

Housing and Human Services Committee Work Plan

July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2026

Task / Subtask	Description
A	<p>Identify opportunities to promote an increase in both affordable housing and housing that may be attainable to households earning around the area median income.</p> <p>To meet the variety of needs within the community and to make progress on State requirements to plan for a share of the regional housing need, the HHSC will identify opportunities to encourage an increase in housing stock. The recommendations would address both conventional affordable housing projects as well as housing models that may be moderately affordable by design (e.g., accessory dwelling units and adaptive reuse). Specifically, the HHSC will identify opportunities on the following topics:</p>
1	<p>Mixed Use: Housing Element Program 5.2-1.i directs the City to evaluate the potential for mixed-use and work/live spaces along Coast Highway and on vacant or underutilized commercial properties. On June 11, 2024, the City Council adopted the Housing Ordinance which reduced constraints on mixed-use development along Coast Highway and on commercial properties. HHSC will continue to monitor and provide input on any change recommended by Coastal Commission until agreement regarding the Housing Ordinance change has been reached between the two bodies.</p> <p>HHSC will hold interviews to educate stakeholders on the new development standards and better understand the barriers that limit opportunities for upper floor residential additions to existing commercial buildings and new mixed-use development. HHSC will consider open house meetings with property owners to encourage consideration of such development. In this regard, HHSC will consider incentives beyond the new development standards adopted on June 11, 2024, that may be offered to such property owners to stimulate residential development.</p>
2	<p>Adaptive Reuse: Underutilized existing structures (offices, stores) represent a significant opportunity to increase housing stock at a relatively low cost. Because of likely smaller unit size, such conversions from commercial use to residential use will likely be “naturally” affordable. Housing Element Policy HE-1.15 encourages adaptive reuse to support affordable housing and Housing Element Policy HE-2.11 encourages adaptive reuse of buildings for housing.</p> <p>Existing zoning and safety regulations limit the ability to facilitate adaptive reuse. An HHSC committee member will participate in the AB529 Adaptive Reuse Working</p>

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	Group. Additionally, HHSC will investigate and identify alternative zoning and safety regulations to create a feasible path to adaptive reuse.
3	Affordable Sites: HHSC will identify additional potential sites, beyond those identified in the Housing Element, for development or redevelopment of affordable housing. In line with Housing Element Program 5.2-7.a, HHSC will conduct outreach to religious institutions to provide information and gauge interest on developing affordable housing on property owned by the religious institutions. In line with Housing Element Program 5.2-7.d, HHSC will interface with affordable housing developers and invite affordable housing developers to HHSC meetings to promote development of affordable housing.
4	Affordable Housing Information: Proposals for new-build affordable units are often met with resistance by neighbors and members of the community. In line with Housing Element Program 5.2-10.e, HHSC will seek to provide information and “education” to the community about the need, nature and impact of affordable units.
5	Work/Live Artist: Work/Live Artist housing is an urgent need in Laguna Beach, as the community works to preserve its history of a center for working artists. HHSC will explore and identify opportunities that will encourage and support both the continued availability of existing and the development of new Work/Live Artist housing to support 2024 City Council Priority #5.
6	Senior Housing: In line with Housing Element Policy HE-3.4, HHSC will review the Senior Housing Task Force’s report to identify which policy recommendations have not been completed and present findings or recommendations if applicable.
B	The City of Laguna Beach is required to facilitate housing development, but housing development is financially difficult to achieve for below-market rate housing units. The HHSC will continue to promote the development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as a moderately affordable-by-design model.
1	ADU utilization as primary living unit: ADUs have contributed 135 new housing units to the community from 2021-August 2024. While some ADUs are not used as a primary living unit, an HHSC survey has suggested that a significant number of the units are occupied as a primary living unit. To promote and encourage more ADUs to be utilized as primary living units, HHSC will develop and propose possible incentive programs to encourage the use of ADUs as independent living units.

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2	<p>Coastal Commission impacts on ADU development: Recent actions by the Coastal Commission have had a reportedly significantly adverse impact on the ease and cost of ADU development. HHSC will evaluate building permit data for ADUs as well as other factors that may impact the number of ADU applications and as appropriate will explore potential options to streamline review and approval for ADU development, including participating in opportunities related to Senate Bill 1077 signed by the Governor on September 3, 2024.</p>
3	<p>ADU legalization: There continues to be a significant number of non-permitted ADUs (typically units built prior to 2015). The major concern with non-permitted units is safety. In line with Housing Element Program 5.2-8.g, HHSC will continue to explore possible incentives and processes to encourage existing owners to seek to have their units permitted.</p>
C	<p>Protecting Tenant’s rights is a critical part of maintaining existing “affordable” rental housing stock.</p>
1	<p>Tenant/Landlord information: Recent tenant protection state legislation and local ordinances, while complicated, do offer significant protection to tenants and potential cost to landlords who do not comply with the legal requirements. HHSC will provide community education to both tenants and landlords to protect rights and assure compliance.</p>
2	<p>Affordable Housing compliance and tenant selection: Laguna Beach has relatively few income-restricted affordable housing projects. Such projects are legally required to follow specific procedures in assuring that qualified tenants are chosen in a manner that conform to the contractual requirements of the particular project. In line with Housing Element Program 5.2-8.f, HHSC will engage in dialogues with existing affordable housing providers to learn if there are actions the City can take to support their continued operations.</p>
D	<p>The City established a Local Housing Trust Fund (Housing Element Program 5.2-9.d), and is in the process of supporting the establishment of a Community Land Trust.</p>
1	<p>Permanent Affordable Housing Funding: HHSC will identify approaches to establishing additional permanent revenue streams to the housing trust fund, beyond property and transit occupancy taxes. In line with Housing Element Program 5.2-9.e, HHSC will seek to identify additional potential grant sources of housing funding. HHSC will review funding and expenditures of the housing trust</p>

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	fund in line with the adopted Laguna Beach Local Housing Trust Fund Administrative Guidelines.
2	Community Land Trust Creation: In line with City Council Priority #5, the City is considering incubating a Community Land Trust. HHSC will support the effort as directed by City Council.
E	Housing Element. HHSC will leverage its volunteer resources to assist the City's Housing Program Coordinator with the implementation of Housing Programs 5.2-7 through 5.2-10 included with the 6th Cycle Housing Element.
1	Program Implementation: The Housing Element identifies the Housing and Human Services Committee as a responsible agency for Housing Programs 5.2-7 through 5.2-10. Some of the tasks in this Workplan implement those programs.
2	Progress Reports: In line with current practice, City staff will present the draft Housing Element Annual Progress Report (APR) to HHSC prior to presenting the APR to City Council. The HHSC will receive and file these annual reports and may also provide input on the ongoing implementation efforts.
F	While Laguna Beach is often perceived as a community of great wealth, in fact there is a significant long-term population of folks with very modest means. Understanding their needs, and the City's success in meeting them, is an important focus for HHSC. HHSC will continue to assist the City in addressing the human services needs of the community as follows.
1	Invite local community agencies to HHSC meetings to explain their mission and their services for residents. Over the past year, representatives from local agencies have given brief presentations at HHSC meetings regarding their efforts to assist the Laguna Beach community. HHSC will continue to invite agencies to gain a thorough understanding of these outreach efforts. HHSC will explore ways to spotlight agency needs to the community and encourage assistance through volunteer efforts or monetary or material donations.
2	Examine the current contract with Be Well Mobile Response Team to learn its impact in providing effective mental health and homeless prevention services. The contract with Be Well OC ends in September 2025. HHSC will meet with City staff, Laguna Beach Police Department personnel, and the Be Well team to gather information regarding the collaboration and make a recommendation regarding the possible renewal of the contract.

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3	<p>Continue the Safety Net Nonprofit Tour. The tour is a Saturday morning open house at various social services sites (Laguna Beach Community Clinic, Friendship Shelter’s ASL and Bridge Housing sites, Seaside Legal Services, Laguna Food Pantry, Laguna Beach Seniors, Sally’s Fund and others to be added) where residents may ask questions of each nonprofit’s staff and learn about the services offered, as well as volunteer opportunities.</p>
4	<p>Survey the community to learn the most critical needs and any gaps in social services. Our goal is to respond to the variety of needs around housing choices and human services that a well-functioning city offers residents at all stages of life. HHSC will develop an engagement strategy to learn from residents what matters most to them regarding social services, as well as any unmet needs within the community. This feedback would be relayed to the City and to the local nonprofits to assist in informing projects and services.</p>
5	<p>Increase community awareness of policies and programs related to housing needs and human services. HHSC will enhance implementation of programs outlined in the Housing Element for Information, Education and Marketing (Program 5.2-10) by increasing community awareness of and support for affordable housing through activities such as town halls, articles in local newspapers, and website postings. Additional community engagement roles include collaboration with local support services. HHSC will ensure that residents are aware of existing programs that could help them with current needs. As with its successful ADU workshop and the Affordable Housing Bus Tour, HHSC can undergird the City in holding events that communicate directly with residents about salient issues, especially those identified in Housing Element Program 5.2-10.e.</p>