

New LA Housing Plan will be Based on Faulty Info

LA Needs to Know
By Ken Marsh



Pending the imminent action on the New Housing Element, here's something residents of Los Angeles need to know.

The City has NOT been meeting certain requirements of its General Plan that are prerequisite to moving ahead with a New Housing Element.

A New Housing Plan is required every eight years -- the 2006-2014 planning period is to be voted on by City Council in July.

Specifically, at issue with the Plan's New Housing Element is an environmental impact report (EIR).

An EIR would look at the infrastructure and the proposed increase in housing to assess environmental and economic impact, information needed to qualify new housing proposed for the 2006-2014 planning period. The City wants to use the seven-year-old EIR that was done in 1996 and updated in 2001, claiming it is good enough.

But, neighborhood organizations disagree. The General Plan's Framework Element requires Annual Reports on Growth and Infrastructure, essential to monitor and mitigate serious environmental impacts. But the Annual Reports on Growth and Infrastructure have NOT been done by the City since 1998.

Two Public Records Act requests for the reports have been filed and on both occasions the City has admitted that NO monitoring has been done.

Without the reliable, up-to-date information the required reports would provide and a new EIR to assess the impacts, moving ahead with the New Housing Element will perpetuate the environmental and fiscal irresponsibility that has characterized planning in the City of Los Angeles for decades.

The [lawsuit](#) that was recently filed against the City [Read CityWatch story here](#) is to enjoin it from approving any further zoning ordinances, specific plan amendments, general plan amendments, development agreements, or tentative subdivision maps, unless and until the City complies with the Plan's mandatory requirement to establish a monitoring program, a transportation database and the Annual Reports on Growth and Infrastructure for years 1999 through 2008.

No one knows the true state of our infrastructure. The Annual Reports on Growth and Infrastructure were meant to let us know if we have enough water, power, schools, police, and fire. What is the state of the sewer system? Which Community plan area's have gotten capital improvement funds in the last 10 years? Etc.

The list of those who gave input on the New Housing Element does NOT include Neighborhood Councils, long-established homeowner groups, renters groups -- in a word, the People.

Some City Council members are talking about laying low on this issue. To lay low on this is to be complicit with perpetuating business as usual.

Issues of NIMBYism vs. developer greed aside, city government accountability is at stake.

There is an opportunity for a sea change in our municipal government culture that will be missed if requirements of the General Plan are allowed to be ignored. Every elected official's accountability is in question. The long-term impact will be significant, however this goes. Again, not a time for those in positions of decision-making to be allowed to lay low.

We must demand that our elected officials represent the People of Los Angeles in the public interest!

Support the demand that the Mayor and City Council direct the Planning Department to complete the Annual

Reports on Growth and Infrastructure from 1998 to the present and require a new EIR, before they vote on the New Housing Element or update any more Community plans.

Ken Marsh was the Mar Vista Community Council, Zone 3 Director from 2005-2006. This message originated with James O'Sullivan, Miracle Mile Residential Association, and has been edited by Ken Marsh, stakeholder, Mar Vista Community Council. For further information: <http://www.fixlosangeles.com/> . For info on the LaBrea Willoughby Coalition law suit to stop the City at: www.LaBreaCoalition.org) ■

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