



Staff Report

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**File #:** 23-0164

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**REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION**

**DATE:** 03/01/2023

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

**FROM:** Planning and Development Department

**SUBJECT:**  
Resolution approving the High Density Residential and Mixed-Use Objective Development Standards and Design Guidelines and Western Riverside Council of Government's Objective Design Standards Architectural Style Standards in support of the Housing Element Rezoning Program.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

This staff report asks the City Council to consider the approval of the High Density Residential and Mixed-Use Objective Development Standards and Design Guidelines and the Western Riverside Council of Government's Objective Design Standards Architectural Style Standards. The objective development standards and design guidelines establishes the criteria that will be used by City staff when reviewing new residential development on property that is being developed per the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) zone. The objective development standards and design guidelines are intended to streamline the review process and promote the development of mixed-income housing projects that will include units set aside for low-income households in support of meeting the City's regional housing need in the Housing Element.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

**That the City Council:**

- a. Find that no additional environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is necessary because there are no changes to the project as analyzed in the Supplemental Environmental Impact Report for the Corona Housing Element Rezoning Program adopted with GPA2022-0002.
- b. Adopt Resolution No. 2023-014 approving the High Density Residential and Mixed-Use Objective Development Standards and Design Guidelines and Western Riverside Council of Government's Objective Design Standards Architectural Style Standards.

**BACKGROUND & HISTORY:**

The High Density Residential and Mixed-Use Objective Development Standards and Design Guidelines were prepared by the City to accommodate potential development on the properties that are zoned with an Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) zone. The AHO zone is a new overlay zone that is being established by the City to address the City's state mandated housing requirement in the General Plan Housing Element. The AHO zone is being adopted into [Title 17](#) of the Corona Municipal Code as Chapter 17.31.

The High Density Residential and Mixed-Use Objective Development Standards and Design Guidelines were created specifically for the AHO zone. The objective development standards and design guidelines will govern the on-site development on properties that are being developed per the AHO zone. The objective development standards and design guidelines were created in compliance with state law which limits the City's review of housing developments to objective standards.

The City's General Plan Housing Element Update was adopted by the City Council on November 3, 2021, and approved by the State Department of Housing and Community Development on October 12, 2022. The rezoning program required by the Housing Element began in June 2022. An overview of the process was presented to the Planning and Housing Commission at its meeting on June 6, 2022. The topic was later discussed at a City Council study session on June 22, 2022.

The initial draft of the objective development standards and design guidelines were completed in August 2022. The Planning and Housing Commission at its meeting on August 8, 2022 was given a report on the draft standards. The City Council at its study session on August 24, 2022 was also provided a report on the draft standards.

In November 2022, the final version of the High Density and Mixed-Use Objective Development Standards and Design Guidelines were posted on the City's General Plan Update website and made available to the public.

**ANALYSIS:**

The High Density Residential and Mixed-Use Objective Development Standards and Design Guidelines is separated into four sections. The document in its entirety is provided in Exhibit 2 of this staff report.

**Section 1. Development Plan Review Process.** This section describes the review process for proposed developments. The process is a by-right, non-discretionary review process. The City's Development Plan Review (DPR) process is a pre-review by staff of the proposed development. The DPR process allows city staff to meet with the developer of the proposed development to review the project's compliance with City ordinances. The DPR process is intended as a guide for the applicant before formal plan reviews are submitted for building plan check to the Building Division, and before grading and public improvement plan checks are submitted to the Development Services Division.

Since the City needed to rezone properties to accommodate the shortfall of sites necessary to accommodate its housing need for low-income households, residential development that includes at least 20% of the total units for low-income households are required to be reviewed as a by-right development pursuant to Government Code [Sections 65583\(f\)](#) and [65583.2\(h\)](#). By-right

development pursuant to Government Code [Sections 65583\(f\)](#) and [65583.2\(h\)](#). By-right development is still subject to the City’s objective development standards applied to the zoning of the property.

**Section 2. Objective Development Standards.** The objective development standards section covers the on-site requirements for housing being developed per the AHO zone. This section describes the required density, unit size, building height, building setbacks and on-site open space that is to be applied to projects.

The AHO zone is designed to support higher density development within the City’s commercial corridors and high-quality transit area. Mixed-Use development consisting of residential and non-residential land uses are allowed in addition to a 100 percent residential use that supports multifamily development. The density of the AHO zone is between 45 dwelling units to the acre (du/ac) to 60 du/ac. Because the area of land may be limited, the development standards focus on providing vertical development to support the density required by the AHO zone. Building setbacks are closer to the property line to maximize the lot coverage. The AHO zone is mostly concentrated within the City’s commercial corridor and located near other commercial properties or multifamily units in the R-3 zone. The following is a summary of the building setbacks and building height for the AHO zone.

Building Setbacks	
Street Frontage	5 Feet (Residential)/8 Feet (Ground Floor Commercial)
Interior Side Yard	8 Feet
Rear Yard	5 Feet
Adjacent to Single Family Residential	8 Feet (one story element), 15 Feet (two story elements), 25 Feet (three story elements and higher)
Building Height	
Residential Only	60 Feet
Mixed-Use (Residential/Commercial)	80 Feet

On site open space is required at 100 square feet per unit with 50 percent allocated to private open space such as balconies and 50 percent in common open space.

Parking is based on the requirements of the Corona Municipal Code. However, the parking requirement for the 20 percent low-income units is regulated by [Government Code Section 65915\(p\)\(1\)](#). The low-income parking requirement is:

- Studio & one bedroom: 1 parking space
- Two and three bedrooms: 1.5 parking spaces
- Four or more bedrooms: 2.5 parking spaces

**Section 3. Design Guidelines.** The design guidelines are a requirement to be applied to projects in the AHO zone. If properties are zoned with a AHO and located in a specific plan, the design guidelines of the specific plan would apply to the project. If a specific plan does not include design guidelines, the High Density Residential and Mixed-Use Objective Design Guidelines would apply to the project. The design guidelines are being applied in the same manner as the development standards by using enforcing language such "shall" instead of "should."

This section covers:

- Building form and articulation,
- Retail design guidelines for ground level retail in a mixed-use project,
- Ground level guidelines,
- Parking locations in addition to landscape buffers and screened parking structures,
- Sustainability practices,
- Setbacks and screening,
- On-site circulation and access,
- Sidewalk and public realm,
- Cycling and transit,
- Public safety and security,
- Landscape,
- Open space and common area amenities, and
- Utilities and mechanical equipment.

The design guidelines also include the Objective Architectural Style Standards prepared for the Western Riverside Council of Governments. The City will be adopting the architectural style standards for Spanish Revival, Craftsman, Tuscan and Modern. The architectural style standards are provided as Exhibit 3 of this staff report. Various projects throughout the City have used these architectural styles; therefore, development pursuant to the AHO zone would remain consistent the architectural styles used in the City.

**Section 4. Appendix.** The appendix includes a glossary and the background and process for the methodology used to draft the objective development standards and design guidelines. The background process included an evaluation of the development standards that are adopted for the City's North Main Street Specific Plan for urban density residential development and mixed-use development in addition to the high-density residential development standards adopted in the cities of Anaheim, Rancho Cucamonga, and Riverside. These cities were selected due to the similarity in the zoning with the city's proposed AHO zone, which is intended for higher density residential.

Objective Development Standards and Design Guidelines Compliance Checklist

The appendix includes a compliance checklist to be used by staff to verify compliance with the objective development standards and design guidelines. This checklist will also be made available to the public to assist applicants in the preparation of development plans.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

The High Density Residential and Mixed-Use Objective Development Standards and Design Guidelines is a city-initiated project. The City Council at its meeting on April 20, 2022, awarded a professional services contract in the amount of \$199,448 to Stantec Consulting for the preparation of the development standards and design guidelines and the preparation of the Supplemental EIR. The project is being funded by a CIP account (69060 - General Plan/Climate Action Plan) adopted in the City's Fiscal Year Budget.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

The City prepared a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Corona Housing Element Rezoning Program in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to evaluate potential environmental impacts associated with the implementation of the City of Corona General Plan Housing Element Rezoning Program Update Project. This document is prepared in conformance with CEQA (California PRC Section 21000, et seq.) and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations [CCR], Title 14, Section 15000, et seq.). The Supplemental EIR adequately addresses impacts from minor changes to the Corona General Plan Technical Update 2020 Final EIR certified on June 3, 2020, by the City Council. As required by CEQA, the Supplemental EIR only contains information necessary to analyze the project modifications, changed circumstances, or new information that triggered the need for additional environmental review. The Supplemental EIR only contains the information necessary to make the previous EIR adequate for the project as revised. The Supplemental EIR indicated that the Housing Element Rezoning Program will not result in impacts not already identified in the Corona General Plan Technical Update 2020 Final EIR. The adoption of the Supplemental EIR is being considered with the adoption of GPA2022-0002.

**PREPARED BY:** JOANNE COLETTA, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

**Attachments:**

1. Exhibit 1 - Resolution No. 2023-014
2. Exhibit 2 - High Density Residential and Mixed-Use Objective Development Standards and Design Guidelines
3. Exhibit 3 - Western Riverside Council of Governments Objective Architectural Style Standards (City of Corona)