

## **Neighborhood Councils Meeting**

**November 17, 2012**

***Attendance: 20 attendees representing all City neighborhood Councils attended.***

Liz Bar-EI, Senior Planner, gave a presentation about the Housing Element process, the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) and the City's continuing housing policies and challenges.

Participants at the meeting asked questions and provided comments on a wide range of topics, grouped below by subject:

### **RHNA**

- There were questions about the consequences for not meeting RHNA allocation. State incentives for grants based on Housing Element certification were discussed and the RHNA as a planning goal that must be included to achieve certification was explained. The City of Santa Monica implements its programs to encourage and build affordable housing based on City Council policies and direction to support diversity and trip reduction, and not because it is a state mandate to build all RHNA units.
- There were questions and discussion of the SCAG RHNA process, which resulted in unequal distribution among Westside Cities and in general. The City submitted a challenge to the draft RHNA, which was denied.

### **Current Development Pipeline**

- Concern was expressed about the type and number of units being proposed through development agreements. Some commented that there are too many small units being built and they are only suitable for young singles (not good for seniors) and people will not stay long in them, so turnover will be high. This does not support community stability.
- There were suggestions that growth must be slowed down and managed carefully.
- Neighborhood conservation: A comment was made that the focus on housing in mixed-used transit-rich parts of the city has not yet brought relief to neighborhoods because the streets are still busy due to high peak hour traffic volumes. It was noted that there are less development projects in residential neighborhoods now, which is in part attributable to the LUCE policies to focus on mixed-use areas and discourage demolition/replacement in residential areas.

### **Affordable Housing**

- There was a question about monitoring residency in affordable housing projects, which is done. The discussion focused on the need to ensure that the housing helps those it was intended to help but also that there must be sensitivity to families to make sure they are not uprooted from the community without a housing solution should their economic situation improve.

### **Seniors**

- There was a comment that senior housing was not emphasized in the presentation, although the population trend toward a growing senior segment was presented.
- Housing that provides more options for older adults and promotes aging in place is needed.
- Senior housing is about more than affordable units; the market needs to provide alternatives to seniors who are above the affordable housing threshold.