

City of Riverside

SB 2 Planning Grant - Program Descriptions

The City intends to achieve City and State goals, and increase housing production, through nine (9) planning projects that together comprise a STREAMLINE HOUSING Program. The City intends to use the \$625k grant to partially fund the following projects, which total \$1.29M.

1. STREAMLINE Housing Policies in all Planning Documents. [\$380,000]

a. Project Description

SB 2 funding will be used to update the City's current Housing Element. The Housing Element update will be a component of a larger comprehensive effort to update and streamline the City's General Plan, Zoning Code, design guidelines and specific plans.

The comprehensive update is aimed at correlating and streamlining all City planning documents. This multi-year effort will identify inconsistencies and complex processes, eliminate unnecessary regulations, and clarify expected outcomes as it relates to the Housing Element. The update will incorporate the community's existing vision and create a more transparent process to ensure consistency. SB 2 funds will specifically be used to update the 6-Cycle Housing Element, prepare a housing inventory, develop an implementation plan, and complete all associated environmental documents. Funding for the larger comprehensive streamlining effort has been identified through a half-cent transaction and use tax, general plan fees, and other grants. The Housing Element is not a separate effort from the comprehensive update but will be integrated into the City's planning, zoning and design documents. The Housing Element will be completed by October 2021. The comprehensive update of the General Plan will likely be completed in 2022/23.

The SB 2 grant would also fund a portion of a consultant contracted to provide day-to-day oversight of the General Plan and Zoning Code update. The portion of the General Plan's Project Manager Costs that are funded by SB 2 will correlate with the Housing Element and associated housing analysis, and environmental documents.

SB2 funding will be used to:

- Prepare an update of the City's Housing Element, concurrent with the comprehensive citywide planning update, which will include the 6th Cycle Housing Element, land use inventory, and their associated environmental documents. Housing Element to be completed by October 2021.
- Secure a project management consultant to provide day-to-day project oversight, scheduling and coordination of the 6th Cycle Housing Element, through late 2021. The consultant is necessary due to the complexities and timing of the comprehensive update, and limited staff resources.

b. Priority Project Areas (PPA):

- VII (3)(a) Rezone to Permit By-right
- VII (3)(b) Objective Design and Development Standards

2. STREAMLINE Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) initiative. [\$150,000]

a. Project Description

In 2017 & 2018 the City amended its ADU regulations to comply with new State laws. Subsequently City staff presented a City Council report regarding ADU fees. Staff have indicated to City Council that a comprehensive policy, program and ordinance (Program) as it relates to accessory dwelling units (ADU), junior ADUs, tiny homes and tiny home communities will be prepared. The ADU Program include fee review, preparation of educational materials to help residents understand the differences in unit types, and prepare ADU standard plans to facilitate construction and reduce permitting costs. SB 2 funding will be used to:

- Prepare policies and streamlined regulations for ADUs, Accessory Living Quarters, Tiny Homes and Cottage Homes. Program would evaluate cities with successful ADU implementation programs.
- Create pamphlets and education materials to clarify unit types and fees.
- Prepare standard architectural plans to be provided over the counter 400, 600 and 800 square foot ADUs.

b. Priority Project Areas (PPA):

- VII (3)(b) Objective Design and Development Standards
- VII (3)(d) Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) or Other Low-Cost Building Strategies
- VII (3)(e) Expedited Processing

3. VMT Mitigation Analysis and Program to STREAMLINE CEQA Compliance. [\$120,000]

a. Project Description

The City has not yet identified thresholds for evaluating the environmental impacts of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). Developing City policies and thresholds, and correlating the thresholds with a mitigation fee program, would expedite compliance with CEQA guidelines for housing projects. Policy considerations would include CEQA streamlining for housing within the City's High Quality Transit Areas (HQTAs), up to and including exemptions. Projects outside HQTAs would benefit from the clarity of defined thresholds and a mitigation fee program that would minimize the need for housing applicants to design and assess mitigations on a case-by-case basis. Streamlining VMT compliance will significantly reduce the time and uncertainties associated with State mandated environmental review, ensures SB 743 compliance, and implements the City's updated Active Transportation Program (ATP). SB 2 funding will be used to:

- Identify screening thresholds of VMT analysis considered/used in the region, identify projects likely to be streamlined in Riverside (i.e., near transit, infill, locally-serving retail, bike and transit projects, pedestrian enhancements, etc.), and coordinate appropriately with the Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG).

- Conduct outreach and analysis necessary to establish thresholds and a policy document for the City of Riverside.
- Develop a fee mitigation program to off-set VMT impacts through identified public improvements, including the City’s ATP.
- Prepare programmatic environmental documents for CEQA compliance

b. Priority Project Areas (PPA):

- VII (3)(b) Objective Design and Development Standards
- VII (3)(e) Expedited Processing

4. CRIA Formation to STREAMLINE Local Funding of Affordable Housing. [\$300,000]

a. Project Description

The creation of affordable housing projects require significant subsidies. Grants and other subsidies are highly competitive, and funds are often assembled from multiple sources. The City is committed to the creation of a community revitalization and investment authority (CRIA) to establish a stable source of funding for housing projects. A CRIA is a program to finance and increase infrastructure, which would enhance housing capacity within the City, similar to an enhanced infrastructure financing districts (EIFD). However, a CRIA is required by law to set aside 25 percent of its funds for affordable housing while an EIFD is not. The City’s initial evaluation of a CRIA over a defined geographically area is estimated to contribute more than \$400k annually to affordable housing projects. The process of creating a CRIA would evaluate the geographic boundary of the CRIA, which could be citywide. SB 2 funding will be used to:

- Conduct outreach and CRIA scoping sessions with stakeholders and City Council.
- Implement the CRIA creation process as stipulated by State law.

b. Priority Project Areas (PPA):

- VII (3)(f) Housing Related Infrastructure Financing and Fee Reduction Strategies

5. EIR Evaluation to STREAMLINE General Plan and Zoning Consistency [\$35,000]

a. Project Description

Many properties in the City have inconsistent General Plan land use designations and zoning categories. As a Charter City, this was not an issue for Riverside. SB 1333, adopted in 2018, requires charter cities to have General Plan/Zoning consistency. As a result, for development proposals on properties that currently have inconsistencies require public hearings, to either change the Zoning or General Plan.

The City is changing its General Plan and Zoning to allow an administrative consistency determination without a public hearing. Revisions broaden the number of zones that are consistent with many of the general plan land use designations, which will allow for administrative approvals of housing projects on more properties. Specific criteria have also been developed to determine consistency.

The General Plan and Zoning Code update has been prepared by City staff. A consultant was hired on April 12, 2019 to analyze the environmental impact of Staff's proposed amendment, pursuant to CEQA. SB 2 funding will be used to:

- Fund the analysis and preparation of environmental documents for SB 1333 streamline revisions, to ensure CEQA compliance. [Webb contract Initiated April 12, 2019; Completed May 21, 2019]

b. Priority Project Areas (PPA):

- VII (3)(a) Rezone to Permit By-right
- VII (3)(e) Expedited Processing

6. STREAMLINE Density Bonus Regulations. [\$80,000]

a. Project Description

The City's existing density bonus regulations are outdated and unclear. There is significant benefit to updating the density bonus criteria to showcase streamlining opportunities and define development concessions. SB 2 funding will be used to:

- Evaluate new density bonus legislation and its impact on the City
- Create clear and concise criteria, eliminate inconsistencies with State law, and expedited processes to grant by-right density bonuses to affordable housing, senior housing, and qualified student housing projects.
- Analyze and prepare environmental documents as necessary for CEQA compliance and streamlining.

b. Priority Project Areas (PPA):

- VII (3)(a) Rezone to Permit By-right
- VII (3)(b) Objective Design and Development Standards
- VII (3)(d) Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) or Other Low-Cost Building Strategies
- VII (3)(e) Expedited Processing

7. Rezoning and EIR Work to STREAMLINE Housing Authority Properties. [\$50,000]

a. Project Description

The City's Housing Authority (HA) owns 12 sites that they would like to develop with housing projects, but which appear to have a zoning density that is too low to support market conditions. These sites are distributed throughout the city, and could produce approximately 100 units based site sizes and potential General Plan densities. To facilitate development the HA will evaluate development potential for each site, develop a development plan, initiate necessary amendments to the City's General Plan and Zoning Code, and prepare environmental documentation pursuant to CEQA. The City already allows multi-family "by-right", therefore the effort to align Zoning and General Plan with market conditions will

streamline project approval, and reduce entitlement cost and uncertainties. SB 2 funds will be used to:

- Analyze each site for maximum development potential.
- Tier off the General Plan programmatic environmental impact report (DPEIR) for rezoning and/or general plan amendments, and anticipated development impacts.

b. Priority Project Areas (PPA):

- VII (3)(a) Rezone to Permit By-right
- VII (3)(e) Expedited Processing

8. Ordinance to STREAMLINE Housing Production on Small Lots and Infill Sites. [\$100,000]

a. Project Description

Large undeveloped properties in Riverside are typically within hillside conservation zones or agricultural preservations, which cannot support high density housing due to voter initiatives. Opportunities for small lot and infill development exist near downtown and along arterial corridors. A Small Lot/Infill Ordinance will help reduce development barriers and increasing incentives for compact, high quality, and affordable housing. The Ordinance could include Code revisions to allow reduced setbacks, greater building heights, or less parking without the need or cost of a variance. The Ordinance would make more efficient use of land near existing services and facilities, effectively reducing costs for developers and expenses for taxpayers. The Ordinance could be integrated with the City’s GIS and permitting software to inform the public of where qualifying sites exist. SB 2 funding will be used to:

- Identify the location of potential small and infill lots within the City
- Evaluate lots and determine eligibility criteria for small/infill lots
- Evaluate barriers to development of the small/infill lots and propose development standards to streamline development
- Prepare environmental documents for CEQA compliance

b. Priority Project Areas (PPA):

- VII (3)(a) Rezone to Permit By-right
- VII (3)(c) Specific Plans or Form Based Codes Coupled with CEQA Streamlining

9. Dashboard to Tracking and STREAMLINE Production of Housing Candidate Sites. [\$75,000]

a. Project Description

The City adopted the 5th Cycle Housing Element in 2017, and rezoned housing element sites in 2018. The rezoning created an additional 6,524 potential housing units, which significantly exceeded the RHNA rezoning requirement of 4,767 units. SB 166 requires tracking of housing production to ensure the City maintains its minimum Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) obligations.

The City currently tracks housing production by manually updating an Excel spreadsheet. The City will use SB 2 funds to create a more accurate tracking of development by integrating it with the City's permitting software (Computronix; launched July, 2019). The City will update its Computronix permit system with a geographic information systems (GIS) module, which will allow the City to display housing sites in a dashboard, which can be evaluated and searched geographically. The dashboard will be publically viewable, which provides a platform for City officials, the public, developers and the State to assess potential high-density development sites and track progress. The dashboard could also be correlated with the Housing Authority owned properties and a Small Lot/Infill Ordinance, and could be instrumental in implementing a community revitalization and investment authority (CRIA). SB 2 funding will be used to:

- Integrate a GIS module and the City's housing inventory with Computronix, to ensure seamless tracking updates and accurate accounting
- Prepare a publically viewable GIS based dashboard of housing sites

b. Priority Project Areas (PPA):

- VII (3)(e) Expedited Processing