

Regional Early Action Planning Grants (REAP)

Annual Report Template



[REAP Program Webpage](#)

March 2021

REAP Grant Annual Report 2023

Inyo County and the City of Bishop, CA

Overall Context:

Inyo County Inyo County is conducting a thorough vacant lands inventory and zoning and General Plan review of properties located in the County. This information will be used identify land that might be appropriate for zone and general plan changes to promote affordable housing opportunities primarily by increasing the allowable residential density. An EIR is being prepared for this work and will include a regional Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) analysis, through the REAP grant funding and a goals and programs component for lowering VMT if appropriate. Lowering VMT is a State goal and compact, affordable housing is an important is a factor in VMT reduction. After the CEQA evaluation is completed, the Draft zone changes, and General Plan Amendments will be taken to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors for adoption.

City of Bishop Inyo County will sub-allocate REAP funding to the City of Bishop to enhance work they are already engaged in. This work focuses on the City's almost completely constrained access to land for housing projects. Bishop's downtown core is currently zoned primarily commercial, and does not allow for residential by right. Bishop struggles with reduction in brick and mortar retail, and has a surplus of commercial property, and a dearth of land (either vacant or appropriate for redevelopment) that allows residential development. As such, housing demand is high and housing prices are artificially inflated. Identifying appropriate areas for infill, mixed-use and other housing solutions will increase housing supply and reduce overall housing costs in the community. The Specific Plan process will identify appropriate locations for mixed-use and residential development within the downtown core. The Bishop General Plan Housing Element identifies 2.1 acres of vacant, privately owned, residential zoned land in Bishop. The Housing Element identifies 5.32 acres of commercially zoned property that could be used to provide housing units if rezoned to allow residential and mixed-use development. The City estimates that the specific plan could allow for nearly 500 new residential units by rezoning the approximately 125 acre project area (to be refined during the planning process), and allowing for an estimated 5 units per acre. The City proposes to prepare a Program EIR per CEQA Guidelines Section 15168. This will facilitate the CEQA streamlining under Section 15168(c) and (d) if projects are consistent and considered later activities under the program.

Preparation of the Program EIR will also facilitate the opportunity for projects to utilize Public Resources Code Section 21159.24, which allows urban infill residential development that meets certain criteria to be exempt from CEQA. The City would facilitate the Statutory Infill Housing Exemption by providing updated community level environmental review, as defined by Public Resources Code Section 21159.20, for properties designated for residential development by the General Plan. In addition, the City may utilize the SB 226 CEQA streamlining provisions that went into effect January 1, 2013. Finally, since the Program EIR is for a Specific Plan, future development will also utilize an expanded exemption under Government Code Section 65457 that will apply to certain residential, commercial, and mixed-use projects that are consistent with a specific plan adopted pursuant to Government Code, Article 8, Chapter 3, and would be exempt from CEQA. This new exemption is outlined in the final text of Section 15182 of the CEQA Guidelines.

Project Highlights, Best Practices and Recent and Anticipated Achievements:

Inyo County prepared a VMT study beginning in May 2022 and completed it at the end of July 2022. The information from the VMT was included in the EIR for a vacant lands study that identified various parcels in the county that might be appropriate for zone and general plan designation changes. The VMT also resulted in residential density numbers that can be used in CEQA evaluations for future projects. Overall, this was a very effective study primarily due to the usefulness of the data moving forward. The rest of 2022-2023 reporting period was used to prepare the final report and billing.

The City of Bishop's consultant worked on the CEQA review needed to adopt a Specific Plan and Mixed-Use Overlay project. The downtown specific plan and mixed-use overlay was intended to allow for increased heights, density and mixed-use zoning by-right to increase housing options and encourage infill development. REAP funds provided augmented funding to support increased engagement tools such as rendering and visualization and technical studies for the preparation of an environmental impact report to allow for adoption and implementation of the plan.

The project started in October 2019. The Environmental Impact report was prepared and made available for a 45-day public comment period beginning on May 27, 2022 and ending on July 11, 2022. The EIR was certified and the Downtown Bishop Specific Plan and Mixed Use Overlay was adopted in December 2022 allowing for implementation of the plan and the proposed zoning overlay ordinance. The rest of the 2022-2023 reporting period was used to help Inyo County prepare the final report and billing.

Status of Activities:

Completed, working on billing, which has been difficult at best.

[Insert data in the following table regarding Status of Activities] N/A

Activity Category	General Description	Amount Allocated	Amount Expended	Timing	Status	Regional Impact on Housing
5	Support SB2 project (site inventory study, rezoning effort, EIR) to include a regional VMT analysis with the EIR	60,759.30	all	04-01-21 – 04/01/22	Final payment by HCD 08/28/2023	Provided a VMT study to be implemented into an EIR for vacant lands study and provides overall residential density numbers for the county
4	Sub-allocate funds to City of Bishop to support its ongoing SB2 project (provide additional funds for CEQA)	54,682.00	all	03/01/2022 - 01/31/2022	Final payment by HCD 08/28/2023	Created infill higher density allowances in downtown Bishop
6	Grant administration	6,075.00	all	03/21/21- 04/01/2022	Final payment by HCD 08/28/2023	The frustration endured and work provided by the grant administrator allowed for all of this to happen

Summary of Indicators of Housing Production:

Housing Production Indicator	Baseline Year 2019	Current Year 2022	Cumulative Change	Notes
Building Permits	28	25	-3	
Certificates of Occupancy	9	6	-3	
Completed Entitlements	3	26	+23	
Bishop is the only incorporated city in Inyo County. Inyo County will suballocate about 40% of the REAP funds to Bishop to further its SB2 activities, retaining about 60% for administrative tasks and its own SB2 activities, which will have regional impacts.	2020	2023	Completed	
Adoption of the Downtown Specific Plan and associated CEQA document	2020	2023	Completed	
The adoption of the Downtown Specific Plan and associated CEQA document support statewide housing priorities to accelerate housing production through (1) increasing the density of the project area, allowing for more housing development; and (2) CEQA streamlining for future housing	2020	2023	Completed	

Housing Production Indicator	Baseline Year 2019	Current Year 2022	Cumulative Change	Notes
projects through the Statutory Infill Housing Exemption by providing updated community level environmental review, as defined by Public Resources Code Section 21159.20.				
As described in the project description, the combination of limited housing supply and subsequent inflated housing prices has created a barrier for residents to access and afford housing in the City. The barrier will be addressed as a result of this project (addition of 500 housing units) through increasing housing supply and reducing overall housing costs in the community.	2020	2023	No new units yet. Too soon.	
Public outreach campaign to engage County residents and decision makers into the process of VMT reduction strategies.	2020	2023	Completed	
Where appropriate, Inyo County will rely on consultants to complete REAP-funded tasks, thereby accomplishing regional housing priorities and	2020	2023	Completed	

Housing Production Indicator	Baseline Year 2019	Current Year 2022	Cumulative Change	Notes
helping to address local staff capacity limitations.				
Undertake VMT Feasibility Study to determine the most efficient locations to site housing, such as those with lowest per capita vehicle miles traveled and highest access to jobs and other opportunities. EIR with VMT analysis will provide community level review, allowing for CEQA streamlining for future projects, including housing projects.	2020	2023	Completed. County now also has a preferred residential density for CEQA streamlining.	
Inyo County to cooperate with City of Bishop to prepare complementary housing stock/density evaluations and strategies to increase housing opportunities in an underrepresented portion of the State.	2020	2023	Completed	
Adoption of draft zoning changes and General Plan Amendments, inclusive of CEQA evaluation.	2020	2023	Completed	
5% (\$6,075.7) of the REAP funding will be allocated to	2020	2023	Completed	

Housing Production Indicator	Baseline Year 2019	Current Year 2022	Cumulative Change	Notes
grant administration, covering costs for tasks such as progress reports and coordination with HCD.				

Additional Information:

N/A