverty.

Racially concentrated areas of affluence are defined as Census tracts where: 1) 80% or more of the population is White and 2) the median household income is \$125,000 or greater. No census tract in the Southeast Los Angeles region features a dominant White population and no census tract in the region features a median household income equal to or greater than \$125,000.

Disparities in Access to Opportunity

Access to opportunity is a concept to approximate place-based characteristics linked to critical life outcomes. Access to opportunity oftentimes means both improving the quality of life for residents of low-income communities, as well as supporting mobility and access to 'high resource' neighborhoods. This encompasses education, employment, economic development, safe and decent housing, low rates of violent crime, transportation, and other opportunities including recreation, and food and healthy environment.

There is one school within the City of Vernon, Vernon City Elementary, a kindergarten through seventh grade school within the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). Another kindergarten through sixth grade LAUSD elementary school is located just outside of Vernon, called Holmes Avenue

Elementary. A second kindergarten through fifth grade LAUSD elementary school is located just outside of Vernon, in Huntington Park, called Pacific Boulevard Elementary. According to Great Schools, Vernon City Elementary is rated 6/10, which is average, Pacific Boulevard Elementary is rated 5/10, and Holmes Avenue Elementary is rated 2/10 which is below average. In comparison to other schools within the region, the majority of which are also LAUSD schools, the school in Vernon is rated similarly to other schools in Southeast Los Angeles. There is no difference amongst schools in and around Vernon and there is no access to more proficient schools in any sort of pattern relating to protected characteristics.

Outside of the Southeast Los Angeles region, to the west of Vernon there are more areas of segregation and racial and ethnic concentrated areas of poverty that correspond to lower quality LAUSD schools, the majority of which are rated either 2/10 or 3/10. The Holmes Avenue Elementary School is just west of Vernon's border, thus falling into this area.

Local students at the middle, high school and superior education levels must travel outside the City.

The City of Vernon is an employment center within Southeast Los Angeles for blue-collar jobs. The blue-collar jobs offered in Vernon are well matched to the population of the greater Southeast Los Angeles region, including residents of the City. A significant barrier to job accessibility within Vernon is access and ability to operate a motor vehicle, which affects persons with disabilities as well as other members of the community. While some jobs are close enough to Vernon residents to walk and most are within biking distance, the City's streets heavily traveled by trucks, large block size, and lack of street trees create an environment that is inhospitable to non-motorized forms of transportation. Vernon does have public transit options in the form of bus lines. The line along Santa Fe Avenue and Pacific Avenue is a high-frequency bus line which connects to Downtown Los Angeles, providing greater accessibility options to residents of the Westside of the City, and connecting residents of Huntington Park and other communities southward to job opportunities in Vernon. The Westside Specific Plan will concentrate growth in this area and address the street experience along key streets.

Protected groups, such as those groups that are disadvantaged by race/ethnicity, familial status, persons with disabilities, or class/income, do not live anywhere specific within the City of Vernon, as all residents essentially live within two main locations. The Vernon Village Park Apartment residents are lower-income, and they live in the area of Vernon that is most proximate to amenities.

According to U.S. Census On Map Data, in Vernon, 59.6% of workers are Hispanic/Latino. By race, workers in Vernon are 77.6% are White, 13% are Asian, 5.3% Black, 2% two or more races, 1.7% American Indian, and 0.3% Native Hawaiian. The Hispanic majority in workers reflects the Southeast Los Angeles region's population, indicating that Southeast Los Angeles residents do not face disproportionate issues securing jobs within Vernon.

The City of Vernon generally faces significant environmental challenges for housing. These are described in greater detail in Appendix B. Throughout the Southeast Los Angeles region, and specifically in Vernon, there are difficulties in accessing environmentally healthy neighborhoods for all class groups, not just protected class groups. However, residents still wish to live in Vernon and Southeast Los Angeles, so building codes are crafted to address adequate filtering and safety standards for residential developments.

According to the CalEnviroScreen 4.0 map, the City of Vernon experiences a pollution burden in the 98th percentile. This high pollution burden percentile is similar to burdens throughout the Southeast Los Angeles region. The pollution burden lessens the further south one moves from Vernon; however, the burdens still remain highly elevated.

The City of Vernon does not have an Environmental Justice Element with which consistency needs to be evaluated. The City of Vernon's 6th Cycle Housing Element does include Housing Element Program 6: Environmental Safety Enforcement which will ensure that Vernon continues to improve the City's access to environmentally healthy neighborhoods.

Disproportionate Housing Needs, Including Displacement

Disproportionate housing needs refers to a condition in which there are significant disparities in the proportion of members of a protected class experiencing a category of housing need when compared to the proportion of members of any other relevant groups, or the total population experiencing the category of housing need in the applicable geographic area. For purposes of this definition, categories of housing need are based on such factors as cost burden and severe cost burden, overcrowding, homelessness, and substandard housing conditions.

Only three units within the City of Vernon are privately owned, non-covenanted housing. The City of Vernon owns a large portion of housing within the City and rents these units at fair rates, below market rate. Additionally, 45 housing units within the City are located within the Vernon Village Park Apartments, an affordable housing development that opened in 2015, which is not owned by

the City. Residents within this complex only pay what they can towards rent and the rest of the rent is paid through project based Section 8 vouchers.

Cost burden refers to the number of households for which housing cost burden is greater than 30% of their income. Severe cost burden refers to the number of households for which housing cost burden is greater than 50% of their income. According to overpayment data from the 2015-2019 ACS 5-Year Survey, as included in HCD's AFFH Data Viewer, no homeowners within the City of Vernon are cost-burdened or severely cost burdened. The same data finds one renter household within Vernon cost burdened and two households are severely cost burdened. These shares of rent burdened households are significantly lower than those throughout the Southeast Los Angeles region. Within the Southeast Los Angeles region, homeowners and renters alike are cost burdened and severely cost burdened at similar rates. Homeowners in Southeast Los Angeles experience a severe cost burden ranging from 40% to more than 80%. Renters in Southeast Los Angeles feature the same range of severe cost burden. Outside of Southeast Los Angeles, the areas directly east of Vernon feature severe cost burdens ranging from 60% to more than 80%. The City of Vernon is largely except from the cost burden and severe cost burden faced by the rest of Southeast Los Angeles, due to the fact that only three units in Vernon are vulnerable to the market.

Overcrowding is defined as households having more than 1.01 to 1.5 persons per room. Severe overcrowding is defined as households having more than 1.51 persons per room. Overcrowding is not an issue in the City of Vernon; however, it is an issue within the Southeast Los Angeles region. According to the CHAS data from HCD's AFFH Data Viewer, no households in Vernon are overcrowded and no households are severely overcrowded. Outside of Vernon within the Southeast Los Angeles region, the majority of Census tracts feature over 20% of households that are overcrowded and many households ranging from less than 5% severely overcrowded to over 65% severely overcrowded. The percentage of overcrowding decreases as one moves further Southeast within the region, towards Downey and Santa Fe Springs.

Substandard housing problems are as follows: 1) Lacking a complete kitchen, 2) lacking complete plumbing, 3) severe overcrowding, and 4) severe cost-burdening. According to ACS and CHAS data included in HCD's AFFH Data Viewer, the majority of cities within the Southeast Los Angeles region feature 40 to 60% of households that have any of the four severe housing problems. Thirteen percent of households in the City of Vernon feature any of the four severe housing problems. Severe housing problems are also less prominent to the southeast, beyond Lynwood, in the cities of Downey, Paramount, and Bellflower. In these cities, the percentage of households facing severe housing problems are 29.9%, 38.9%, and 35% respectively.

Homelessness is an issue in Southeast Los Angeles; however, it is not as big of an issue in comparison to communities to the North and East of Southeast Los Angeles. The City of Vernon has a homeless population of 70 people, all of which are unsheltered. Within the greater Southeast Los Angeles region the cities with the largest homeless populations are in the cities of South Gate, Huntington Park, and Bell Gardens who have 399 people, 215 people, and 83 people who are experiencing homelessness respectively. These numbers are based on LAHSA's 2020 Greater Homeless Count.

According to data from U.C. Berkeley's Urban Displacement Project, the City of Vernon does not feature a displacement risk. Displacement is not an issue in Vernon as only three housing units are private, meaning that only three households are vulnerable to the whim of the market and displacement pressures.

The greater Southeast Los Angeles region does feature displacement risk, ranging from early/ongoing gentrification, low-income/susceptible to displacement, ongoing displacement, advanced gentrification, and at risk or becoming exclusive. Those cities actively experiencing some level of gentrification are located closest to Vernon within the region and they include cities such as South Gate, Bell, Maywood, and Huntington Park. Within the region, in communities such as Lynwood, Bellflower, Downey, and Paramount, gentrification risk is lower, and communities are more stable moderate/mixed income and at risk of becoming exclusive.

Sites Inventory

The sites inventory consists of one City-owned site which will be offered for RFP by the City (2323 E Vernon Ave). Affordable or mixed-income development is anticipated on the site in keeping with the procedures outlined by the Surplus Land Act. As discussed in the analysis above, this site is located in a portion of the City which already has residential units and some supportive services (school, church), and it has high accessibility to jobs and public transit. It is located away from distribution centers and very high truck traffic-generating uses. Finally, the Westside Specific Plan (Program #8) will ensure that environmental conditions and commercial services are improved as well in this area.

Contributing Factors and Meaningful Actions

Figure H-2 describes the key fair housing issues and contributing factors identified in this Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing analysis, and relates the City's meaningful actions and commitments described in the Goals and

Policies, Sites Inventory (Appendix C) and Housing Programs Detail (Appendix E) of this Housing Element.

Contributing Factors and Meaningful Actions			
Identified Fair Housing Issue	Key Contributing Factors	Priority	Meaningful Action
Few fair housing complaints and limited local familiarity with fair housing law	Lack of history of privately owned rental units in City	Low	Program 7 (Equal Housing Opportunity) commits the City to publish on the website clear information warning entities that could potentially discriminate; ensure that environmental hazards are not disproportionately concentrated in low-income communities of color; explore offering training to property owners and managers regarding responsible management of environmental hazards; assist in outreach to tenants to inform them of their rights to live in habitable housing regardless of income, race or immigration status; and develop a code enforcement program that holds property owners accountable when necessary.
Lack of access to jobs and education for people with disabilities and people who do not own cars	Urban form Heavy trucking	Medium	Program 8 (Westside Specific Plan) will focus future housing growth in areas of the community that are served by public transit and/or facilities for non-motorized forms of transportation. Complete streets interventions and truck restrictions on key residential corridors will be implemented.
High level of pollution burden and health risks	Heavy trucking Industrial facilities Soil contamination, including hazardous materials release sites Railroads Waste facilities	High	<p>The Housing Inventory Site (2323 E Vernon Ave) is located one of the least susceptible areas of the City to pollution burden and health risks, is located downwind of rendering plants, and it has not been identified as a contaminated site.</p> <p>Program 6 (Environmental Safety Enforcement) commits the City to enforcing health and environmental safety regulations on industrial businesses through its Health Department.</p> <p>Program 8 (Westside Specific Plan) will impose restrictions on truck traffic on key residential corridors, and restrict the permitting of new heavy industrial facilities in residential areas. It will also establish new requirements for healthy residential buildings, such as sound insulation and high-efficiency air filters.</p>

Appendix B: Constraints to Future Housing Development

Constraints to Future Housing Development

Meeting the housing needs for the City over the next eight years and beyond is not simple given the built-out nature of Vernon and the surrounding region. This Appendix identifies constraints to developing new housing, pursuant to the State Government Code Section 65583(a). Constraints are classified into two categories: a) governmental constraints, over which the City of Vernon has significant authority, and b) non-governmental constraints, which are more difficult for the City to address.

The governmental constraints addressed in this appendix are:

- Existing zoning and land use controls
- Site plan review and processing times
- Off-site improvements
- Processing fees

The non-governmental constraints addressed are:

- Land availability and cost
- Housing prices
- Construction costs
- Financing
- Environmental conditions

The appendix then concludes with an in-depth examination of environmental constraints. The analysis developed below directly informs the housing programs recommended in this Housing Element.

Historically, housing growth has been virtually nonexistent in Vernon due to City policy that has discouraged, and in 2007 precluded, the development of any new residential units. For many years, due to Vernon's industrial nature, City policy-makers determined that housing would not be a compatible land use in the City. However, as part of the City's good governance reform initiative, City leaders have agreed to establish a way to allow for a very limited amount of new housing. Today, Vernon is making a major shift towards the development of new housing in the City with the Westside Specific Plan. The City's new prioritization

of housing will result in the removal of most of the major governmental constraints to housing development.

Existing Zoning and Land Use Controls

The Vernon Zoning Code and Zoning Map are the primary implementation ordinances of the Land Use Element. The zoning map and ordinance identify the specific land uses allowed in the City and establishes regulations and standards for use and development. The entirety of Vernon is zoned industrial, but seven overlay zones provide additional flexibility: Commercial-1, Commercial-2, Emergency Shelter, Housing, Rendering, Slaughtering, and Truck and Freight Terminal overlay zone.

The only zone which allows residential uses is the Housing Overlay which is currently restricted to a small rectangular area in the Southeast corner of the City. Residential uses (including single-family, multi-family, supportive, transitional, and more) are permitted within the Housing Overlay zone; however, a development agreement is required as no residential uses are permitted by-right in the City. The purpose of the Housing Overlay is to accommodate housing at limited and specific areas of the City pursuant to General Plan policy, and to locate such housing in a manner that minimizes potential conflicts between residential and industrial uses.

Development standards and site planning standards are determined during the process of a project obtaining a development agreement. As part of the development agreement, the City may impose requirements that protect occupants from environmental contaminants and risk factors, such as traffic, air pollutants, noise, odor, dust, and more.

Of note, the majority of residential units currently existing in the City are not covered by the Housing Overlay, but instead are zoned industrial. Program 11 of this Element describes the City's intention to change the zoning of parcels with residential units from industrial to residential within the 6th cycle planning period. The Westside Specific Plan, Program 8 of the Element, describes the ways in which more areas in Vernon will be rezoned to permit residential uses. Both programs will establish by-right processes for the development of housing.

Westside Specific Plan

The City is currently in the midst of preparing a Specific Plan for the Westside of the City, tentatively titled "Reimagine Vernon." This Specific Plan has six goals:

Reinvigorate the City's competitive advantage as a center of production.

Strengthen and provide long-term stability to the City's fiscal position.

Increase the residential population in order to increase access to proportionally allocated Federal and State funding, to strengthen the City's governance by providing more voters and candidates for elected office, and to help meet regional housing needs.

Diversify and reorient the Westside's land uses to take advantage of changes in the economic landscape of Southern California.

Increase amenities available to local residents and workers.

Create a physical environment that is supportive of diversified land uses, welcoming to the larger region, and enhancing to the City's image and identity.

In order to pursue these six goals, the Specific Plan will strongly encourage the development of new and adaptive reuse residential projects within defined areas within the Specific Plan boundary. A general idea of the areas that are targeted for residential use is shown in Figure B-1, which indicates the clusters of buildings which together present the highest potential for adaptive reuse, mixed-use districts with residential components. Development standards and procedures will allow multifamily residential development of 3-7 stories by-right, while placing restrictions on new logistics uses which would be the greatest competition to residential from a land cost perspective.

The Specific Plan, in keeping with State law, will evaluate the adequacy of all infrastructure services required to accommodate the residential development and provide a mechanism to address them should there be any deficits. Complete streets interventions, including truck restrictions on key residential corridors, will be implemented. The Specific Plan's Program EIR will also set forth all necessary mitigation measures to protect the health of residents and the integrity of the surrounding environment.

Site Plan Review and Processing Times

Currently, all new residential applications are subject to a Development Agreement approved by the City Council. The average processing time is one year. Renovation applications are put in by the City itself (for City owned properties); for privately-owned housing renovations, the processing time is 1-2 weeks.

Renovation, Restoration, Maintenance, and Repair

The City will continue to permit the renovation, restoration, maintenance, and repair of existing residential uses. Residential rehabilitation projects are permitted in Vernon, and the rehabilitation is a “Minor Alteration or Repair,” as defined in the Zoning Code (less than 50 percent of the fair market value of the buildings on the lot).³ As a practical matter, the expansive definition of “Minor Alteration or Repair” and lack of development standards result in limited governmental constraints (other than complying with the building code) that would prevent a homeowner from upgrading or improving a residence within the existing square footage.

If the hard costs of improvements equal or exceed, over a three- year period, 50 percent of the then-current fair market value of the building, then the improvement, if voluntary, will be defined as a “Major Alteration or Repair” and terminate the legal nonconforming status of the residence. A Major Alteration or Repair is considered to be the functional equivalent of a tear-down and rebuild, which the City does not currently permit. However, if the Major Alteration or Repair is necessitated by a natural disaster, such as an earthquake or fire, or other force majeure, the owner does have the right to rebuild the residence up to the square footage of the original residence. At that time, the development standards for the home would be developed. The City has not developed those criteria at this time since there are only forty-eight private residences in Vernon. Forty-five of these private residences belong to Vernon Villages, an affordable housing development that was opened in 2015, and whose development standards are governed by the development agreement.

The Major Alteration provision does not constrain the maintenance of the existing housing stock, as property owners are permitted to undertake a broad array of improvements that extend the life of residential structures and improve unit conditions. Under State law, any and all such improvements can be pursued consistent with Health & Safety Code Section 17922(d) and Section 17958.8 relating to the alteration and repair of existing buildings. This section discusses the use of original materials and methods for the repair, replacement, or extension as long as it meets Building Code standards. The Zoning Code had no provisions or limitations on the construction materials utilized. Section 17958.8 is similar, as it addresses the use of original construction materials and methods. Nothing in the Zoning Code or Building Code prohibits the use of original materials and methods, with the exception of an unreinforced masonry structure, which would have to be seismically retrofitted. As no residential units in Vernon are constructed of unreinforced masonry, this does not affect any housing units.

The City of Vernon has recently renovated 24 of their 26 City-owned units. The remaining two units, though they are in good, habitable condition, will be renovated if needed over the next eight-year planning period. All private residential units in the City are in good condition, with no units requiring a major alteration during the planning period. The Vernon Villages affordable project opened in 2015 and therefore will not require renovation for many years, past the 6th cycle planning period.

No private residential property owners have proposed major renovations to their properties. Residential property owners participated in the 5th Cycle Zoning Ordinance revision process, and none expressed opposition to the standards that apply to existing, nonconforming residential structures in the City, including the prohibitions on increasing square footage and undertaking major alterations. All residences – whether owned by the City or others – are in good condition, according to City staff. As described above, residential rehabilitation that constitutes a minor alteration (costing, over a three year period, less than 50 percent of the market value of the building) is permitted. Because minor alterations are permitted and existing standards will allow renovations of these units, the limit on major alterations is not considered an impact to the maintenance and improvement of the City's housing stock. The Zoning Code has been revised to remove restrictions on major alterations as needed through the implementation of reasonable accommodation procedures.

It is the City's intent to encourage and actively participate in the rehabilitation of existing residential units. The process is straightforward and not burdensome; there is no entitlement process required for rehabilitation projects. Residential rehabilitation projects that are Minor Alterations or Repairs and do not exceed the existing square footage require only a building permit. The building permit process timeframe depends on the complexity of the renovation. Complex renovations involving new electrical systems, plumbing, etc. can take up to three weeks to process. The City has no intention of removing any of the 74 units in the City, as all units are in good condition.

Building Code Amendments

The City has adopted the 2019 California Building Code with some minor local amendments related primarily to industrial buildings in the City. Per State Health and Safety Code Sections 17958.5 and 17958.7, the City made required findings and filed such findings with the California Building Standards Commission. The amendments include administrative processes such as the establishment of City permit fees and appeals boards, as well as requirements specific to hazardous and industrial uses such as fire access roads, spray booths, and storage of explosive and flammable materials. Vernon has also

made additional amendments to protect the safety of workers and residents within the City. Specifically, the City requires all wiring to be in a metallic conduit, to protect workers and residents from hazards of accidentally driving a nail or screw through wiring. There is a marginal cost increase associated with this precaution, but the benefit associated with safer installation outweighs the cost. The price for a 2 inch by 10 inch metallic conduit is \$43.33 while the cost for the same PVC conduit is \$25.65.

The City has also made amendments to require Class A and B roofing material, which is more fire resistive and can stop the potential spread of fire. While this type of roofing material may be more expensive than some standard materials, this amendment is necessary to prevent and quickly extinguish fires that may have far more costly impacts. As such, no restrictions or amendments have been adopted in the Building Code that would constrain housing in the City.

Permit and Infrastructure Fees

The City assesses various fees to cover the costs of permit processing (Figure B-2). Most of the fees charged are flat fees based on the cost of services, or tiered fees based on the size and cost of the improvement. Fees charged are comparable to surrounding communities in Los Angeles County, and as such, do not pose a constraint to housing renovation. Owners intending to renovate or improve existing residential units are required to obtain a building permit for a minor alteration. The fee, which is reviewed annually, is based on the cost of the improvement. The City of Vernon does not currently levy impact fees on new development.

Building Permit Fees	
Permit Fees (Valuation)	Fee
\$1.00 to \$2,000	\$111
\$2,001 to \$5,000	\$111 for the first \$2,000 plus \$5.55 for each additional \$100 or fraction thereof, up to and including \$5,000.
\$5,001 to \$25,000	\$277 for the first \$5,000 plus \$13.87 for each additional \$1,000 or fraction thereof, up to and including \$25,000.
\$25,001 to \$50,000	\$555 for the first \$25,000 plus \$10.40 for each additional \$1,000 or fraction thereof, up to and including \$50,000.
\$50,001 to \$100,000	\$815 for the first \$50,000 plus \$7.63 for each additional \$1,000 or fraction thereof, up to and including \$100,000.
\$100,001 to \$500,000	\$1,196.00 for the first \$100,000 plus \$5.55 for each additional \$1,000 or fraction thereof, up to and including \$500,000.
\$500,001 and up	\$3,415 for the first \$500,000 plus \$4.29 for each additional \$1,000 or fraction thereof.
Plan Check Fee when required, shall be equal to 65% of the Permit Fee. Check Energy Fee 25% of the permit fee. Permit Energy Fee 10% of the Permit Fee.	
Inspection and Other Fees	
Description	Fee
Inspection Outside of Normal Hours (minimum of 4 hours)	\$244/hour (minimum of \$976)
Reinspection Fee	\$168/hour
Additional Plan Review (non-structural, structural)	\$136 - \$321/hour
Final, Parcel, or Tentative Map	\$5,585 - \$11,107 (for five or more parcels or lots)
Conditional Use Permit	\$16,628 plus applicant is responsible for cost to retain a consultant to prepare the environmental document for the project plus a 25% administration fee, plus any County Surveyor and County Clerk filing fees & Fish and Game Section 713 fees.
Zoning Variance or Amendment	\$11,075
Building Code Variance	\$4,879

Figure B-2.

Source: City of Vernon General Fee Schedule, Effective July 1, 2021.

Code Enforcement

The Vernon Department of Public Works is responsible for code enforcement and the maintenance and upkeep of all City-owned units. Enforcement of building code standards does not constrain the improvement of housing in Vernon but instead serves to maintain or improve the condition of the limited, existing housing stock.

Of the 74 units in the City, 48 units are not owned by the City. Forty-five of those 48 units are part of the Vernon Villages Park Apartments affordable development completed in 2015. Due to the recent completion of this project, it does not require improvement. City staff has investigated the remaining three private units and determined that none of these units require significant rehabilitation. At this time, an active code enforcement program is unwarranted due to the limited number of older privately owned units and the fact all units are currently in good condition and continue to be well maintained by the owners. However, in the future the City will need active code enforcement due to a desired increase of new housing units which are privately owned. Program 2 in this 6th Cycle Housing Element addresses the City's future need for code enforcement. The City encourages active maintenance of the housing stock, as evidenced by the extensive rehabilitation the City has undertaken on those housing units that it owns. Currently, Community Services Staff is active in the community, and will respond to any visible code enforcement violations or complaints that may require rehabilitation of units.

Property owners are permitted and encouraged to perform proper upkeep and maintenance, which can include renovations, as long as the existing square footage is not exceeded and the cost of the renovation, over a three-year period, does not exceed 50 percent of the market value of buildings on the lot. For all practical purposes, all other controls, permit processes, and fees do not constrain the maintenance and preservation of the City's housing stock.

On/Offsite Improvement Standards

On-site and off-site improvements will be required for new residential and mixed-use developments within the Westside Specific Plan Area, as required by the Westside Specific Plan.

SB 35 Processing Procedure

Senate Bill (SB) 35 requires cities and counties to streamline review and approval of eligible affordable housing projects by providing a ministerial approval process, exempting qualifying projects from CEQA review. SB 35 can

be utilized in a City when the State determines the City has made insufficient process towards their lower-income RHNA. In Cities where the State has made this determination SB 35 allows for streamlined ministerial approval of proposed developments with at least 50% affordability. If the City is also determined to have made insufficient progress towards their moderate-income RHNA, the City is subject to the more inclusive streamlining for developments with at least 10% affordability.

The City of Vernon is subject to SB 35 streamlining at this time, specifically the more inclusive streamlining for developments with at least 10% affordability. As of October 2021, the City has not received applications to streamline.

Constraints to Housing for Persons with Disabilities

Housing element law requires an analysis of government constraints to the development of housing for people with disabilities. People with disabilities have specific housing needs related to accessibility of dwelling units; access to transportation; employment, and commercial services; and alternative living arrangements that include on-site or nearby supportive services.

Building Codes

The City has adopted the 2019 California Building Code. Standards within the Code of the City of Vernon (through the adoption of the California Building Code) include provisions to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities. These standards are consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). No local amendments that would constrain accessibility or increase the cost of housing for persons with disabilities have been adopted, except that the Zoning Code does not permit the floor area of the residences to be increased or permit any major alterations that equal or exceed 50 percent of the current fair market value of the buildings on the lot.

Universal Design Element

The City of Vernon has not adopted a universal design ordinance governing construction or modification of homes using design principles that allow individuals to remain in those homes as their physical needs and capabilities change.

Definition of Family

Sometimes, a city's definition of "family" can limit access to housing for persons with disabilities when the word is narrowly defined. This can illegally limit the use of housing as group homes for persons with disabilities, but not limit housing for families. The Vernon Municipal Code does not define family, and therefore is nondiscriminatory in its application.

Reasonable Accommodation

The Fair Housing Act, as amended in 1988, requires that cities and counties provide reasonable accommodation to rules, policies, practices, and procedures where such accommodation may be necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal housing opportunities. While fair housing laws intend that all people have equal access to housing, the law also recognizes that people with disabilities may need extra tools to achieve equality. Reasonable accommodation is one of the tools intended to further housing opportunities for people with disabilities. Reasonable accommodation provides a means of requesting from the local government flexibility in the application of land use and zoning and building regulations or, in some instances, even a waiver of certain restrictions or requirements because it is necessary to achieve equal access to housing. Cities and counties are required to consider requests for accommodations related to housing for people with disabilities, and to provide the accommodation when it is determined to be "reasonable" based on fair housing laws and the case law interpreting the statutes.

State law allows for a statutorily based four-part analysis to be used in evaluating requests for reasonable accommodation related to land use and zoning matters and can be incorporated into a reasonable accommodation ordinance or procedures. This analysis gives great weight to furthering the housing needs of people with disabilities and also considers the impact or effect of providing the requested accommodation on the City and its overall zoning scheme. Developers and providers of housing for people with disabilities must be ready to address each element of the following four-part analysis:

- The housing that is the subject of the request for reasonable accommodation is for people with disabilities as defined in federal or state fair housing laws;
- The reasonable accommodation requested is necessary to make specific housing available to people with disabilities who are protected under fair housing laws;

- The requested accommodation will not impose an undue financial or administrative burden on the local government;
- The requested accommodation will not result in a fundamental alteration in the local zoning ordinance.

The City abides by the Fair Housing Act and has instituted a clearly defined process for making requests for reasonable accommodation to provide exceptions in zoning, land-use, permitting processes, and building codes. The City has developed reasonable accommodation procedures and will provide information on the procedures on the City's website (Housing Element Program 4). Additionally, during the 6th cycle the City will add the reasonable accommodation procedures to the Municipal code.

The State has removed any City discretion for review of small group homes for persons with disabilities (six or fewer residents). Group homes will be permitted in specific zones within the Westside Specific Plan. The City does not impose additional zoning, building code, or permitting procedures other than those allowed by State law.

The City does not impose special permit procedures or requirements that could impede the retrofitting of homes for accessibility. A retrofit would be permitted as a minor alteration (requiring a building permit), as long as the cost of the retrofit was less than 50 percent of the market value of the buildings. The City's requirements for building permits are standard, straightforward, and not burdensome. No CUP or other special permitting requirements are required for retrofitting homes for accessibility.

The City's adopted reasonable accommodation procedures are ministerial and include, but not be limited to, identifying who may request a reasonable accommodation (i.e., persons with disabilities, family-members, landlords, etc.), timeframes for decision-making, and provision for relief from the various land-use, zoning, or building regulations that may constrain the housing for persons of disabilities. The procedure also includes consideration of allowing an increase in habitable floor area of an existing residence to accommodate disabled persons.

The City will also explore the feasibility of offering fee reductions for permit processes that involve retrofitting residences for accessibility purposes.

Information Regarding Accommodation for Zoning, Permit Processing, and Building Codes

The City provides information to all interested parties regarding accommodations in zoning, permit processes, and application of building codes for housing for persons with disabilities.

Zoning and Land Use Policies and Practices

The City of Vernon has not identified any zoning or other land-use regulatory practices that could discriminate against persons with disabilities and impede the availability of such housing for these individuals.

An example of the ways in which the City facilitates housing for persons with disabilities through its regulatory and permitting processes was in the Vernon Village housing development which has all ground-floor units fully accessible.

Permit and Processing Procedures

State law requires that residential care facilities with six or fewer residents be permitted by-right in residential zones. Therefore, the City of Vernon does not require conditional use permits for the permitting of licensed residential care facilities with six or fewer residents in the Housing Overlay zone. The City does require conditional use permits for the permitting of licensed, residential care facilities with seven or more residents. A conditional use permit takes about two to three months as it requires a planning hearing before the planning commission. The City of Vernon does not impose additional zoning, building code, or permitting procedures other than those allowed by State law. There are no constraints on housing for persons with disabilities caused or controlled by the City.

The City does not impose special permit procedures or requirements that could impede the retrofitting of homes for accessibility. The City allows residential retrofitting to increase the suitability of homes for persons with disabilities in compliance with accessibility requirements. The process for requesting an accessibility retrofitting includes a zone clearance approval from the Planning Division, which takes about two weeks, and a building permit which takes ten working days. The City's requirements for building permits and inspections are the same as for other residential projects and are straightforward and not burdensome. In addition, the City works with applicants who need special accommodations in their homes to ensure that application of building code requirements does not create a constraint.

Efforts to Remove Regulatory Constraints for Persons with Disabilities

State law removed any City discretion for review of small residential care facilities for persons with disabilities (six or fewer residents). The City does not impose additional zoning, building code, or permitting procedures other than those allowed by State law. There are no City initiated constraints on housing for persons with disabilities caused or controlled by the City. The City also allows residential retrofitting to increase the suitability of homes for persons with disabilities in compliance with accessibility requirements.

Non-governmental Constraints to Housing

In Vernon, limited land is available which would be suitable for the development of housing. The Housing Element inventory identifies the city-owned Petrelli Electric site as the site with the highest potential for residential development. The limited sites available for residential development are due to serious environmental conditions which render the majority of sites throughout Vernon unsuitable for residential development. Environmental factors affecting potential residential development are related to hazardous materials storage and processing, background contamination, noxious odors, noise pollution, and truck and railroad traffic generated by the City's pervasive industrial land uses. Inadequate access to residential services is an additional constraint to residential development in the City. However, the Westside Specific Plan (Program #8) will implement significant steps to address these constraints within the limited areas which are more suitable for residential, live/work and mixed-use development.

Land Cost and Availability

Currently, limited land is available for residential development in Vernon. This is due to Vernon being a built-out city as well as the zoning constraints on residential development in the city. However, these zoning constraints should change with the adoption of the Westside Specific Plan. The Westside Specific Plan targets specific sites for residential development, one of which is highlighted within the Housing Element Site Inventory.

The Westside Specific Plan will target residential development for the Petrelli Electric/City Yard site located along Santa Fe Avenue. Existing conditions at this site include the City Yard and Factory/Industrial uses. The Westside Specific Plan envisions a mid-rise residential building on City-owned property, replacing the City Yard and factory/industrial uses on the Petrelli Electric/City Yard site.

Market Constraints

A financial feasibility analysis of the Civic Center site residential development found the following assumptions: Residential rent at the site would be \$2.92 per square foot per month, residential hard costs would be \$225 per square foot, and parking costs would be \$30,000 per space (at/above-grade structured parking).

Based on the same analysis, a mid-rise residential development on the Civic Center site achieves a positive residual land value (\$18 per square foot), though it does not exceed the market value of the land (\$53 per square foot). Given that the site is publicly-owned, the analysis assumed that 25% of units would be affordable, with rents ranging from \$840 to \$1,080 per month. While the development does not exceed market value of the land, it is important to note that the City owns the land and is very invested in bringing new residential development into Vernon. Therefore, the City is able to sell its land at a discount to a residential developer in order to make the development financially feasible.

Construction Costs

The cost of building housing in the Los Angeles metro area is high. Hard costs make up more than 60% of total development costs for your average project. Hard costs include labor and materials. The hard cost price (per square foot) of constructing multifamily housing in the State climbed 25% over the decade from 2008 to 2018. Statewide, the average hard cost per square foot rose by \$45 from \$177 in 2008 to \$222 in 2018, after adjusting for inflation. This hard cost increase has been driven by the increased price of labor and certain building materials, such as wood, plastics, and composites. Between 2010 and 2020, the price of wood, plastics, and composites rose by 110%, after accounting for inflation; it then subsequently spiked during the pandemic.

Soft costs make up the second largest component of total development costs. These costs include fees, financing, consulting, tax, title, and insurance. Soft costs differ from hard costs because soft costs are not involved in physical construction. Fees in the City of Vernon are discussed in the “Permit and Infrastructure Fees” section of this Appendix. Financing costs are associated with obtaining equity and debt, as well as a developer fee. Consulting includes costs associated with professional services such as architects, engineers, plumbers, accounting, legal, and much more. Last, tax, title, and insurance costs account for the price of liability and builder’s risk, as well as property taxes.

In California it is common for affordable housing projects to cost more on average than market-rate or mixed-income developments. Prevailing wage requirements are associated with the higher cost of building labor. Wages for construction occupations in California rose by 29% from 2006 to 2018.

As construction costs rise, the rental price of new rental units increases. For example, a multifamily unit that costs \$800,000 to build will require a \$4,000 per month rent, without subsidy, in order for the developer to make ends meet. It is important that construction costs remain as low as possible. Unfortunately, if construction costs run too high these costs can render housing projects infeasible.

Financing

Vernon has an extremely low rate of private, market-driven housing. For those who do want to purchase a home, as of early 2021, interest rates are at historic lows for mortgage seekers. However, lending criteria remain significantly stricter than prior to the 2007 housing crisis. With rent burdens high, saving for a down payment could present the largest barrier to low- and moderate-income residents becoming homeowners. Commercial lending for residential development, particularly dense multifamily development, is currently slow as the long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are unclear.

Environmental Constraints

Given the industrial nature of the jurisdiction, all residential development will need to contend with environmental concerns that currently affect the City (further described below). These are issues that adversely affect existing residents and could affect future residents based on the location of new housing. In particular, environmental factors affecting potential residential development can be related to hazardous materials storage and processing, air quality, odors, noise pollution, and truck and railroad traffic generated by industrial land uses that are prevalent within the City. Inadequate access to residential services can be an additional constraint to residential development. These factors are a consideration as the City looks to opportunities to generate new housing.

While this data highlights environmental challenges that must be factored into any future housing land use decisions, it will not preclude the construction of new residential uses. However, it will require the City to give careful consideration to environmental conditions when demonstrating site suitability.

Hazardous Materials & Air Quality

Currently, the City experiences a high level of truck traffic, with trucks exiting the freeways and traveling along local roadways to any number of industrial facilities within the City. Trucks generate high levels of diesel particulate matter (DPM). Exposure to DPM is a health hazard, particularly for children whose lungs are still developing and the elderly who may have other serious health problems. DPM levels and resultant potential health effects are higher in close proximity to heavily traveled roadways with substantial truck traffic or near industrial facilities. In addition to truck traffic, heavy and prolonged industrial use in Vernon has contributed to existing conditions unhealthy air quality.¹



Figure B-3. Air Quality Risks.

Source: MATES IV, recommended buffers from AQMD.

¹ The South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) Multiple Air Toxics Exposure Study (MATES) is a unique environmental justice program that has spanned more than three decades and provides a detailed assessment of the impacts of a group of air pollutants known as "air toxics", which are pollutants that can cause important health effects. Unlike the common "criteria air pollutants", there are no state or federal standards for ambient concentrations of air toxics. Examples of air toxics include gases, such as benzene and 1,3-butadiene, as well as particles, such as arsenic and diesel particulate matter. The MATES program is designed to assess overall long-term trends in air toxics levels in the community. It has long been recognized that air toxics levels vary across communities, and the MATES program provides important information to examine these differences.

High risk of cancer. Based on the SCAQMD MATES V database, the estimated risk of cancer is 641 per one million throughout the City.² According to the MATES V Final Report (August 2021), the cancer risk in the South Coast Air Basin (Basin) region is estimated at approximately 455 per one million, and 576 per one million in the neighboring community of Huntington Park. Thus, the ambient cancer risk in the City of Vernon is higher than the average risk for the Basin.

High non-cancer chronic health risks. Along with cancer risk estimates, MATES V includes information on the chronic non-cancer health impacts from inhalation and non-inhalation pathways through the collection of air toxics at fixed monitoring stations. The nearest monitoring station to the City is Huntington Park. Located just south of Vernon, this monitoring station reported the maximum residential non-cancer chronic hazard index is 5.0. The Hazard Index (HI) is an indicator of whether non-cancer health effects can occur due to chronic exposure to toxic air contaminants. An HI greater than one does not mean that such health effects are expected, but rather that the likelihood of experiencing adverse health effects increases. Although the likelihood of experiencing an adverse non-cancer health effect may not scale linearly with the HI, a larger HI would generally indicate a greater likelihood of experiencing those health effects in the exposed population. The non-cancer chronic hazard index of 5.0 near the City is considered to be a relatively high hazard index as compared to other locations in the Basin.

Numerous permitted industrial facilities. According to the SCAQMD's Facility Information Detail (FIND) database,³ there are 1,031 regulated facilities required to have air quality permits. These range from dry cleaners and gas stations to manufacturing and industrial plants and are a general indicator of the preponderance of air pollution sources.

² South Coast Air Quality Management District's MATES V database, <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/air-quality/air-quality-studies/health-studies/mates-v>; accessed November 2021.

³ <https://www.aqmd.gov/nav/FIND/facility-information-detail>; accessed November 2021.

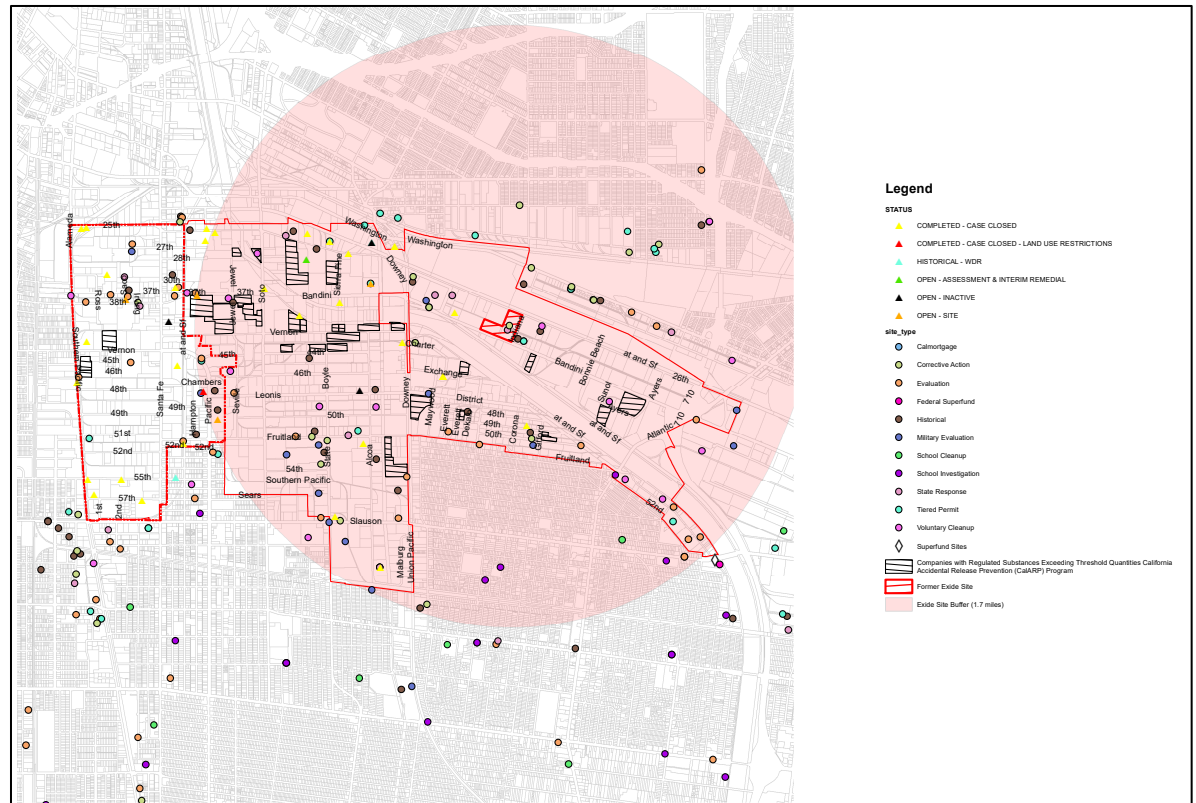


Figure B-4. Soil Contamination Risks.

Sources: Geotracker, Envirostor, Department of Toxic Substances Control, City of Vernon.

Hazardous material storage tanks. According to the State Water Resources Control Board,⁴ there are 25 leaking underground storage tank clean-up sites in Vernon.

Hazardous materials release sites. According to the California Environmental Protection Agency's (CalEPA) Cortese list database, there are three facilities in Vernon that are identified as hazardous materials release sites by the Department of Toxic Substance Control. The first is the Exide Residential/Parkways cleanup site located at 2700 South Indiana Avenue, the second is the facility identified as Pechiney located at 3200 Fruitland Avenue, and the third is the facility identified as AAD Distribution and Dry Cleaning, Inc. located at 2306 E. 38th Street.

Exposure from Soil Contamination. As a city with a 100-year-long industrial history, there are numerous sites in Vernon with soil

⁴ California State Water Resources Control Board, Geotracker, <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/>; accessed November 2021.

contamination issues which will need to be addressed during new development (see Figure B-4).

Hazardous Material Storage. Within the City, approximately 570 businesses handle/store hazardous materials. Thirty-eight of these businesses handle high levels of extremely dangerous materials regulated by the State.

Underground Pipelines. There are numerous underground pipelines throughout the City, many carrying potentially explosive materials.

Railroads. There are approximately 130 miles of railroad track historically treated with herbicides for weed control. Rights-of way show patterns of contamination from spilling, overfilling, or transfer of chemicals.

Waste Facilities. The City has four California EPA-permitted hazardous waste treatment, storage and disposal facilities. There are also ten closed landfill sites.

While many of these environmental conditions represent a higher than average risk of pollutant exposure for potential residents, there are still opportunities for diversifying development. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) recommends avoiding siting sensitive receptors within 500 feet of freeways and 1,000 feet of railyards. The City has identified one potential residential development site at 2323 Vernon Avenue, located in the west side of the City. This site is not located within 500 feet of a freeway, nor 1000 feet of a railyard. As illustrated in Figure B-4, the west side of the City has lower cancer risk 1) due to a lower concentration of heavy industrial uses and 2) due to the prevailing wind, which typically travels from the west to the east. As a result, odors and pollutants are typically carried across the City to the east.

The City has developed programs to assist in controlling hazardous materials. One such program is the “right to know” program. All businesses in the City are required to submit inventories of all hazardous materials used or stored. The City currently has 571 businesses that handle or store hazardous materials. Class C businesses with very high maximum daily volumes (2,001 to 1,000,000 pounds) are the most prevalent and are located throughout the City. The risk of upset from businesses handling such high volumes of chemicals, many of which are toxic, is a factor that must be considered in land use planning. Generally, businesses with highly toxic chemicals are further regulated through the California Accidental Release Prevention Program (CALARP). Such businesses are required to provide the City’s Environmental Health Department with a CALARP report detailing how they plan to prevent the release of such chemicals, as well as presenting a plan for clean-up and notification if there were an accidental release. Such regulated chemicals

include ammonia and chlorine gas and could impact a large geographic area if released. As illustrated in Figure B-4, Vernon currently has 38 businesses regulated under CALARP.

Based on review of the Geotracker, Envirostor and DTSC databases, 2323 East Vernon Avenue has not been identified as a contaminated site.⁵ However, given the long industrial history, all developments will have to undergo Phase I Environmental Site Analyses as part of their environmental clearance process, leading to a Phase 2 and/or 3 analyses if necessary. Soil remediation measures may be required.

Noxious Odors

Numerous industries that generate noxious odors operate in Vernon, including several focused on the slaughtering and rendering of animals. Overlay districts have been designated in the City's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance to isolate the locations of offensive industrial uses responsible for excessive noxious odors. These overlay districts include a "Slaughtering Overlay" for uses which involve the slaughtering of animals, and a "Rendering Overlay" for the location of rendering facilities. To address these concerns, all newly constructed buildings, or new uses in existing buildings within the Slaughtering (S) Overlay Zone and Rendering (R) Overlay Zone are required to comply with Development and Performance Standards (Section 26.4.1-7) and Site Planning Standards (Section 26.4.1-8). Additionally, the City Council may impose as a part of the Conditional Use Permit any other requirements as are necessary to protect nearby owners and occupants from odor and other environmental concerns. 2323 Vernon Avenue is not located near or adjacent to these overlay zones. Residential uses are not permitted within these areas.

Noise

Noise sources in Vernon include stationary industrial activity, as well as from trucks, automobiles, and railroad operations. Numerous companies operate equipment such as large presses and pumps which produce excessive vibrations and generate noise well beyond the level of acceptability for noise-sensitive land uses within the vicinity. Arterial roadways in Vernon have a very high proportion of truck traffic (approximately 30 percent), thereby intensifying noise levels along the City's roadways. In addition, four main railroad lines and a number of switching operations are located in the City, and these generate significant levels of noise day and night.

⁵ See baseline studies report, Soil Contamination Map.

Truck and Railroad Traffic

Vernon is traversed by approximately 130 miles of railroad tracks, with approximately 96 at-grade and seven grade-separated railroad crossings. As previously mentioned, truck traffic is extremely heavy, comprising nearly one-third of all traffic in the City. The construction of the Alameda Corridor has consolidated rail traffic between the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach and downtown Los Angeles, and no plans have been announced to vacate existing mainline railroads. Some spur tracks have been eliminated but have been replaced by truck transportation. Also, the rail lines are being considered as routes for California High Speed Rail in the Orange County to Los Angeles segment.

Much of the truck traffic in the City is generated as a result of the close access to the regional freeway system.⁶ Trucks traveling from Vernon to the rest of the region primarily take SR-60 East, I-710 South via Bandini Boulevard, and I-5 North and South. The most common routes within the west side to access these freeways are Santa Fe Avenue, Alameda Street East, and Alameda Street West. As discussed previously, truck trips contribute to both noise and air quality concerns for residential uses. Limiting truck traffic in the west side of the City and around areas such as the 2323 Vernon Avenue site could reduce both air quality and noise exposure for future residents. CARB recommends a 1,000-foot buffer between sensitive uses and distribution centers that generate more than 100 truck trips per day. No uses within the area of 2323 Vernon Avenue reach that threshold of 100 trips per day. Additionally, the site is located more than 850 feet away from any uses that generate over 50 truck trips per day.

⁶ Iteris Technical Memorandum, Vernon Westside Specific Plan Analysis

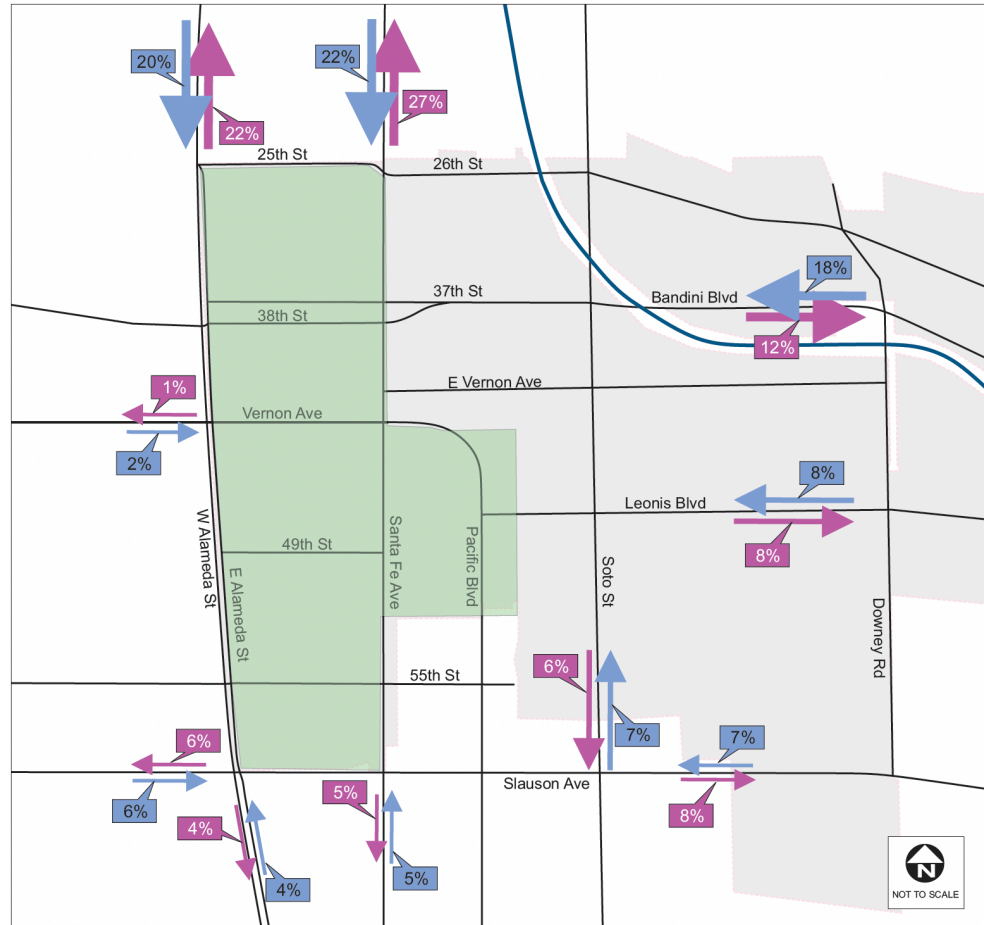


Figure B-5. **Westside Truck Distribution (Inbound/Outbound).**

Sources: Iteris Technical Memorandum, Vernon Westside Specific Plan Analysis.

Implications for Housing Policy

As required by the RHNA, the City must identify locations for a variety of housing units. The challenge in the City will be to identify locations that are suitable for housing in light of the environmental constraints identified herein. Guidance from regulatory agencies caution the siting of residences and other “sensitive land uses” that could be adversely affected by environmental pollution.

In April 2005, CARB published the Air Quality and Land Use Handbook to serve as a general guide for considering health effects associated with siting sensitive receptors proximate to sources of toxic air contaminant (TAC) emissions. The recommendations are voluntary and do not constitute a requirement or mandate for either land use agencies or local air districts. The goal of the guidance document is to protect sensitive receptors, such as children, the

elderly, acutely ill, and chronically ill persons, from exposure to TAC emissions. Some examples of CARB's siting recommendations include the following: (1) avoid siting sensitive receptors within 500 feet of a freeway, urban road with 100,000 vehicles per day, or rural roads with 50,000 vehicles per day; (2) avoid siting sensitive receptors within 1,000 feet of a distribution center (that accommodates more than 100 trucks per day, more than 40 trucks with operating transport refrigeration units per day, or where transport refrigeration unit operations exceed 300 hours per week); and (3) avoid siting sensitive receptors within 300 feet of any dry cleaning operation using perchloroethylene and within 500 feet of operations with two or more machines.

The environmental setting in Vernon and CARB guidance on siting of residences pose challenges on two levels. First, infrastructure investments will be needed to help improve the livability in areas that can accommodate more housing. For example, reducing local exposure to diesel truck traffic would help reduce localized exposure to DPM, while increasing a tree canopy will improve the livability of neighborhoods. Second, building design will be helpful in reducing exposure to negative environmental effects, particularly air quality. Installing high efficiency filters in heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment will help reduce exposure of residents to indoor air pollution. 5th Cycle Housing Element Policy 1.2 already requires HEPA filters in all new development in the City. Orienting development away from freeways, distribution centers, and other sources of air pollution and toxic emissions can help reduce exposure as well.

Appendix C: Housing Resources

Planning, financing, developing, and operating housing requires resources of many varieties, such as land, financial, and human resources. This Appendix summarizes the City's requirement for adding housing within the City of Vernon, identifies sites on which that requirement can be accommodated, identifies resources to financing new housing, recognizes City policies and programs that will impact housing development, and discusses opportunities for energy conservation.

Future Housing Needs

State law requires that each community build a certain number of new housing units to keep up with the region's housing need. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) 6th Housing Element Cycle Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) for the City of Vernon is nine (9) units. This section discusses the City of Vernon's ability to accommodate their RHNA during the eight-year planning period.

RHNA Requirement & Adequacy of the Sites Inventory

The RHNA covers the planning period from June 30, 2021, through October 15, 2029. The City of Vernon must identify adequate land with appropriate zoning and development standards to accommodate its allocation of the regional housing need.

The City of Vernon's required nine RHNA units are split between the very low- and low-income levels as seen in Figure C-1.

City of Vernon 6 th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Allocation	
Income Level	Units
Very-Low Income (<50% of AMI)	5
Low-Income (50 to 80% of AMI)	4
Moderate-Income (80 to 120% of AMI)	0
Above Moderate Income (>120% of AMI)	0
Total	9

Figure C-1.

Source: Southern California Association of Governments.

Housing Site: 2323 E Vernon Ave

2323 E. Vernon Ave. is a four-acre site adjacent to Vernon City Hall and Furlong Place, a residential community of ten homes. Like City Hall and Furlong Place, it is owned by the City of Vernon, which leases a portion of the site to Petrelli Electric, a power line maintenance and construction company based in Agua Dulce (near Santa Clarita) which uses the site for a small office and storage of vehicles and equipment for its operations in the central Los Angeles area. The lease is month-to-month and the City has informed the tenant of its intention to redevelop the property. The rear of the property is used as a storage yard for City vehicles. However, the City has identified other appropriate storage locations where it plans to reaccommodate its fleet, and is negotiating to provide Petrelli Electric use of a separate City-owned property.

The site is located within the Westside Specific Plan and will be zoned for by-right housing development. Additionally, as expressed in Program #10, the City will issue an RFP for the residential development of this site. The RFP will be conducted pursuant to the requirements of the Surplus Land Act. Environmental constraints include the presence of an underground water well on the rear portion of the site. However, the site has good vehicular access and is fully provisioned with utility services. Abutting uses to the west are an office building and the abutting use to the north, while a logistics facility, orients its truck activities further away from this site. The site possesses all basic utility services including water, sewer, storm drain, electrical service, gas, and broadband internet.

A conservative assumption for the capacity of the site can be based on the type of development located next door on Furlong Place. The site can accommodate the construction of twenty small lot single-family homes on the front two acres of land which do not interfere with the well. Given that the site would be developed pursuant to the Surplus Land Act, first opportunity would be given to an affordable housing developer to acquire the site. While single-family homes are not typically affordable, there are a number of affordable housing developers which develop bungalow courts and other single-family development types which can achieve unit sizes and development costs similar to those of an ADU (See Figure C-2). If the land is provided for free or at a discount, such projects can be sold or rented at lower-income prices without need for additional public subsidy. Given the intense housing crisis in Southern California, we anticipate strong demand for these units when offered at these prices. For this reason the Element claims realistic capacity for 20 low-income units on the site.

Examples of Small Affordable Housing Developments				
Development	Type	Units	Income Restriction	Population
11909 Willowbrook Avenue – Restore Neighborhoods LA	Bungalow Courts	7	50% or below AMI	Unhoused
South Los Angeles Bungalow Court – Restore Neighborhoods LA	Bungalow Courts	8	30% or below AMI	Unhoused

Figure C-2.

Source: Urbanize Los Angeles, Curbed LA.

While the single-family concept presents a feasible development potential, there is also opportunity for a much larger development. The Arroyo Group, Lorcan O’ Herlihy (LOHA) Architects and HR&A Advisors identified and evaluated a development concept for the site with 325 residential units and a small amount of ground-floor commercial space in a seven-story podium structure. Per Surplus Land Act guidelines, 25% of the units would be covenanted as affordable to lower-income households. The concept assumed that the development team would assume the cost to move the existing water well (\$5.3 million) and pay for streetscape improvements (\$0.8 million). Despite the costs and affordable housing requirements, a residual land value of \$7 million would still result, making the development feasible, since the City would be willing to sell or lease the land for less than market value.

Zoning for a Variety of Housing Types

The City of Vernon’s housing element must identify and analyze sites with appropriate zoning that will encourage and facilitate a variety of housing types.

Emergency Shelters

Emergency shelters will be permitted by right in the City’s Santa Fe North zone, as identified in the Westside Specific Plan (Program #8). Within this zone the residential uses permitted are anticipated to be live-work units and emergency shelters. The Santa Fe North zone is currently occupied by many old vacant buildings that have the potential to be converted into shelters for unhoused residents. Additionally, The Santa Fe North zone is in close proximity to public transit and the streetscape within this zone will be improved through the Westside Specific Plan. Emergency Shelters permitted by right in the City’s Santa Fe North zone can accommodate up to 40 beds per shelter. A review of

similar emergency shelters within the Los Angeles region reveals that a 40 bed emergency shelter takes up approximately .27 acres. Lots in the Santa Fe North zone range from .07 to 2.87 acres. As such, the area can accommodate its sufficient capacity of emergency shelters to serve the homeless population in the City of Vernon, which was last counted at 70 individuals during the 2020 LAHSA Homeless Count.

Transitional and Supportive Housing

According to State Government Code Section 65583(a)(4 & 5), transitional and supportive housing are considered residential uses and subject to only those restrictions that apply to other residential dwellings of the same type in the same zone. Vernon Municipal Code 26.4.6-4 explicitly permits supportive and transitional housing in the Housing Overlay Zone, subject to a Conditional Use Permit, as required for all types of housing. The Westside Specific Plan (Program #9) will permit by-right housing development in sections of the Westside. Transitional and supportive housing will also be permitted by-right.

Farmworker Housing

The City of Vernon does not have a farmworker population; therefore, sites do not need to be identified.

Manufactured Homes and Factory-Built Housing

Manufactured homes are permitted in the same areas as other types of housing.

Multi-family Rental Housing

All residential zones in Vernon permit multi-family rental housing.

Single-Room Occupancy Units (SROs)

Single-room occupancy units are commonly located in buildings which date from the early twentieth century. The Westside Specific Plan (Program #9) will allow such units to be established in residential mixed-use districts along Santa Fe Avenue, which is where the greatest number of these buildings exist in Vernon.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)/ Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (JADUs)

The City will adopt an accessory dwelling unit ordinance (Program #13) pursuant to State law to allow ADUs and JADUs to be constructed on single- and multi-family properties.

Financial Resources for Housing

For the 2021-2029 Housing Element planning period, the City anticipates funding available from the following programs:

Tenant-Based Subsidies

There are a wide variety of tenant-based subsidies that are available from government agencies to support tenants in the payment of rent for apartments on the open market. Tenant-based subsidies could be used to pay for City-owned or private housing units. Below are a few of the most important tenant-based subsidies:

- The Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) provides rental assistance payments to owners of private market rate units on behalf of extremely low-income tenants.
- The Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program combines Housing Choice Vouchers with rental assistance for homeless veterans.
- The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH) Shelter Plus Care grant provides subsidized housing and supportive services for individuals and families that meet the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)'s definition of homelessness.
- The Family Self-Sufficiency Program provides an escrow/savings account to help welfare recipients transition off welfare.

As Vernon does not have its own housing authority, all programs are administered by larger government entities including the Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA).

Low-Income Housing Tax Credits

The workhorse of funding for affordable rental housing in the United States, the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program gives State and local LIHTC-allocating agencies the equivalent of approximately \$8 billion in annual budget authority to issue tax credits for the acquisition, rehabilitation, or new construction of rental housing targeted to lower-income households. In California, these credits are distributed by the Tax Credit Allocation Committee (TCAC), which awards projects funding in the Senior and Family categories. Income levels generally range from 30% to 60% AMI.

Tax credits come in the 9% and 4% variety. The more valuable 9% tax credits have always been subject to a competitive process; however, the 4% tax credits have recently become competitive in recent years. Thus in order for a project to be competitive, there are certain characteristics that projects must have:

- Projects must generally include a minimum of 40 to 50 units, and a maximum of 100 to 150 units, to ensure that the affordable housing developer can earn a sufficient developer fee to make the project worth its while.
- Most projects need a local match. The match may be in-kind (land) or financial.
- Locational and other scoring criteria must be met. This includes proximity to services and public transit.

Tax credits are typically used for projects which are 100% affordable; however, the regulations allow for up to 20% of units to be market-rate. There is also the California Housing Financing Agency (CalHFA) and California Public Finance Authority (CalPFA)'s 80/20 Program, which allows for tax credits to be applied to 20% or greater affordable units in large, largely market-rate developments.

Brownfields Funding

In the event that environmental site analyses determine that a housing site has contaminated soil, brownfields funding may be needed to offset remediation costs. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) administer several types of brownfield grant and loan programs, particularly for publicly-owned sites.

Historic Tax Credits

A federal historic tax credit of 20% is available for the rehabilitation of historic, income-producing buildings that are determined by the Secretary of the Interior to be “certified historic structures.” In 2019, the State of California also approved a 20% or 25% credit for the rehabilitation of such structures.

Private Financing

Vernon has an active real estate market which attracts private equity and debt to finance acquisition, rehabilitation and construction projects. While the financing of new market-rate housing would be new to Vernon, there is a definite pattern of banks and equity investors who have increasingly been willing to invest in housing development projects in the nearby Arts District, Boyle Heights, and Historic South Central Los Angeles.

Appendix D: Policy Evaluation

State Government Code (GC) Section 65588 calls on a local government to “...review its housing element as frequently as appropriate to evaluate all of the following: (1) The appropriateness of the housing goals, objectives, and policies in contributing to the attainment of the state housing goal. (2) The effectiveness of the housing element in attainment of the community's housing goals and objectives. (3) The progress of the city, county, or city and county in implementation of the housing element.”

The development of the 2021-2029 Housing Element included an evaluation of how the City has implemented the policies of the 5th Cycle Housing Element. The table on the following pages summarizes the status, effectiveness, and appropriateness of current housing policy programs, as well as any barriers to implementation.

Status of Housing Element Policies (5 th Cycle Housing Element)			
Housing Element Policy	Result	Evaluation	Continue/Modify/Delete
Goal H-1: Ensure that all housing units are maintained in decent, safe, and sanitary condition.			
<i>Housing Element Policy 1.1</i> Continue to enforce all relevant building and zoning codes to ensure that all residential units are adequately maintained.	The City's Public Works Division is responsible for code enforcement activities. Due to the limited number of units in the City, staff can accurately monitor all units and has determined that all are in good repair.	The City has been effective in maintaining housing conditions in the City and responds to complaints as needed. By 2021, the City has renovated 24 of its 26 City-owned dwelling units and added heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems. The City will modify the two remaining City-owned units within the 6 th cycle planning period.	Code enforcement will become more important and necessary in the future as the number of housing units increase in the City. Continue.
<i>Housing Element Policy 1.2</i> Require any new or residential units undergoing a major alteration to be equipped with air filtration systems (such as HVAC systems) and sound insulation (such as dual-paned windows) to protect residents from exposure to adverse environmental conditions.	The City actively pursues maintenance on City-owned units, providing renovations on vacated units and repairs as needed on occupied units.	The City successfully completed the renovation of 24 units by 2021. Renovations included adding HVAC systems and providing insulation for sound protection and energy conservation purposes. The Vernon Village Park Apartments were built with MERV 13 air filters, which were state of the art in 2015, when the apartments opened.	The City owns many residences in Vernon. The City is fully involved with the maintenance and upkeep of the properties, and will continue to provide these services on other units, as they are needed. All new and remodeled units will be required to provide HVAC systems and sound insulation protection, such as dual paned windows. Continue.
<i>Housing Element Policy 1.3</i> Mitigate any residential displacement impacts occurring as a result of residential demolition.	No residential units were demolished during the last planning period.	The City is committed to maintaining the existing housing units in the City.	The City is committed to mitigating residential displacement impacts, should they occur. Continue.
Goal H-2: Maintain all existing dwelling units within the City.			
<i>Housing Element Policy 2.1</i>	All units in the City were retained during the last planning period.	The 74 residential units in the City have all been determined to be in good condition.	A focus of housing policy in Vernon is to preserve the existing housing stock

Status of Housing Element Policies (5 th Cycle Housing Element)			
Housing Element Policy	Result	Evaluation	Continue/Modify/Delete
Provide for the retention of existing residential units in the City that are economically and physically sound.			as well as maintain safe and viable housing units. Continue.
<i>Housing Element Policy 2.2</i> Continue to accommodate the needs of disabled residents through the adopted reasonable accommodation procedure.	As of 2021, there are no assisted housing units for disabled residents in the City.	Vernon Village Park Apartments, an affordable development opened in 2015, features 45 affordable units which are publicly assisted. While these units are not specifically targeted for disabled residents, the units meet standards for public buildings as defined by Chapter 11B of the California Building Code. 21 of the City's 24 occupied rental units are rented at levels that are affordable to very low-income tenants, though the City is currently raising rents according to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) to approximate market rate rents.	While there is no assisted housing for disabled residents in the City that requires monitoring, the City will continue this policy. Continue.
Goal H-3: Create opportunities for the development of new housing in areas of the City that have the least potential for adverse impacts associated with established industrial uses and truck routes. Locate such new housing nearby community services.			
<i>Housing Element Policy 3.1</i> Implement the Housing Overlay Zone via the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning	The City adopted the Housing Overlay Zone in 2007.		Implement new housing zoning tools, such as the Westside Specific Plan, to

Status of Housing Element Policies (5 th Cycle Housing Element)			
Housing Element Policy	Result	Evaluation	Continue/Modify/Delete
map to allow for a limited amount of new housing construction.			encourage a broader level of housing construction in the City. Modify.
<i>Housing Element Policy 3.2</i> Strategically locate sites for new housing so as to minimize noise, vibration, smoke, noxious gases, glare, heat, dust, odors, air pollution, and other adverse impacts associated with industrial uses, slaughtering and rendering uses, businesses that release toxic materials, and trucking and railroad facilities and routes.	The Vernon Village housing development was constructed in 2015, per analysis conducted in the 5 th Cycle Housing Element that determined this was one of the two best sites for housing in the City.		Sites should continue to be located in areas where industrial impacts are minimized. The City will also undertake appropriate actions to minimize impacts in areas adjacent to residentially targeted zones. Continue.
<i>Housing Element Policy 3.3</i> Encourage development of residential uses in strategic proximity to schools, recreational facilities, commercial areas, parks and other public spaces, and transit routes.	The Vernon Village housing development was constructed in 2015. It is located .5 mile from schools and parks.	While locating housing close to schools is good policy for family-oriented housing, other types of housing may be better suited for proximity to other types of amenities.	Residential development should occur in proximity to amenities, but those amenities may be defined differently. Modify.
Goal H-4: Continue to promote the availability of a range in existing unit types and sizes, and equal housing opportunity in the City's housing market on the basis of age, race, sex, marital status, ethnic background, source of income, homelessness, physical disabilities, and other factors.			

Status of Housing Element Policies (5 th Cycle Housing Element)			
Housing Element Policy	Result	Evaluation	Continue/Modify/Delete
<i>Housing Element Policy 4.1</i> Prohibit discrimination in the availability of existing and new housing.	The City has not been advised of any discriminatory practices that have occurred in regards to the availability of housing. The City will take a proactive approach in enforcing anti-discrimination laws.	The City has received no complaints regarding any discriminatory actions and will continue to enforce all fair housing law.	Prior to 2012, the City's Zoning Ordinance did not allow the development of new housing in the City. As such, housing discrimination related to the siting of housing was not an issue. This program was updated in 2008 to address a range of fair housing concerns related to the existing housing stock, including access for persons with disabilities or special needs, providing greater access to equal housing opportunity. As more private residential units are expected to be built in Vernon, the City will remain proactive about enforcing anti-discrimination laws. Continue.
<i>Housing Element Policy 4.2</i> Address the housing needs of special populations and extremely low-income households through emergency shelters, transitional housing, supportive housing, and single-room occupancy units.	With the development of Vernon Villages, the City of Vernon has seen an increase of 45 new affordable units within the City as of 2015.	The program has been successful and more than doubled Vernon's housing stock during the 5 th cycle planning period.	Continue.

Figure D-1.
Source: City of Vernon, 2021.

Quantitative Objectives Progress

The 2014-2021 Housing Element identified overall objectives for housing production, rehabilitation, conservation, and preservation. These objectives represented aspirational goals for City accomplishments and exceeded the City's state obligations. (The Regional Housing Needs Assessment during the 5th Cycle was two units.) The following table summarizes actual accomplishments during the Plan period.

	2014-2021 Housing Element Objectives					
Income Category	New Construction		Rehabilitation		Conservation	
	Objective	Outcome	Objective	Outcome	Objective	Outcome
Extremely Low- and Very-Low Income	2	27	0	5	0	29
Low-Income	47	17	0		0	
Moderate -Income	0	0	7		31	
Above Moderate -income	0	1	0		0	
Total	49	45	7	5	31	26

*Figure D-2.
Housing Element Objectives Progress.*

Appendix E: Housing Programs Detail

The programs that will be effective in the implementation of the Housing Element policies are described in the sections that follow.

Program 1: Maintenance of City-Owned Residences

Detail. The City owns 26 housing units in Vernon, all but three of which are rented. The City is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of these units, and management is overseen by the City's Housing Commission. All City-owned units were determined to be in good repair. The City of Vernon recently renovated 24 of their 26 City-owned units. The remaining two units, though they are in good, habitable condition, will be renovated due to age over the next eight-year planning period. The City continues to provide maintenance to these units, thus ensuring upkeep for Vernon's City-Owned housing stock.

City's Role in Implementation. The Department of Public Works is responsible for coordinating the maintenance of City-Owned residences. The day-to-day oversight of the program is under the direction of the Director of Public Works.

Source of Funding. General Fund.

2021-2029 Program Objectives. To renovate the final two unrenovated City-Owned residences. The City will continue to provide maintenance to City-Owned residences over the 6th cycle planning period.

Agency Responsible for Implementation. The Department of Public Works is responsible for coordinating the maintenance of City-Owned residences under the supervision of the Housing Commission.

Implementation Schedule. The Department of Public Works will continue to provide maintenance to City-Owned residences over the 6th Cycle planning period.

Program 2: Vernon Code Enforcement Program.

Detail. Of the 48 non-City owned units located in Vernon, none were determined by the City to be in need of substantial rehabilitation. Forty-five of these units belong to the Vernon Village Park Apartments, an affordable family development which was completed in 2015. Due to the limited number of privately owned units in the City, a code enforcement program would have limited application at this time. However, it is nonetheless imperative that residential units be adequately maintained for health, safety, and aesthetic concerns. Public Works staff is active in the community and will enforce the City's code to eliminate and prevent unsafe conditions in residential units. Public Works staff responds to reports of code violations within the week that they are reported and enforces applicable laws to ensure the safety and preservation of all housing units within the City.

As additional privately-owned residential units are built in Vernon the need for code enforcement will increase. At the conclusion of the 6th Cycle, the City will review the need to dedicate additional staff time to code enforcement.

City's Role in Implementation. To enforce the City of Vernon's building code and ensure the safety and preservation of all housing units in Vernon.

Source of Funding. General Fund.

2021-2029 Program Objectives. The City continues to inspect privately owned residential units on an as-needed basis.

Agency Responsible for Implementation. The Public Works Department Building Division of the City of Vernon. Responsibility for this program falls under the Public Works Director.

Implementation Schedule. The Building Division of the Public Works Department Code will continue to implement the program over the 6th Cycle planning period.

Program 3: Preservation of At-Risk Housing.

Detail. There is one affordable family housing development in the City of Vernon funded through Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). This development, the Vernon Village Park Apartments, is not at risk of conversion to market rate housing since the development was completed in 2015. Vernon Village Park Apartments will not be eligible to convert to market rate housing until 2070.

The Vernon Village Park Apartments are on property owned by the City and ground leased to Meta Housing Corporation, a developer of affordable housing and operated by Solari Enterprises, a full-service property management organization specializing in multifamily affordable housing. Because the development is owned and operated by entities that prioritize affordable housing, they have a small, but not negligible, risk of converting to market rate in the far future. Under this program, the City of Vernon will continue to monitor all units considered at risk of conversion to market rate units in the future. The City of Vernon continues to also assist property owners in maintaining the affordability of these units through grants and other means. Finally, the City will require the timely notification of tenants in the event the owners intend to convert the affordable units to market-rate units.

Source of Funding. General Fund.

2021-2029 Program Objectives. To continue to monitor the status of the existing and any new affordable housing units.

Agency Responsible for Implementation. The responsible agency is the City of Vernon's Public Works Department, led by the Public Works Director.

Implementation Schedule. The program will be implemented throughout the 6th Cycle.

Program 4: Housing Opportunities for Residents with Special Needs

Detail. The Fair Housing Act, as amended in 1988, requires that cities and counties provide reasonable accommodation to rules, policies, practices, and procedures where such accommodation may be necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal housing opportunities. The City has adopted procedures for housing for persons with disabilities and continues to provide information to residents through the City's website. During the 6th cycle, the City will add these reasonable accommodation procedures into the Municipal code.

Source of Funding. General Fund.

2021-2029 Program Objectives. To continue to implement its reasonable accommodation procedure on an as-needed basis. Add reasonable accommodation procedures into the Municipal code.

Agency Responsible for Implementation. The responsible agency is the City of Vernon's Public Works Department, led by the Public Works Director.

Implementation Schedule. The program will be implemented throughout the 6th Cycle.

Program 5: Priority Water and Sewer Services.

Detail. In accordance with Government Code Section 65589.7, after the Vernon Housing Element is adopted by City Council, a copy will be immediately delivered to all public agencies or private entities that provide water or sewer services to properties within Vernon.

Source of Funding. General Fund.

2021-2029 Program Objectives. To deliver, in timely fashion, a copy of the 6th Cycle Housing Element to public agencies or private entities that provide water and/or sewer services within Vernon.

Agency Responsible for Implementation. The responsible agency is the City of Vernon's Public Works Department, led by the Public Works Director.

Implementation Schedule. The program will be implemented by the end of 2022.

Program 6: Environmental Safety Enforcement.

Detail. The City continues to enforce health and environmental safety regulations of industrial businesses through its Health and Environmental Control Department (HECD) which can help protect nearby residents. The Public Works Department will inform HECD of any residential development applications, construction projects, and certificates of occupancy extended in the City so that HECD can ensure compliance of neighboring businesses with applicable regulations in their operations.

Source of Funding. General Fund.

2021-2029 Program Objectives. To enforce health and environmental safety regulations for industrial businesses operating near residential uses.

Agency Responsible for Implementation. The responsible agency is the City of Vernon Health and Environmental Control Department, led by the Director of Health.

Implementation Schedule. The program will be implemented throughout the 6th Cycle.

Program 7: Equal Housing Opportunity Program.

Detail. The City shall take meaningful actions to address significant disparities in housing needs and in access to opportunity for all persons regardless of race, religion, sex, marital status, ancestry, national origin, color, familial status, or disability, and other characteristics protected by the California Fair Employment and Housing Act (Part 2.8 (commencing with Section 12900) of Division 3 of Title 2), Section 65008, and any other state and federal fair housing and planning law. As the number of privately-owned housing units increases in Vernon, the City will take actions including:

- Publish on the City’s website clear information warning entities that would potentially discriminate about the enforcement of fair housing law;
- Provide a staff point of contact to refer housing-related complaints to the Housing Rights Center,
- Ensure environmental hazards are not disproportionately concentrated in low-income communities of color.
- Explore offering training to property owners and managers regarding responsible management of environmental hazards. Assist in outreach to tenants to inform them of their rights to live in habitable housing regardless of income, race, or immigration status.
- Develop a code enforcement program that holds property owners accountable, when necessary.

Source of Funding. General Fund and other eligible funding sources.

2021-2029 Program Objectives. To establish a point of contact to refer fair housing complaints to the Housing Rights Center.

Agency Responsible for Implementation. The Public Works Department. Responsible party is the Public Works Director.

Implementation Schedule. The program is done on an ongoing basis throughout the planning period.

Program 8: Westside Specific Plan.

Detail. The City of Vernon is preparing a Specific Plan for the Westside of the City. This Specific Plan has six goals: to reinvigorate the City's competitive advantage as a center of production, to strengthen and provide long-term stability to the City's fiscal position, to increase the residential population in order to increase access to proportionally allocated Federal and State funding, to strengthen the City's governance by providing more voters and candidates for elected office, and to help meet regional housing needs, diversify and reorient the Westside's land uses to take advantage of changes in the economic landscape of Southern California, to increase amenities available to local residents and workers, and to create a physical environment that is supportive of diversified land uses, welcoming to the larger region, and enhancing to the City's image and identity.

The Specific Plan will define focused areas where residential uses will be permitted by-right. Development standards and procedures in these zones will allow multifamily residential development in new multistory and adaptively reused buildings.

The Specific Plan, in keeping with State law, will evaluate the adequacy of all infrastructure services required to accommodate the residential development and provide a mechanism to address them should there be any deficits. Complete streets interventions and truck restrictions on key residential corridors will be implemented. The Specific Plan's Program EIR will also set forth all necessary mitigation measures to protect the health of residents and the integrity of the surrounding environment. Additionally, the Westside Specific Plan will permit transitional and supportive housing wherever multifamily housing is permitted, permit manufactured housing in all residential zones, and designate appropriate zones for by-right emergency shelters of up to 40 beds, along with complying with all other state requirements.

Source of Funding. General Fund.

2021-2029 Program Objectives. To adopt a Specific Plan for the Westside of the City which permits by-right residential uses.

Agency Responsible for Implementation. The responsible agency is the Public Works Department. The responsible party is the Public Works Director.

Implementation Schedule. The Specific Plan is currently under development and will be adopted by October 15, 2022.

Program 9: Westside Specific Plan Marketing

Detail. After the City of Vernon completes the Westside Specific Plan the City will initiate a Westside Specific Marketing program to inform the developers of the new opportunity that will exist on the Westside of the City. This marketing program aims to market the Westside of Vernon as a hybrid industrial, mixed-use district which welcomes residential development.

This program will create a municipal development coordinator function who will be responsible for marketing the new Westside of Vernon, generating interest in residing and conducting business on the Westside. The marketing program will have two prongs: one targeted at the development community (property owners, real estate agents and developers), pointing out that mixed-use development, including multifamily residential, commercial and light industrial, are welcome in areas of the Westside, and can be quite profitable; and one targeted at potential residents and customers, raising the profile of the area.

Development coordinator responsibilities include creating a comprehensive branding program which will include putting up a gateway sign reflecting the new image of the Westside, holding events such as art tours which will highlight local Westside businesses and generate a buzz for the new Westside, and advertising and marketing the new Westside in selected publications.

City's Role in Implementation. The City of Vernon Public Works Department is responsible for the implementation of this program.

Source of Funding. General Fund.

2021-2029 Program Objectives. To identify a development coordinator who will prepare a marketing plan for the Westside Specific Plan.

Agency Responsible for Implementation. The responsible agency is the Public Works Department. The responsible parties are the Development Coordinator and the Public Works Director.

Implementation Schedule. The development coordinator will implement the marketing plan over the sixth cycle planning period.

Program 10: Civic Center Residential Development

Detail. Through this program the City will put out a request for proposals (RFP) for the Petrelli/City Yard site for development of a residential or mixed-use project which can substantially increase the residential population of the City. The process will follow the stipulations of the Surplus Land Act and result in, at minimum, construction of enough very-low and low income units to satisfy the City's RHNA.

City's Role in Implementation. The City of Vernon Public Works Department is responsible for the implementation of this program.

Source of Funding. General Fund.

2021-2029 Program Objectives. To develop and release an RFP. Once proposals are received the Public Works Department will evaluate the proposals and respond.

Agency Responsible for Implementation. The responsible agency is the Public Works Department. The responsible party is the Public Works Director.

Implementation Schedule. The program will be implemented by the end of 2023.

Program 11: Medium-Density Residential Zoning

Detail. A large amount of housing in the City of Vernon is situated on land not zoned for residential uses. This program includes adopting a zoning designation to make all existing housing conforming. The zoning designation may take the form of an overlay zone or a re-zone.

In addition, the program will allow a few units to be built per property. In most cases, the new residential zoning capacity of the housing sites will be larger than the number of existing residential units on the sites. The program will also permit manufactured housing in the same areas as other types of housing.

Source of Funding. General Fund.

2021-2029 Program Objectives. To adopt a new medium-density residential zoning designation in the zoning code and map. Permit manufactured housing in the same areas as other types of housing.

Agency Responsible for Implementation. The responsible agency is the Public Works Department. The responsible party is the Public Works Director.

Implementation Schedule. The program will be implemented by the end of 2024.

Program 12: Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance.

Detail. The City of Vernon will develop and adopt an ADU ordinance within the sixth cycle planning period. The ADU ordinance will be in conformance with State law and encourage accessory dwelling unit construction. The changes will be advertised on the City's website and printed handouts will be prepared and provided at the Planning counter.

Funding permitting, the City will also seek to encourage the creation of affordable ADUs through partnerships with entities that can make low-interest loans or other types of financial assistance.

Source of Funding. General Fund (zoning implementation), and other eligible funding sources.

2021-2029 Program Objectives. To develop, adopt, and implement the ADU Ordinance in accordance with State Law. The City will also evaluate incentives for creating affordable ADUs.

Agency Responsible for Implementation. The responsible agency is the Public Works Department. The responsible party is the Public Works Director.

Implementation Schedule. The ADU Ordinance will be developed and adopted by the end of the sixth cycle planning period.

Program 13: Caretaker Housing

Detail. Caretaker housing is generally occupied by the owner of an industrial property or their employee and serves the purposes of providing housing, security, and care to the industrial property during off hours. Many cities allow one or more caretaker housing units to be constructed and occupied on the sites of industrial establishments. These units often take the form of a second-story apartment unit or detached modular home.

Businesses in Vernon have with regularity expressed interest in permitting caretaker housing units to be constructed on-site. Furthermore, code enforcement actions have revealed that several properties in Vernon provide housing illegally today, for example by parking inhabited RVs on the property. The City will adopt a code amendment to allow caretaker housing to be constructed on industrial properties in appropriate locations throughout the City, as long as such housing does not injure the health and welfare of residents or other industrial users.

Source of Funding. General Fund.

2021-2029 Program Objectives. To adopt a zoning code amendment to permit up to three caretaker housing units to be constructed per industrial facility in appropriate locations.

Agency Responsible for Implementation. The responsible agency is the Public Works Department. The responsible party is the Public Works Director.

Implementation Schedule. The code amendment will be adopted by 2025.

Program 14: Housing Lottery

Detail. Since the institution of the City's good governance reforms in the early 2010's, the City has used a lottery system to guide the lease-up of vacant City-owned residential units. The City conducts quarterly marketing of housing opportunities through its website, Craigslist, postings at City Hall, and a local newspaper. In addition, the Vernon Police Department and Fire Department advertise housing availability to its employees. Interested applicants file interest forms which are valid for one year. (The City currently has 54 interest forms on file.) When a housing unit opens up, the City asks for confirmation of interested parties' interest, and conducts the lottery. There is a priority for First Responders; if less than four units are currently occupied by Vernon First Responders, any First Responder applicants will be ranked higher than other applicants.

Source of Funding. General Fund.

2021-2029 Program Objectives. To continue to administer the housing lottery system in the selection of tenants for City-owned housing units.

Agency Responsible for Implementation. The Vernon Housing Commission, in conjunction with the City Clerk's office, are responsible for this program. The responsible party is the City Clerk.

Implementation Schedule. Advertisement for Notices of Availability will be conducted quarterly, and lotteries held as vacancies arise, throughout the 6th Cycle.

Program 15: Housing Grant Application Working Group.

Detail. The City desires to seek out grants that can expand revenue for important housing programs while providing more financial flexibility for General Fund revenues. As opportunities arise, the City will form a interdepartmental working group to identify unmet housing needs and focus on appropriate regional grant opportunities.

Source of Funding. General Fund.

2021-2029 Program Objectives. To regularly monitor and seek grant funds to advance the City's housing objectives.

Agency Responsible for Implementation. The responsible agencies are the Public Works Department, City Administration, and the Finance Department. The responsible party is the Public Works Director.

Implementation Schedule. The City will regularly monitor and seek grant funds to advance the City's housing objectives over the sixth cycle planning period.

Program 16: Employee Workforce Housing

Detail. The City of Vernon is a large job center; however, at this time very few Vernon workers are able to work and live in Vernon. Some Vernon workers are likely to live in Vernon if given the opportunity. Employers that can provide on-site and local affordable housing for its workers can reduce transportation costs, commute time, and improve quality of life while improving job retention rates. The City will cooperate with business owners that seek to develop employee housing in the City. This may include assisting in obtaining financing and identifying means for employee housing to be managed. Program eligibility, equity, and other issues would need to be explored to provide a template that sets the stage for a housing project that advances this concept.

In the course of its regular business, for example, while extending business licenses and in meetings with business owners, the Public Works Department will inform local business owners of their ability to develop employee workforce housing for their employees.

At the same time that the City encourages employee housing, it will also ensure that such housing does not constitute an overconcentration of residents employed by any one business in the electorate of the City.

Source of Funding. General Fund.

2021-2029 Program Objectives. To cooperate with businesses who seek to establish employee workforce housing in the City.

Agency Responsible for Implementation. The responsible agencies include the City of Vernon Public Works Department. The responsible parties is the Public Works Director.

Implementation Schedule. The program will be implemented throughout the 6th Cycle.

Program 17: City-Owned Housing Disposition Study

Detail. Prior to the City's good governance reforms, tenancy in City-owned housing was managed in a questionable fashion. To provide long-term protection against any repetition of these practices, the City will consider divesting itself of its 26 housing units.

The City will undertake a study to identify and evaluate options relating to the future management of City-owned housing. Options to be considered include:

- Continuing to operate City-owned housing with the same processes as exist today to ensure transparency and fairness in the occupancy of housing units.
- Selling properties, including the exploration of a first-time homebuyer down payment assistance program, and first right of offer provided to current tenants to enable them to build equity. As a variation, the City could sell interest in the structures, while retaining long-term control over the land.

The study would also address questions of legal and financial constraints to all options, and provide guidelines for the appropriate prices at which units could be disposed.

Source of Funding. General Fund.

2021-2029 Program Objectives. To undertake a study to identify and evaluate options relating to the future of City-owned housing.

Agency Responsible for Implementation. The responsible agency is the Public Works Department. The responsible party is the Public Works Director.

Implementation Schedule. The disposition study will be undertaken by 2027.

Appendix F: Summary Of Recent Housing Legislation

The 2021-2029 Housing Element reflects the evolving legislative priorities of the California Legislature and Senate. This included a number of housing-related bills in 2020 that addressed streamlining housing approvals, affordability issues, and responses to the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-2021.

COVID-19 Responses

- Assembly Bill (“AB”) 3088 – COVID-19 Emergency Relief (Chiu) protected tenants from evictions between September 1, 2020 and January 31, 2021 due to COVID-19 related financial hardship provided the tenant pays at least 25% of the rent due to the landlord. Landlords can eventually recover all unpaid rent from the tenant in small claims court, but it can never be the basis for an eviction. On January 29, 2021, Governor Newsom extended the eviction moratorium through June 30, 2021.
- AB 1561 – Housing Entitlement Extension (Garcia) extended the period for the expiration, effectuation or utilization of a housing entitlement that was in effect on March 4, 2020 and will expire before December 31, 2021 by 18 months. Housing entitlements include discretionary and ministerial approvals from a state or local agency, but exclude development agreements, a preliminary application under SB 330, and an application for a SB 35 permit.

Density

- AB 2345 – Density Bonus Law (Gonzalez and Chiu) allows local jurisdictions the authority to grant additional concessions and incentives above and beyond what is currently provided under state Density Bonus Law, including the increase of the maximum density bonus to up to 50% based on an updated sliding scale of housing affordability. The legislation also includes a uniform method to measure the distance between a major transit stop and a project location to maximize the number of eligible properties within a half-mile radius of a major transit stop. The bill also reduces maximum parking requirements for eligible projects and eliminates parking requirements for 100% affordable projects and senior housing projects that meet specified criteria.

Streamlining Housing Approvals

- AB 1851 – Parking Lot of Religious Institutions (Wicks) prohibits a local jurisdiction from denying a housing development project proposed by a religious institution, or a developer working with a religious institution, solely on the basis that the project will reduce the total number of parking spaces available at the place of worship, provided that the total reduction does not exceed 50% of existing parking spaces. The bill authorizes a local jurisdiction to require up to one parking space per unit for a religious institution affiliated housing project.
- AB 3182 – Right to Rent in HOAs / ADU Permits (Ting) prohibits a Home Owners Association from adopting or enforcing a provision that restricts the rental or lease of a house or condo, except that the HOA may restrict short-term rentals of 30 days or less. This legislation deems a permit application for the creation of an accessory dwelling unit or junior accessory dwelling unit approved if the local agency has not acted upon the completed application within 60 days.
- AB 831 – Modifications and Clarifications to SB 35 (Grayson) amends SB 35, which allows some housing and mixed-use projects to qualify for a streamlined, ministerial CEQA-exempt approval process if the project meets the local government’s objective zoning and design review standards, provides a specific minimum number of affordable housing units, agrees to pay prevailing wages, and meets other qualifying criteria. It also helps ensure that cities do not use post-entitlement review processes to avoid the intent of SB 35’s ministerial approval process.
- AB 168 – Tribal Resources (Aguilar-Curry) requires local governments to conduct a scoping consultation with Native American Tribes before processing a SB 35 application to determine if the proposed development could impact a potential tribal cultural resource. The bill makes a project ineligible for streamlining under SB 35 if the Native American Tribe does not agree that no potential tribal cultural resource would be affected by the proposed development. This bill took effect on September 25, 2020.
- SB 1030 – Housing Omnibus (Wiener) provides minor technical fixes to existing housing legislations. It revised the definition of “deemed complete” under the Housing Accountability Act (SB 330) to include the submission of a completed application if the applicant has not submitted a preliminary application. This bill took effect on September 25, 2020.

- AB 3308 – Teachers Housing (Gabriel, Mullin, and Quirk-Silva) permits school districts to restrict occupancy on land owned by school districts to teachers and school district employees of the school district that owns the land. This includes permitting school districts and developers in receipt of tax credits designated for affordable rental housing to retain the right to prioritize and restrict occupancy on land owned by school districts to teachers and school district employees.

Planning

- AB 725 – Housing Element Location Designation Requirements (Wicks) imposes new requirements for city housing element updates that are required to be prepared under the already underway 6th Cycle of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (“RHNA”) process. AB 725 requires that cities designate sites to meet at least 25% of a jurisdiction’s share of the regional housing need for moderate-income housing, and at least 25% of a jurisdiction’s share of the regional housing need for above moderate-income housing. For these sites, zoning that allows at least 4 units of housing, but not more than 100 units per acre of housing, is required. This bill will take effect on January 1, 2022.

CEQA

- SB 288 – New CEQA Exemption for Sustainable Transportation Projects (Weiner) creates a new CEQA exemption for certain classes of qualifying transit-related projects until January 1, 2023. To qualify, the project must be carried out by a public agency, be located in an urbanized area and within an existing public right-of-way, not require demolition of affordable housing units, be completed by skilled and trained workforces, and not entail adding physical infrastructure that would increase new automobile capacity.

Tenant & Homeowner Rights

- AB 2463 – Ban on Forced Sale of Home Due to Consumer Debt (Wicks) prohibits a sale under execution of a judgement lien of a judgment debtor’s principal place of residence based on a consumer debt unless that debt was secured by that principal place of residence at the time it was incurred.
- AB 2782 – Mobile Home Rent Control (Stone) allows rent control on mobile home leases that are more than 1 year long. This legislation will take effect on January 1, 2025.

- SB 1079 – Foreclosure Sales (Skinner) requires a seller to receive offers from tenants and potential owner-occupiers in a foreclosure sale. The legislation prohibits the bundling of properties during an auction. This legislation will be operational between January 1, 2021 and January 1, 2026.
- SB 1157 – Optional Credit Reporting for Tenants (Bradford) allows tenants in certain buildings who want to build a credit history to request that their landlord report their rent payments to a credit agency. This legislation will be operational between July 1, 2021 and July 1, 2025.
- SB 1190 – Right to End Lease Early for Victims of Violent Crime (Durazo and Rubio) authorizes a tenant to terminate their tenancy without penalty because an immediate family member, as defined, was the victim of a crime, and would expand the list of eligible crimes to include, among others, a crime that caused bodily injury or death. The legislation authorizes a tenant to attach to the notice any form of documentation that reasonably verifies that the qualifying crime or act occurred.

Some of these 2020 legislation priorities created deficiencies in the City’s 5th Cycle Housing Element and/or Zoning Ordinance that required follow-up through this update of the Housing Element. Table G-1 summarizes some of those deficiencies.

Summary of Pending Housing Legislation (as Spring 2021)

Since the adoption of the 2014-2021 Housing Element, substantial legislation in Sacramento has been added. Most of these housing laws addressed topics like permit streamlining, tenant rights, and homeowner rights that are not addressed by the broad programs called for by the City. However, some of these developments will necessitate updates to applicable policies in the upcoming Housing Element update. The following table identifies major pending State housing legislation as of Spring 2021 since the 5th Cycle Housing Element was adopted.

As of Spring 2021, the 2021-2022 California legislative session began with a focus on the housing crisis with a “Building Opportunities for All” housing package. This includes a number of bills that builds upon the housing production bills from the 2020-2021 legislative session that failed to pass out of committee or gain concurrence votes before the session ended. The Building Opportunities for All housing package includes the following Senate Bills (“SB”):

- SB 5 (Atkins, Caballero, McGuire, Rubio, Skinner and Wiener) establishes the broad, initial framework for a statewide housing bond that would fund the creation of new affordable housing for houseless and low-income families. Further details will be crafted as the legislative session progresses.
- SB 6 (Caballero, Eggman and Rubio) allows specified housing development projects in office or retail commercial zones. In authorizing the conversion of underutilized strip malls or “big box” stores to residential spaces, SB 6 requires the residential units be built at a minimum density to accommodate affordable housing. This is similar to last session’s SB 1385, which was also introduced by Senator Anna Caballero.
- SB 8 (Skinner) is a placeholder for a density bonus bill.
- SB 7 (Atkins) renews the effort to extend the streamlined CEQA judicial review process developed for Environmental Leadership Development Projects under the 2011 Jobs and Economic Improvement Through Environmental Leadership Act (AB 900). SB 7 would extend the 2021 “sunset” of AB 900 through 2024. Pro Tem Toni Atkins also introduced last session’s version of this bill, SB 995.
- SB 9 (Atkins, Caballero, Rubio and Wiener) allows duplexes and lot-splits in single-family residential zones by-right, if the proposed development meets certain requirements. This is a reintroduction of last session’s SB 1120. It retains the arbitrary and impractical requirement that, for a subdivision map to qualify for ministerial approval, the two new parcels that replace the existing single parcel must be of equal size.
- SB 10 (Wiener) grants local governments the ability to rezone parcels close to job centers, transit and existing urbanized areas to allow up to 10 residential units without undergoing CEQA review. Last year’s version of this bill was SB 902, also introduced by Senator Scott Wiener.

In addition to the Building Opportunities for All housing package, there are other proposed Senate bills aimed at housing reform.

- SB 15 (Portantino) establishes a grant program to incentivize local governments to rezone idle retail sites for the development of workforce housing.
- SB 290 (Skinner) revises the Density Bonus Law to create more low-income student housing and for-sale housing for moderate-income residents. The bill includes identical language from SB

1085, which failed in 2020 when the Legislature ran out of time for a concurrence vote.

- SB 12 (McGuire) establishes new requirements for addressing wildfire risks in general plan safety, housing, and land use elements. Of note, the bill directs the Department of Housing and Community Development to take into consideration how much land within a jurisdiction is considered a “very high fire risk area” when determining the RHNA allocation. SB 12 also requires land use elements to identify very high fire risk areas and prohibits local governments from entering into development agreements, approving specified discretionary permits, or approving subdivision maps for projects within a very high fire risk area, unless specified findings based on substantial evidence in the record are made.
- SB 55 (Stern and Allen) prohibits new development in very high fire severity zones or state responsibility areas.
- AB 71 (Rivas and Chiu) would dedicate \$2.4 billion annually to houselessness solutions. Revenue sources include state adoption of the federal Global Intangible Low-Taxed Income, which taxes certain intellectual property generated overseas. The bill would create the Bring California Home Fund in the State Treasury.
- AB 49 (Petrie-Norris) would eliminate the California Debt Limit Allocation Committee — which, among other projects, finances affordable housing. The bill would move the committee’s duties and authority to the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee, also in the State Treasurer’s Office.
- AB 68 (Salas) would implement recommendations from the recent auditor’s report on the performance of the state’s housing agencies and local impediments to housing production. The report found that the state’s four key financing agencies lack coordination and alignment and that “State law and oversight are not strong enough to ensure that cities and counties are doing their part to facilitate the construction of affordable housing.”
- SB 478 (Wiener), also known as the Housing Opportunity Act, would change land use restrictions such as FAR and lot size requirements. This is an effort to ensure that small scale development can be developed where they are legal based on zoned density, and most importantly that FAR and lot size requirements would not be able to stop these developments. SB 478 proposes two specific statewide policy changes: establishing a minimum floor area ratio (FAR) that cities could impose on all land zoned for two to ten residential units, and establishing

minimum lot sizes for parcels that are 2-4 units and for parcels that are 5-10 units.

- AB 1199 (Gipson) would create a database of rental properties, levy a tax on the rental profits of some people or entities holding many properties, and use the funds to support services for tenants and small landlords.
- SCA 2 (Allen, Wiener) would repeal Article 34 of the California constitution which requires a vote on public housing projects.
- SB 477 (Wiener) will require local governments to keep track of data needed to evaluate the impact of state laws on local housing availability and affordability.
- AB 59 (Gabriel) will increase the noticing period for new or increased development impact fees and extends time that a new or increased fee may be challenged.
- AB 115 (Bloom) requires all jurisdictions to allow for residential development in commercially zoned areas provided that the development reserves 20% of the units for affordable housing.
- AB 215 (Chiu) is an intent bill to strengthen HCD's housing law enforcement authority.
- AB 244 (Rubio) requires TCAC, CDLAC, and the California Housing Finance Agency to conduct an affordable housing cost study across all state funded housing projects.
- AB 345 (Quirk Silva, Medina) clarifies rules around the selling of ADUs built by nonprofit organizations for low income homeownership. Would allow ADUs built by nonprofits, like Habitat for Humanity, to be sold separate from the primary residence.
- AB 348 (Villapudua, Carillo, Mathis, Patterson, Salas, Jones) requires HCD to conduct an annual summary report that discloses the amount of state, federal, and private funding spent on affordable housing development throughout the state.
- AB 387 (Lee, Wicks) Establishes the California Housing Authority to develop affordable and mixed-income housing.
- AB 561 (Ting, Bloom, Hertzberg, Boerner Horvath, Quirk-Silva) Requires the Office of the Treasurer to work with CalHFA and HCD to create an Accessory Dwelling Unit financing product to assist homeowners in the creation of ADUs.
- AB 571 (Mayes) prohibits affordable housing or inclusionary zoning fees on the bonus units of a project using the state density bonus.

- AB 602 (Grayson) is a spot bill on residential development impact fees.
- AB 617 (Davies) allows jurisdictions the option of paying other jurisdictions to transfer all or a portion of their Regional Housing Needs Assessment allocation.
- AB 672 (Garcia) is an intent bill to enable to use of underutilized golf courses for affordable housing.
- AB 678 (Grayson) is a spot bill on residential development impact fees.
- AB 682 (Bloom) requires cities to allow cohousing projects in areas zoned for multi-family residential.
- AB 816 (Chiu, Bloom, Bonta, Quirk-Silva, Santiago, Wicks) requires the creation of a statewide plan for addressing houselessness and allows for legal action against jurisdictions who do not make progress towards meeting the plan's goals.
- AB 834 (Choi) creates a tax credit for property owners renting to tenants receiving housing assistance.
- AB 880 (Aguiar-Curry) establishes the Affordable Disaster Housing Revolving Development and Acquisition Program within HCD to fund the creation and preservation of affordable housing in disaster areas.
- AB 916 (Salas) prohibits public hearings for proposed room additions for single family homes and expands allowable ADU height to 20 feet.
- AB 919 (Grayson) reduces the statute of limitations for construction defects from 10 to 5 years for projects that use a skilled and trained workforce.
- AB 946 (Lee) eliminates mortgage interest deduction on second homes and transfers resulting revenues to the Home Purchase Assistance Fund.
- AB 950 (Ward) authorizes the Department of Transportation to sell excess land to jurisdictions for the purpose of creating affordable housing.
- AB 978 (Quirk-Silva, Chiu, Garcia, Luz Rivas, Robert Rivas) extends rent cap and just cause eviction protections established in the Tenant Protection Act of 2019 to mobile home residents.
- AB 1029 (Mullin, Caballero, Becker) adds housing preservation policies to HCD's list of local prohousing policies.

- AB 1068 (Santiago) requires HCD to create a model plan for the use of alternative forms of housing, including modular housing, for the purpose of cost reduction.
- AB 1090 (Quirk-Silva, Caballero, Gabriel, Rivas, Salas, Wicks, Eggman) establishes the Legislative Task Force on the California Master Plan on Homeownership which will submit a report to the legislature in October 2022.
- AB 1143 (Berman) and SB 649 (Cortese) allow jurisdictions to create local preference policies for affordable housing developments to local residents at risk of displacement.
- AB 1188 (Wicks, Kalra, Wiener) requires cities to create and maintain a rental registry by 2021 covering all landlords who own or operate five or more units.
- AB 1277 (Rubio) creates an expedited judicial review process for CEQA for student housing project.
- AB 1372 (Muratsuchi) requires every jurisdiction to provide access to temporary shelter to every houseless individual.
- AB 1377 (McCarty) creates the California Student Housing Revolving Loan Fund to provide loans for the purpose of constructing affordable student housing.
- AB 1401 (Friedman, Lee, Skinner, Wiener) prohibits parking minimums for residential or commercial projects near transit or within low vehicle miles traveled areas.
- SB 490 (Caballero, Skinner, Garcia) establishes the Housing Acquisition and Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Program to provide technical assistance.

Appendix G: Community Engagement Meeting Minutes

The following pages present minutes from the following meetings that were held to provide input on the Housing Element and associated Westside Specific Plan:

- Westside Specific Plan Stakeholders Advisory Committee Meeting #1: February 2, 2021
- Westside Specific Plan Stakeholders Advisory Committee Meeting #2: February 16, 2021
- Westside Specific Plan Stakeholders Advisory Committee Meeting #3: February 23, 2021
- Westside Specific Plan Stakeholders Advisory Committee Meeting #4: August 18, 2021
- Westside Specific Plan Stakeholders Advisory Committee Meeting #5: September 28, 2021
- Housing Commission Meeting: December 8, 2021

WESTSIDE SPECIFIC PLAN STAKEHOLDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING # 1: FEBRUARY 2, 2021

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brian Bailey, Jack Cline, Steve Freed, Juliet Goff, Dale Jabour, Ming-Shin Kou, Richard Lucas, Judith Merlo, Marisa Olguin, Andy Perkins, Jeff Sanita, Doug Williams, Kevin Wilson, Melissa Ybarra, Marlene Ybarra

GUESTS PRESENT: Abigail Mejia, David Prince

STAFF PRESENT: Carlos Fandino, Dan Wall, Manny Garcia, Angela Kimmey

CONSULTANTS PRESENT: Phil Burns, Ian Dickenson, Bob Paternoster, Lance Lowrey

Welcome:

The Zoom meeting was called to order at 3:02 PM by City Administrator Carlos Fandino. He welcomed the group and thanked them for their willingness to participate in the Westside Specific Plan Study, to help formulate a plan for the future evolution of the City of Vernon. He stated that the City's objective is to diversify land use in the Westside so as to increase the population of the City and to make it a more attractive place to do business.

Mr. Fandino introduced Dan Wall, Director of Public Works, who showed a video of the City Council presentation on the proposed Westside Specific Plan.

Introductions:

Committee Moderator Bob Paternoster of the Arroyo Group reviewed the meeting agenda and asked each member of the Committee and guests to introduce themselves.

Project Description:

Phil Burns of the Arroyo Group defined the boundaries of the study area, roughly between Alameda on the west, Santa Fe and Pacific on the east, City boundary with Los Angeles on the north, and City boundary with Huntington Park on the south. He explained the nature of a specific plan and its three major components: Vision, Regulation, and Implementation. He set forth the following six proposed goals of the plan, and asked the Committee to determine at its next meeting if these are appropriate:

1. Diversify land use
2. Maintain competitive advantage as center of production
3. Increase residential population
4. Strengthen City's fiscal position

5. Increase amenities for residents and businesses
6. Create physical environment supportive of diverse land uses and enhancing of the City image

Role of Committee:

Bob Paternoster described the role of the Committee as advisory to consultants and staff in preparation of the plan, and advisory to the City Council in adoption of the plan. He encouraged all Committee members to freely express their opinions, and to be open to modifying their opinions when they hear the concerns of others. He said that he hopes that votes will not be necessary, but that the Committee will develop its comments and recommendations by consensus.

Baseline Studies Presentation:

Bob Paternoster explained that the first step in the planning process is the reconnaissance, or baseline studies phase. The consultant team gets to know the area by gathering data, analyzing the data, and deciding where to focus their attention. Phil Burns stated that the Committee may review the Baseline Studies Report via a link which he would send them by email, or on the website ReimagineVernon.com. He asked the Committee members to review the report over the next two weeks, and be prepared to discuss it at the next meeting to determine if the identified opportunities and constraints were correct and if the proposed areas of focus were appropriate.

Phil reviewed the Market Scan data from the report. Ian Dickenson of LOHA summarized the Building Assessment & Asset Identification chapter of the report, noting that four areas (or clusters of buildings) in the Westside demonstrated the most potential for the revitalization of original industrial buildings for more diverse reuse. Lance Lowrey of the Arroyo Group reviewed the chapters of the report dealing with Parcel Redevelopment Analysis, Transportation Analysis, and Infrastructure Analysis. Phil then stated that the consultants' analysis of all of these data and studies indicated that although industrial uses will continue to predominate in the Westside, there are two opportunity areas along the northern and southern ends of Santa Fe Ave. where land use diversification may be possible and desirable.

Committee members asked how the proposed new Metro transit line will relate to the Westside, questioned the possible air pollution impact of the proposed expanded rail yard in the vicinity of 49th Street, urged the Committee to think big and consider high rise buildings in Vernon, and asked if the consultants considered the types of industrial uses that are currently in or adjacent to the Westside.

Next Meeting:

The Committee agreed that they would meet again on Tuesday, February 16 at 3 PM. Bob emphasized that their homework assignment was to review the Baseline Studies Report and be prepared to discuss it at the next meeting. He stated that the next meeting will be recorded for purposes of minute taking, but the recording will not be made public. He stated that he will distribute to members a list of Committee members with their telephone and email contacts, but that only names and affiliation will be published on the Website.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:33 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bob Paternoster, Moderator

WESTSIDE SPECIFIC PLAN STAKEHOLDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING # 2: FEBRUARY 16, 2021

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brian Bailey, Jack Cline, Juliet Goff, Ming-Shin Kou, Richard Lucas, Marisa Olguin, Andy Perkins, Jeff Sanita, Ben Shanassafer, Doug Williams, Kevin Wilson, Melissa Ybarra, Marlene Ybarra

GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT: Dan Wall, Manny Garcia, Angela Kimmey, Abigail Mejia

CONSULTANTS PRESENT: Ian Dickenson, Bob Paternoster, Lance Lowrey, Zachary Zabel (Phil Burns joined for the last 15 minutes of the meeting)

Introduction:

The Zoom meeting was called to order at 3:02 PM by Moderator Bob Paternoster. He reviewed the draft minutes of Meeting #1, noting that comments and questions were not attributed to specific Committee members in order to maintain privacy. The Committee expressed a desire to have names attributed to speakers in all subsequent minutes. Bob reported that City staff had agreed to delete from the Committee any member who failed to attend the first two meetings; the updated list of members will be distributed following this meeting and will be posted on the Website without contact information.

Project Goals:

Lance Lowrey reviewed the six project goals presented at the last meeting, and led the Committee discussion of them.

Ben expressed concern that the goals of diversifying land use and increasing residents appeared to be in conflict with the goal of maintaining Vernon as a center of production. He stated that the project should include a plan for maintaining the City's competitive advantage as a production center.

Doug reflected on how production in Vernon was vastly different 35 or 40 years ago, and stated that it will also be vastly different 35 or 40 years in the future. He suggested that production could actually be increased if the zoning were changed to permit a larger variety of uses and to permit vertical (multi-story) rather than only horizontal growth.

Jack suggested that the six goals be cast in priority order, with maintain center of production first, strengthen City's fiscal position second, and increase residential population third.

Marisa said that the Chamber supports the six goals, but she agrees with Jack's suggestion to reorder them by priority. She noted that the goals are not intended to apply to every location in the Westside, and that "the Committee will craft where diversification will take place."

Brian recommended that "maintain competitive advantage" be changed to "reinvigorate competitive advantage."

Melissa stated that growth in population should be a priority, but it should only occur in limited areas.

Kevin asked why the City isn't considering housing in areas other than the Westside.

Dan replied that the Westside seems best because it is relatively close to transit, it abuts residential uses in Huntington Park to the south and in Los Angeles to the west, and it can accommodate additional residential uses while still preserving heavy industrial uses in most areas of the City.

Richard Lucas noted the validity of Kevin's point, pointing out the traffic, lack of parking, and proximity of rail yards along Santa Fe, all of which are problems for mixed use as well as residential.

Ming-Shin stated that residential uses along Alameda are hard to imagine, given the congestion in the area.

Bob pointed out to Ming-Shin that the diagram which summarizes the baseline studies shows Alameda as industrial, not residential.

Juliet stated that we must try to move the traffic from Santa Fe over to Alameda. She said that she favors placing housing, including housing for retired veterans, in the southern cluster near Huntington Park, but she questions the impact of the proposed expansion of the rail yard near 49th Street.

Dan replied that the rail yard is intended primarily as a rail car storage yard, and should have only two moving trains per day.

Kevin questioned the "regional needs" wording in the residential goal, and when Bob explained that it referred to State and regional pressure for every community to accept its share of projected population growth, he suggested that the goal be reworded to list that objective last.

Doug urged that new residential not be low-income like the recent housing development on the eastside.

Bob observed that the discussion was beginning to address the next agenda item, and asked the Committee if they generally agreed with the following goals, reworded and listed in order of priority, as suggested by the Committee:

1. Reinvigorate the City's competitive advantage as a center of production
2. Strengthen and provide long-term stability to the City's fiscal position
3. Increase the residential population in order to increase access to proportionally allocated Federal and State funding, to strengthen the City's governance by providing more voters and candidates for elected office, and to help meet regional housing needs.
4. Diversify and reorient the Westside's land uses to take advantage of changes in the economic landscape of Southern California
5. Increase amenities available to local residents and workers
6. Create a physical environment that is supportive of diversified land uses, welcoming to the larger region, and enhancing to the City's image and identity.

There being no opposition, Bob declared these to be the Committee's recommended project goals.

Baseline Studies Report:

Ian briefly described the four cluster areas which have been identified by the consultant team for focused study for possible diversification of land use. He noted that a major factor in identifying these areas was the presence of buildings whose style and condition made them most conducive to such reuse.

Brian questioned the inclusion in a cluster of the southeast corner of Vernon and Santa Fe, noting that it is unsuitable for residential use because it is immediately adjacent to a major paper mill and rail line. In response to a question from Ben, Brian stated that the paper mill is likely to remain in the long term and is a major user of electricity.

Ben stated that he believes that Santa Fe is the right place to consider diversification of land use. The entire street can be considered, but he would start first at the northern end.

Kevin agreed that Santa Fe was appropriate for mixed use, but suggested that we also consider Pacific which has less traffic and more opportunities for parking.

Juliet agreed with the potential of Pacific, particularly because of the traffic on Santa Fe.

Ian pointed out that the traffic is not heavy 24 hours a day, and that some types of new uses would be busiest when traffic is lightest.

Manny asked the Committee to consider changes over time, and invited Committee members to call him for an historical perspective.

Kevin noted that Pacific could be viewed as an extension of the Huntington Park commercial center, but Brian pointed out the heavy truck traffic generated by Whole Foods and the proximity of the rail yard.

Jack suggested that the best areas to consider are the far northern end of Santa Fe near the Arts District, and the far southern end of Pacific near residential amenities in Huntington Park. He pointed out that in these locations residential uses would interfere less with existing operators and future high tech production uses.

Ian emphasized that residential is not the only use to be considered for the land use diversification areas and might very well not be appropriate in all of them. He suggested that the City will witness a gradual transition of uses in these areas, probably beginning with forward-looking production uses. Residential uses would probably be further down the line.

Next Meeting:

Bob noted that an hour and a half had elapsed without reaching a conclusion on preferred action areas from the Baseline Studies and without any discussion of the Transportation Issues agenda item. He congratulated the Committee on an active and productive discussion and suggested that the Committee reconvene on February 23 at 3 PM to complete the Meeting #2 Agenda. The Committee concurred.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bob Paternoster, Moderator

WESTSIDE SPECIFIC PLAN STAKEHOLDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING # 3: FEBRUARY 23, 2021

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brian Bailey, Jack Cline, Juliet Goff, Ming-Shin Kou, Richard Lucas, Judith Merlo, Andy Perkins, Ben Shanassafer, Doug Williams, Kevin Wilson, Marlene Ybarra

GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT: Carlos Fandino, Dan Wall, Manny Garcia, Angela Kimmey, Abigail Mejia

CONSULTANTS PRESENT: Phil Burns, Ian Dickenson, Bob Paternoster, Lance Lowrey, Zachary Zabel

Introduction:

The Zoom meeting was called to order at 3:06 PM by Moderator Bob Paternoster. He reviewed the draft minutes of Meeting #2. He set forth the Agenda for Meeting #3, noting that we will not jump in immediately where we left off at the last meeting discussing action area preferences. Rather, in light of concerns raised by the Committee at the last meeting, we will first review potential uses in action areas, and then discuss traffic issues and potential solutions.

Potential New Uses:

Ian provided a brief review of the consultant team's identification of four building clusters which create possible areas for diversification of land use. Of the four, the consultant team saw the best opportunities in Santa Fe north (from just south of Vernon to 28th St.) and in Santa Fe south (from 57th St. to 49th St.). At the last meeting, the Committee also expressed interest in Pacific south (from 52nd St. just south of Fruitland to Chambers).

Ian stated that any diversification of land use in these areas would be a gradual transition from pure production to some combination of production with retail, residential, and/or office. He used examples of a brewery with retail beer sale and an artist live/work studio. He emphasized that residential uses, while important, may not be in all areas or be predominant in any area.

Transportation Issues:

Zachery outlined the transportation issues in Vernon, focusing on traffic problems. He stated that because of its location, between Downtown Los Angeles to the north and residential

communities to the south, and adjacent to major freeway interchanges, Vernon suffers from a lot of through traffic. Although 53% of Vernon employees live within 10 miles, most take private automobiles to work. All three of the major north/south arteries (Alameda, Santa Fe, and Soto) are at or near capacity, with nearly 30,000 daily vehicle trips on each. The east/west streets are less travelled, with only 18,000 daily vehicle trips on Vernon/Pacific. In contrast, the north/south Alameda East access road is utilized far below its capacity.

Zach showed bicycle route plans of the City of Los Angeles and the City of Vernon, noting that many bicycle lanes and trails are proposed to run to and through Vernon.

Bob asked the Committee to pose questions to Zach and to discuss traffic problems and potential solutions.

Juliet stated that we must address the poor signal timing on Alameda East if it is to become a successful truck route. She pointed out that trucks serving businesses on the east side of Santa Fe must use Santa Fe for access. She questioned how much traffic is through traffic, and what techniques might be employed to divert it.

Zach replied that trucks serving local businesses would be permitted on Santa Fe and all other streets not designated as truck routes. Although origin and destination data are not available, it would appear that most of the truck traffic is serving businesses within Vernon, but much of the automobile traffic is through traffic. One technique for diverting traffic is to reduce the capacity of the street by reducing the number of lanes, which encourages through traffic to seek alternative routes. Designations of truck routes and good signage can help direct truck traffic to preferred corridors.

Kevin confirmed that the signal green time for through traffic on Alameda East is so short that trucks are discouraged from using it. He pointed out that the signal timing is controlled by the City of Los Angeles. He recalled that in the past Santa Fe had parking on both sides of the street, with no center turn lanes. He suggested that parking could be restored on at least one side if the middle turn lanes were removed. He noted that even though commercial uses have been permitted for years on much of Santa Fe, such uses have not been attracted to the street, perhaps because of the strict off-street parking requirements in the zoning ordinance.

Brian agreed with Juliet and Kevin regarding the signal timing problem on Alameda East, and stated that the location of the truck weigh station on Bandini is another reason trucks tend to favor Santa Fe, rather than go back and forth between Alameda and Bandini to obtain and deliver their weigh tickets. He stated that the potential link between northern Santa Fe and the LA Arts District is difficult, and that he prefers a link to the Huntington Park business district via Pacific.

Lance pointed out that the southern boundary of Vernon along Pacific is just south of Fruitland, and it is 3,750 feet, or a 20 minute walk, from the Huntington Park business district, making it unlikely that the business district could ever be extended into Vernon.

Jack expressed concern that we don't have the control necessary to correct the signal timing on Alameda East or to reduce traffic exiting the 10 Freeway at Santa Fe.

Phil responded that Vernon does control potential measures to divert traffic from Santa Fe, such as reducing the cross section south of Vernon to one lane in each direction, or removing the center turn lanes north of Vernon in order to restore curbside parking.

Juliet suggested building parking structures and then providing a shuttle service to get people to their destinations. She noted that truck turning radii from Santa Fe are too tight, and that Alameda East would be a "brilliant solution" if the signal timing problem could be corrected.

Jack stated that better use of Alameda East could improve productivity in Vernon, particularly south of 38th St. where current lower rents reflect the area's more difficult freeway access at present.

Doug stated that trucks have great difficulty making the right turn from Vernon westbound to both Alameda and Alameda East northbound. He encouraged the Committee to focus on a vision for the future, rather than on present and past problems.

Kevin pointed out that a major FedEx terminal is located on 28th St. east of Santa Fe, requiring substantial truck traffic on that portion of Santa Fe. He also reflected on the original planning for the Alameda Corridor, noting that one of the alternatives considered was to place the trench between southbound lanes and northbound lanes. That might have provided better truck access to Vernon from Alameda, but would have required trucks coming from the north to make troublesome u-turns to reach many of Vernon's minor east/west streets.

Richard asked Kevin, Dan and Manny, with their vast experience in Vernon, if they support limiting truck traffic on Santa Fe. Kevin replied that it would not be a problem, but would create heavier volumes on other streets. Dan suggested that we look south of Vernon first, requiring trucks to use Pacific rather than Santa Fe. Manny stated that we can do it if we make Vernon/Pacific into a truck route.

Juliet and Andy stated that trucks could very well serve their businesses on 48th St. from Alameda East, but they would have to exit onto Santa Fe because 48th is too narrow to allow them to turn around.

Bob thanked the Committee members for providing all of their first-hand insights into the traffic problems and potential solutions, and said that the consulting team will take all of this into account as it proceeds to devise solutions to the issues of traffic and parking in the Eastside.

Preferred Action Areas:

Phil reviewed briefly the four potential clusters of buildings conducive to diversification of use, noting that although the consultant team had initially felt the two on Santa Fe to be the most viable, the Committee had made a strong argument for also considering the cluster along Pacific. He sought the Committee's thoughts on designating all three as potential action areas, noting that types of uses and development timing might very well vary among the three.

Richard reported that a large warehouse building in the southern cluster at Santa Fe and 57th St. had just been sold.

Kevin stated that a major problem along Santa Fe is that the small parcels cannot easily provide the off-street parking required by zoning for retail uses.

Ben supported Phil's proposal to study all three areas, but expressed his preference for the area at the north end of Santa Fe because of its proximity to the LA Arts District. He pointed out that Vernon has always been marketed as an industrial community, and that the City must begin to spend money to market it for a broader variety of uses.

Jack noted that it was low rents rather than the building fabric that attracted investment in the Arts District, that it was surrounding demographics that prompted reinvestment in Sleepy Hollow, and that it was one particular artist who had generated interest in Frogtown. He continued to express his preference for the Pacific cluster, where there are many obsolete small buildings, and where diversification of use can take place without having a negative impact on existing industrial uses in the middle of Vernon.

Richard stated that retail uses don't pencil out for property owners along Santa Fe, because even though the rent per square foot would be higher, the number of square feet would be substantially lower because of the need to demolish portions of structures to make way for off-street surface parking.

Juliet expressed her preference for the southern cluster along Santa Fe if we can solve the parking problem.

Jack noted that the Cornfields Arroyo Seco area in LA developed successfully with “makers’ space” despite no required off-street parking.

Phil concluded the discussion by thanking the Committee members for their input, and he stated that the consultant team would proceed to the conceptual design phase on all three clusters discussed by the Committee: Santa Fe north, Santa Fe south, and Pacific south. He estimated that the first phase of this work would take about six weeks to complete.

Future Meeting Schedule:

Bob asked the Committee to tentatively mark their calendars for Meeting #4 on April 6, reflecting the six-week work schedule cited by Phil. He thanked Kevin for submitting comments in writing following the last meeting, and invited other Committee members to email any comments that they were unable to make at this meeting or any thoughts that they may have in the days following. He adjourned the meeting at 4:39 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bob Paternoster, Moderator

WESTSIDE SPECIFIC PLAN STAKEHOLDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING # 4: August 18, 2021

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT, Conference Room #3, City Hall: Jack Cline, Judith Merlo, Marisa Olguin, Kevin Wilson, Melissa Ybarra, Tony Shantobi

MEMBERS PRESENT via ZOOM: Brian Bailey, Steve Freed, Dale Jabour, Ming-Shin Kou, Richard Lucas, Doug Williams

GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT: Dan Wall, Manny Garcia, Angela Kimmey

CONSULTANTS PRESENT: Phil Burns, Lance Lowrey, Deepak Kaushik, Bob Paternoster

Introduction:

The meeting was called to order at 3:10 PM by Moderator Bob Paternoster.

Bob reviewed the Committee's progress through Meeting #1, which was largely introductory; Meeting #2, where six project goals were formulated and baseline studies discussed; and, Meeting #3, where current transportation issues were discussed and the Committee agreed upon three primary action areas (Santa Fe North, Santa Fe South, and Pacific/Hampton) for possible conversion from industrial to mixed use. He noted that the Committee felt that the greatest obstacle to the conversion of properties along Santa Fe to mixed use was the very heavy truck and automobile traffic. Although many Committee members recognized the potential for Alameda East to accept much of the truck traffic, they warned that truckers would not use it because of the substantial delays at intersections. He concluded that the sole topic of discussion for Meeting #4 is possible solutions to the primary problem identified by the Committee, the very heavy present traffic along Santa Fe.

Transportation Plan Report:

EXISTING CONDITIONS: Phil presented a summary of present traffic conditions in the Westside of Vernon, pointing out that 64% of the trucks traveling on Santa Fe are destined for businesses in the Westside, whereas only 17% of the automobiles are destined for Vernon. He stated that most of the trucks enter Vernon from the north, and a substantial number also enter from the east along Bandini; very few trucks enter from the south, and practically none from the west. He noted that traffic on Santa Fe south of Vernon Avenue is less than north of Vernon Avenue,

largely because automobiles destined for Huntington Park and communities east of Huntington Park are leaving Santa Fe at Vernon Avenue to utilize Pacific Boulevard.

The Committee briefly discussed the information presented by Phil on existing traffic conditions. Kevin expressed concern that the shift of traffic from Santa Fe to other north/south streets will aggravate congestion problems on those streets at Washington Avenue. He asked if the consultants had projected future traffic increases due to the proposed conversion of some properties from industrial to more intense uses. Phil replied that such projections had been made and that the model runs which he would describe utilized higher trip generation rates for such properties.

PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION SCENARIO: Phil then presented to the Committee the scenario which the consultant team devised to reduce traffic along Santa Fe. He said that it contains two big moves:

- (1) Creation of a truck route system with two major routes serving the Westside: Alameda East serving Westside businesses west of Santa Fe Avenue, and Vernon/Pacific, serving Westside businesses south of Vernon Avenue and east of the railroad corridor; the only trucks allowed to use Santa Fe would be those serving businesses along Santa Fe and between Santa Fe and the railroad corridor.
- (2) Lane reduction for Santa Fe south of Vernon Avenue from four lanes to two lanes; because there is no parallel route north of Vernon Avenue, Santa Fe North must remain four lanes, but curbside parking is added by removing most of the median left-turn lanes.

He continued that Alameda East is made more conducive to truck traffic by increasing the green time at intersections so that through traffic on Alameda and on Alameda West can run concurrently. Exclusive turn lanes are also added at the intersection with Vernon Avenue, which will be described in more detail in the following discussion of intersection improvements. He stated that the consultant team had considered an alternative which was to convert Alameda East and West to a couplet, with all northbound traffic on Alameda East and all southbound traffic on Alameda West. The consultants abandoned this alternative when they discovered that the benefit was not worth the large cost and when they realized its implementation would be politically difficult since the City of Los Angeles controls Alameda West.

EVALUATION OF PROPOSED SCENARIO: Phil then described how a computer model was utilized to project traffic flow with the proposed scenario in place. The travel demand model projected a very large reduction of truck traffic on Santa Fe, with the largest diversion being to Alameda East, where trips increased from about 4,000 per day to more than 8,000 per day (still less than

a comfortable capacity of the roadway). Santa Fe south of Vernon Avenue enjoyed a 10,000 trip per day reduction in traffic volume to about 18,000 trips per day, within the capacity for a two-lane roadway; these primarily automobile trips were diverted to several north/south roadways, with the largest diversion to Pacific Boulevard, well within its capacity. Traffic volumes on Santa Fe north of Vernon Avenue decreased very little, because as trucks left the corridor, automobiles from other north/south corridors replaced them.

Bob offered the Committee the opportunity to discuss the proposed scenario and the results of the model run before the team focused in on necessary intersection improvements. Marisa pointed out the plan causes increased truck traffic on 25th Street and on 37th and 38th Streets west of Santa Fe. Kevin noted that drop-off and pick-up of students at the Vernon City School just south of the Santa Fe/Vernon intersection would be more of a problem if Santa Fe were narrowed along the school frontage. Ming expressed concern that the projected increase in truck traffic on Alameda East would make present congestion at the Vernon intersection totally unbearable. Tony stated that two problems must be solved on Alameda East: the congestion at the Vernon intersection, and the center divider on Slauson which limits turning movements into the truck corridor. Bob urged Ming and Tony to hold their concerns until the team presents its proposed intersection improvements.

Jack asked how trucks could be prohibited from using Santa Fe. Phil replied that the team has discussed with the City four possible methods to actually reduce truck use of Santa Fe:

- Communication: Westside businesses and the City would inform truckers and trucking companies of the appropriate routes to utilize to reach their destinations, and the City would work to facilitate alternative access points to properties wherever possible.
- Signage: A plethora of new road signs would direct trucks to truck routes.
- Permitting & Enforcement: Police would initially give warnings to all but local trucks using Santa Fe, but gradually shift to issuing citations. Trucks serving businesses along Santa Fe and between Santa Fe and the railroad corridor would be given passes to allow their use of the street.
- Design: The planting of large shade trees, curbside parking and elimination of the center median turn lanes would discourage truck use and slow down automobile traffic.

Jack, Marisa, Doug and Ming all recommended that one-on-one discussions be held with effected businesses to explain the new system before it is adopted, and to make accommodation when necessary to relieve any substantial hardship. Melissa expressed concern that the proposed lane reduction of Santa Fe south of Vernon would push the traffic problem onto other streets and intersections in Vernon and in cities to the north and south of Vernon.

PROPOSED INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS: Phil introduced Deepak Kaushik from Iteris to discuss necessary improvement to key intersections to minimize congestion and delay when the proposed scenario is implemented. Deepak first focused on the intersection of Santa Fe with Vernon/Pacific. He said that the main geometric change was to narrow Santa Fe south of the intersection so as to have only one through lane southbound. The main change in signal phasing is to give priority to turning movements between Santa Fe North and Pacific Boulevard, reflecting the results of the model run showing a significant increase in these turning movements. With these changes, Deepak reported that an intersection operations analysis shows a slight increase in average delay at this intersection, but the resultant levels of service are within acceptable limits for urban intersections within a central business district during peak hours.

Deepak then focused on the intersection of Vernon Avenue with Alameda East and Alameda West. He pointed out that in order to permit Alameda East and West to run concurrently, all turns from Alameda East toward Alameda West would have to be prohibited, as would the right turn from Alameda West northbound to Vernon Avenue eastbound. Since the latter turn is an important movement, a cross-over of the railroad trench would be constructed about 350 feet south of the intersection to allow trucks and autos to move from Alameda West to Alameda East, from which the right turn onto Vernon Avenue would be permitted. Alameda East would be widened at the intersection to add exclusive turn lanes onto the Vernon/Pacific corridor, and pedestrian refuge islands would be constructed between the two Alamedas both north and south of the intersection to permit the pedestrian crossing to be accommodated in two signal phases rather than the current one long phase. With these improvements, Deepak reported that the level of service at the intersection would significantly improve over today's operation, even with the doubling of truck traffic on Alameda East. Specifically, present average delay for northbound vehicles on Alameda East of 77.5 seconds would be reduced to 57.5 seconds, and present average delay of southbound vehicles of 64.3 seconds would be reduced to 36.0 seconds.

Bob opened the meeting for final discussion of the proposal and its ramifications. In response to a question from Kevin, Deepak confirmed that the only major required construction over the railroad trench would be the cross-over 350 feet south of the intersection. Kevin asked if new left-turn lanes would be required along Alameda East at other intersections, and Deepak replied that he believed they would not, as the relatively few turns could be accomplished between oncoming traffic during the long green cycle, but further analysis may be required. Doug asked if acquisition of private property would be required to widen Alameda East at the intersection. Bob replied that none would be required south of the intersection, because the widening would take place along the concrete slab to the west, which lies over the railroad trench, thereby better aligning the traffic lanes north and south of the intersection. North of

the intersection, the widening could be accomplished by narrowing the 10-foot sidewalk to 5 feet and moving one utility pole, but a preferable approach would be to acquire a small sliver of land along the western edge of Doug's property.

Richard and Ming expressed doubt that the present PM peak congestion would be relieved; Ming cited frequent crashes at the intersection, the fact that through northbound traffic must often wait through two or three cycles behind vehicles trying to turn left, and the need for his employees to make a left turn from northbound Alameda East to westbound Vernon Avenue. Deepak stated that present congestion is definitely lessened under the proposed scenario, that safety should be improved because of the reduction in conflicting turning movements, and that the prohibition of the left turn will eliminate the delay of through traffic waiting behind turning vehicles. Phil noted that there is very little truck demand for left turns onto Vernon westbound, but that Ming raises a valid point about automobile demand for left turns which the team will examine further.

Dan emphasized that what was presented today was a conceptual plan, and that detailed engineering will be required before it can be implemented; but the results are certainly encouraging. Jack stated that he had been extremely skeptical about our ability to significantly reduce traffic along Santa Fe, but that the presentation today, particularly about the proposed improvements to Alameda East, had reduced his skepticism. He suggested that over time Ming's employees would find another way to move westbound, perhaps by travelling south to Slauson for that movement. He concluded that regardless of what else comes of this project, the proposed improvements to Alameda East to improve truck movement and reduce congestion stand alone as an important first implementation step.

Future Meeting Schedule:

Phil thanked all of the Committee members for their intense review and comment on the team's transportation proposals. As usual, the Committee members have given important first-hand insight on the issues, problems and opportunities. He pointed out that even though consultants love to come up with win-win solutions, often the plan recommendations result in tradeoffs between successful new opportunities and undesirable negative side effects. He opined that the need to provide long-term stability for the City of Vernon through added population and a broader economic base is a critical issue that is probably worth some tradeoffs. The consultant team hopes to bring the Committee at its next meeting some of these exciting new development opportunities within the action areas identified by the Committee at its last meeting. The team will also present a parking strategy for these new developments and provide recommendations for improving the entire pedestrian experience in the public realm.

Bob stated that he will notify the Committee on the date of the next meeting, which should be sometime within the next 30 days. He adjourned the meeting at 5:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bob Paternoster, Moderator

WESTSIDE SPECIFIC PLAN STAKEHOLDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING # 5: September 28, 2021

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT, Conference Room #3, City Hall: Jack Cline, Steve Freed, Judith Merlo, Marisa Olguin, Tony Shamtobi, Kevin Wilson, Melissa Ybarra

MEMBERS PRESENT via ZOOM: Juliet Goff, Doug Williams, Marlene Ybarra

STAFF PRESENT: Carlos Fandino, Dan Wall, Manny Garcia

STAFF PRESENT via ZOOM: Angela Kimmey

CONSULTANTS PRESENT: Phil Burns, Ian Dickenson, Lance Lowrey, Abel Garcia, Bob Paternoster

CONSULTANTS PRESENT via ZOOM: Jane Carlson, Zachery Zabel

Introduction:

Carlos opened Meeting #5 at 3:02 P.M. and welcomed the Committee. He stressed the importance and urgency of the Committee's work on the Westside Specific Plan. He said that Vernon will stay true to its roots as an industrial city, but emphasized the need to increase the population in order to have a larger and more diverse electorate. He indicated that there are those who are trying to take over of the City through control of a small number of new voters, even if this means bringing a homeless encampment into Vernon. He concluded that even though such action might be to the immediate short-run advantage of a few, it would be disastrous for the long-run of the City as a whole.

Kevin agreed that the immediate need is to build more housing in Vernon. Jack asked how many new units are required, and Carlos replied 600 to 700, in order to increase the population by about 2,000 persons. Carlos stated that he is committed to maintaining a balance of power in the City, with neither the City Administrator, nor the City Council, nor the City Attorney having monopolistic power.

Bob reviewed the progress of the Committee through its first four meetings, noting that together we had adopted six goals for the project, identified four clusters of buildings suitable for conversion to non-industrial use, selected three of these clusters for first priority action, and devised a workable plan for diverting truck traffic from Santa Fe Avenue to Alameda East and for dramatically reducing auto trips on Santa Fe Avenue south of Vernon Avenue. He concluded that

the proposed traffic plan opens the opportunity to undertake creative development along Santa Fe, and that is the focus of the agenda for Meeting #5.

Catalytic Development Opportunities:

ACTION CLUSTERS & CATALYTIC SITES: Phil reviewed the four clusters of buildings judged suitable for creative reuse and the three recommended by the Committee for first priority action. He stated that the two clusters on the north and south portions of Santa Fe Avenue provide the exciting opportunity to revive Santa Fe as the “main street” of Vernon, and noted that proposed physical upgrades of the street with large street trees, curbside parking and sidewalk improvements are necessary in order for development in these clusters to be successful.

Phil continued that the consultant team searched through these clusters to find the most suitable buildings with owners who were supportive of conversion to residential, production retail, and/or creative office uses. The consultant team was pleased to identify three such catalytic development opportunities within these clusters: (1) the Civic Center, where new residential and traditional small retail would be the focus; (2) the large brick building at 4400 Pacific Boulevard, where production retail, restaurants, markets, creative office and residential would be the focus; and, (3) 5201 Santa Fe in the southern cluster where live-work would be the focus, consistent with the Committee’s identification of this area close to Huntington Park as the best cluster for residential uses.

Ian stressed the importance of the catalytic sites as the early adapters which will inspire and drive the long-range development of Vernon. These sites, involving largely the creative reuse of fine old existing buildings, serve three purposes: to retain the historic character of Vernon, to demonstrate flexibility and diversity in land use, and to stimulate (serve as a catalyst for) development on adjacent sites, all along the Santa Fe corridor.

CIVIC CENTER COMPLEX:

Ian presented the proposed development within the Civic Center Complex. He stated that the City is prepared to make available the large site which it owns just west of City Hall, now occupied partially by Petrelli, for private development of multi-family apartments. The consultant team tested a variety of building types on the site, including a high-rise tower, and determined that the most feasible development was a mid-rise building of five stories of apartments over two levels of parking, with a full range of residential amenities including both private and public open space. The development would create at least 301 new residential units. The residential development would be connected via a pedestrian and bicycle corridor to Vernon Plaza, a redevelopment of the existing Civic Center plaza to include abutting small retail development

(e.g., coffee shop, sandwich shop, FedEx office) in the first level of the parking garage and in the parking area under the City Hall building along Santa Fe. This open space could become the central town square, where residents and employees would gather for lunch, relaxation and socializing.

Phil stated that it is not enough for the consultant team to come up with interesting and attractive development proposals; it is also necessary to test the feasibility of such development, using two criteria: parking availability, and financial feasibility. The Civic Center proposal meets all parking requirements, since the residential development will provide its own private parking and the 18 parking spaces required to support the new retail will be available in the existing City Hall parking structure when the City completes relocation of some staff and related parking to other sites. The 0.9 spaces per apartment might seem low, but it is typical of residential developments of this type. In addition, in order to comply with the State's Surplus Land Act, the City must guarantee that 25% of the apartments will be affordable (the State law would require that the entire site be offered to an affordable housing developer if the number of units was less than 300).

Phil continued that the financial feasibility was examined using the accepted real estate industry analysis of "residual land value", wherein an estimate is made of the amount that can be paid to buy the land after all net construction and operating costs are deducted from the total value of the development; the project is feasible if this residual land value equals or exceeds the current market value for land. For the Civic Center proposal, the residual land value is estimated to be \$40 per square foot. Phil pointed out that this is less than current market value of land, but that the City is anxious to realize the development, so it is willing to accept less than market value for its land, making this proposal feasible.

4400 PACIFIC BOULEVARD:

Ian stated that 4400 Pacific Boulevard is the large brick building that stretches along the east side of Santa Fe Avenue just south of the Vernon/Pacific intersection. He said that the building type and dimensions are uniquely suited for restaurant, production retail, and entertainment uses, perhaps combined with residential. The proposal removes the uninteresting concrete structure at the corner, and replaces it with an open plaza entrance to the development. The northern portion of the brick building could come alive with a production retail use such as a brewery, other restaurants, and a marketplace. Live/work uses could take place moving south, and a new mid-rise residential building (five-story over two levels of parking) could be constructed within the existing brick walls at the far southern end. Overall, the proposal would result in 48,000 sq. ft. of brewery/restaurant uses, 38,700 sq. ft. of farmers' market/co-op uses, 31,300 sq. ft. of production retail uses, and 65 new residential units. He concluded that this unique cluster of

different but mutually reinforcing uses could attract both customers and residents to this location in the very center of Vernon.

Phil reported on the feasibility of this proposal using the same parking availability and financial feasibility analyses. Parking demand using tradition ITE ratios would be 339 spaces, but since the different uses would have peak parking demand at different times of the day, only 247 spaces would be necessary if the parking spaces are shared. The existing surface parking lot can provide 180 spaces, and 32 employee parking spaces can be provided in the small vacant lot across Pacific Boulevard which is owned by the same property owner. The City Hall parking structure can provide 50 parking spaces, perhaps as valet parking, and 172 parking spaces will be available within a five minute walk along Santa Fe and along Pacific. The total of 434 spaces exceeds the parking demand. With regard to financial feasibility, Phil reported that the analysis reveals a residual land value of \$57 per square foot, which slightly exceeds the market value of land for comparable projects.

5201 SANTA FE AVENUE: Ian stated that the southern cluster along Santa Fe contains many sound buildings which are uniquely suited to reuse. These include the Utopia Building on 51st Street, and the prior Joie Jeans Buildings at 5201 Santa Fe. The latter are a small two-story building on the corner, and a large three-story building to the south; both are beautiful buildings in good condition. The small building can be reused with a 9,563 sq. ft. restaurant on the ground floor and 7,043 sq. ft. of office space above. The dimensions and window design of the large building are perfect for 47,304 sq. ft. of 32 live/work units and 6,318 sq. ft. of production retail activity (ground floor only). A restaurant and outdoor patio could be constructed on the roof, with excellent views of all of Vernon and of Downtown Los Angeles.

Phil reported that the parking demand of 53 spaces using shared parking standards could be accommodated by the 69 spaces in the existing on-site surface parking lot; in addition, 135 spaces will be available on-street within a five minute walk. With regard to financial feasibility, the proforma results in a residual land value of \$99 per square foot, in excess of the average current market value of land for comparable projects of \$53 per square foot. Phil reminded the Committee that the streetscape along this stretch of Santa Fe would be substantially upgraded, with two moving lanes and a median turn lane, curbside parking and bike lanes on both sides, and large shade trees all along the right-of-way, helping to stimulate development on adjacent sites as well

OTHER AREAS OF INTEREST: Phil stated that, in addition to the three catalytic development proposals, the team is also considering three other areas of interest. First is the five-story Williams building on the northeast corner of Vernon Avenue and Alameda East, which is within walking distance of the Metro light rail station and which can be connected to the Civic Center

Complex via a proposed greenway and bike trail along the adjacent abandoned rail right-of-way. This building might be suitable for creative office use or live/work units.

Second is the row of small buildings along the east side of Santa Fe moving north to 38th Street. These are already being converted to production retail and benefit from their proximity to the Los Angeles Arts District. The streetscape along Santa Fe north of Vernon Avenue will retain two moving lanes in each direction, but with the median turn lanes removed in most areas, curbside parking, large shade trees in extended tree wells, and sidewalk improvements can be made to support continuing creative reuse of existing buildings.

Third is the Pacific/Hampton Cluster which was singled out by the Committee. The smaller buildings in this area appear to be particularly suitable for small adaptive reuse and creative office/R & D uses, such as production studios. The team does not believe this area is best suited for residential use due to its lack of connection to residentially supportive amenities and the heavy existing and future traffic on Pacific Boulevard, which will become a designated truck route.

COMCLUSIONS:

Phil summarized the presentation, concluding that the analyses had demonstrated that there are a wide variety of possible and desirable uses; that residential development is possible, meeting not only the City's primary objective but also driving the economic feasibility of new development, and that creative parking solutions, including shared parking and extensive new on-street parking, are important to provide support retail use

He referred back to the six project goals adopted by the Committee, and demonstrated how the proposed catalytic developments and public streetscape improvements successfully addressed all six. And, he concluded, the three catalytic development proposals themselves, without considering other areas of interest and future projects which the catalytic developments will stimulate, amount to more than 400 residential units, substantially furthering the goal of the City.

Committee Discussion:

Jack stated that his intimate knowledge of the market suggests that the financial analyses utilized retail and office rents that are aspirational, and residential rents that are super aggressive. Jane Carlson, whose firm conducted the financial feasibility analyses, admitted that the rents were somewhat optimistic, but said that they were consistent with comparable areas such as Frogtown and the CASP; the high rents achieved in the Arts District were not considered comparable.

Jack further stated that the \$53 per square foot land market value utilized in the analyses was far below current market value, with recent sales averaging \$90 per square foot. He also recommended that the number of two-bedroom units in the Civic Center development, proposed at 35%, be reduced to increase the number of higher demand one-bedroom units, thereby increasing the total number of units from 301 to nearly 350.

Doug confirmed Jack's figures on current market value of land, believing that it is actually closer to \$105 per sq. ft. He expressed concern that the basis of the plan might be flawed. A discussion followed about the market price of land and the logistics users who offer the highest rents. Jane noted that from her work in Carson and Commerce, she understands that logistics users offer top dollar for suitable properties, but that these users pose many problems for cities, as they do not pay for the infrastructure that they use.

Juliet stated that she was sorry to have been unable to attend the last meeting on traffic, and felt uncomfortable over the proposed reduced traffic capacity on Santa Fe south of Vernon Avenue. Bob invited Juliet to call him so that he could review with her the traffic studies which were discussed in Meeting #4. Juliet also questioned whether a brewery could be located across the street from a public elementary school, as proposed for 4400 Pacific.

Kevin asked why the Civic Center proposal didn't include replacement of the 10 single-family homes with multi-family apartments. Lance replied that such is not included in the first phase of development, but might be considered by the City over time as initial projects are successful and housing demand in Vernon increases. Kevin also asked if the proposed new housing was intended to be apartments or condominiums. Bob replied that obviously condominiums are preferred, but the current market in Vernon probably will not be supportive.

Tony asked when the streetscape improvements along Santa Fe will be made. He stated that such will be very important for development of his building and to encourage other property owners to follow suit.

Marisa asked if the team investigated present office and restaurant rents in Vernon. Ian replied that present rents would not be indicative of the rents that much more "cool" commercial development would generate. The proposals do not seek traditional retail and office uses, but rather the types of uses now found in the Arts District. He assured the Committee that the Arts District market is moving southward, now coming very close to Vernon.

Doug reflected upon the City's residential goals, noting that they do not include Section 8 housing. He stated that the amenities proposed by the consultant team in the catalytic projects should attract the right kind of residents to Vernon.

Steve suggested that in order to get the ball rolling, we narrow our sights and focus on an immediately doable project, such as the Civic Center proposal. Phil and Bob concurred with this recommendation, but pointed out that the Specific Plan must guide development for the next 10 to 15 years.

Jack expressed disappointment that the team was not considering residential development along Pacific, noting that it is proximate to the Huntington Park downtown. Lance replied that it is actually about a mile from the beginning of the Huntington Park commercial center.

Future Meeting Schedule:

Phil thanked the Committee members for their thoughtful criticism and comments, and assured them that the consultant team will consider all of their concerns and respond to them at subsequent meetings. The input and support of the Committee to date is sufficient for the team to now proceed to preparation of the Draft Specific Plan, which will include specific recommended amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and Map. This will be the major agenda item for the next meeting. He concluded that the consultant team has a lot of work to do, and cannot at this time set an exact date for Meeting #6.

Bob adjourned the meeting at 5:09 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bob Paternoster, Moderator



**Memorandum
City Clerk Department**

DATE: December 9, 2021

TO: Department Heads

FROM: Lisa Pope, City Clerk

RE: Vernon Housing Commission Actions Taken

At the December 8, 2021, Regular Vernon Housing Commission meeting, the Vernon Housing Commission (Chair Froberg absent) took the actions listed below by unanimous vote unless otherwise noted:

1. Discussed the draft Housing Element update; and advise the City Council that the Commission conceptually agreed with the Goals on Pages 8 and 9 of the Draft Housing Element.
2. Approved the September 8, 2021 Regular Vernon Housing Commission meeting minutes.
3. Received and filed the December 2021 Quarterly Housing Report.
4. Directed staff to: a) Increase rental rates for City-owned occupied residential units by 1.5% for calendar year 2022 in accordance with Resolution No. VHC-8, and b) Retain current rental rates for vacant units.
5. Recommended the City Council approve and authorize the submittal of a Permanent Local Housing Allocation (PHLA) Program application to the California Department of Housing and Community Development.
6. Discussed current vacancies in City-owned housing stock and provided direction to staff to proceed with housing lotteries.