



Staff Report

File #: 23-0118

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

DATE: 03/01/2023

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Planning & Development Department

SUBJECT:

Specific Plan Amendment 2022-0003 to amend various specific plans to change the land use on certain properties to allow certain residential land uses with commensurate text changes.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This staff report asks the City Council to consider the approval of Specific Plan Amendment 2022-0003 (SPA2022-0003) to support the Housing Element Rezoning Program. The Housing Element Rezoning Program is a planning requirement that sets the path for the development of housing units in accordance with the City's mandated regional housing need in the General Plan Housing Element. It does not guarantee that housing will be developed on all the properties identified on the housing sites inventory in the Housing Element. Future development on these properties and in most cases the redevelopment of these properties will be determined by market conditions. At the same time however, the City needs to maintain land that can support the development of residential units based on the regional housing need during the eight- year period of the current Housing Element, which is the reason for SPA2022-0003.

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 that was certified with the approval of General Plan Amendment 2022-0002.
- b. Introduce by title only and waive full reading for consideration of Ordinance No. 3363, first reading of an ordinance approving amendments to various specific plans to: (1) add an Affordable Housing Overlay Zone for properties identified on the Housing Sites Inventory to permit High Density Residential in conjunction with existing zoning; (2) change the zoning on

various properties from Low Density Residential to Medium Density Residential; and (3) make commensurate text changes (SPA2022-0003).

BACKGROUND & HISTORY:

The City Council adopted the General Plan Housing Element 2021-2029 on November 3, 2021. The Housing Element is a state mandated document that is required to be updated every eight years. On October 12, 2022, the California Department of Housing and Community Development approved the City's Housing Element and found the document to be in compliance with State Housing Element Law (Government Code Article 10.6). The Housing Element requires the City to rezone and amend the General Plan land use of certain properties to meet its state mandated regional housing need.

The Housing Element 2021-2029 aligns with the State's allocation of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment, commonly known as RHNA. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Council adopted the final RHNA allocation for the jurisdictions within its region at its meeting on March 4, 2021. The City of Corona was issued a final RHNA allocation of 6,088 housing units. The City is required to demonstrate the planning of these units based on each income category within the Housing Element for the next eight years.

Corona's RHNA allocation in the low-income category is 2,792 units and in the moderate-income category is 1,096 units. Because the City's availability of vacant, undeveloped properties has decreased over the years due to development, it is especially challenging to find properties suitable for higher density residential, which is crucial in planning enough sites to accommodate low- and moderate-income housing units. Sites suitable for low-income units must have a zoning and General Plan designation that allows a higher density of at least 30 dwelling units to the acre. Moderate income units also can be accounted for in the higher density but can be included in a medium density that allows up to 15 dwelling units to the acre.

Housing Program 7 of the Housing Element requires the City to identify adequate housing sites that could be developed with housing according to the income categories required by the City's RHNA allocation. The City does have a lack of sites with a high density residential zoning available for the planning of low- and moderate-income units. Housing Program 7 requires the City to rezone certain properties so that enough sites are available for the potential development of high density residential that would support the planning of low- and moderate-income units.

ANALYSIS:

SPA2022-0003 is part of the rezoning program described by Housing Program 7 of the Housing Element to support the planning of high-density residential. The specific plan amendment will: a) change the zoning on certain properties identified on the Housing Element Sites Inventory to include an Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) zone in conjunction with the sites existing zoning to allow high-density residential as a stand-alone use or as part of a commercial and residential mixed-use development, b) increase the density from a low density residential to medium density residential on certain properties, and c) include commensurate text changes that align with the land use changes. SPA2022-0003 will amend the following specific plans:

- Downtown Revitalization Specific Plan (SP98-01)

- North Main Street Specific Plan (SP99-01)
- Plaza on Sixth Street Specific Plan (SP90-01)
- Corona Vista Specific Plan (SP90-05)

The amendments to the land use plan exhibits and the commensurate text changes of the specific plans are provided in the Ordinance attached as Exhibit 1 to this staff report.

Downtown Revitalization Specific Plan (SP98-01)

The amendment will amend the land uses on various properties from a nonresidential land use to a residential land use, from a single family residential land use to a multifamily residential land use, and add an Affordable Housing Overlay zone on certain properties. Additionally, a new R2 residential land use is being added to the specific plan with supplementing development standards and other commensurate text changes.

The land use amendments are summarized in the below table. The locations of the land use amendments are depicted in the Plan’s Land Use Plan provided in Exhibit 2.

Existing Land Use	Proposed Land Use	Number of Parcels	Total Acreage	Land Uses On-Site
Gateway Business	Multifamily	16	2.78	Residential
General Commercial	Multifamily	6	2.33	Mobile Homes, miscellaneous commercial buildings
Single Family	Multifamily	3	1.19	Vacant, small single family units, basketball court, recreation building
Single Family	R2	14	3.73	Vacant, tow, car impound yard, single family residential
Residential Office	Multifamily	1	.52	Commercial building (Pacific Bell), parking lot, vacant area

Multifamily 1 (overlay)	Multifamily	1	.42	Parking lot
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The Land Use Plan also shows the properties where the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) zone will be added. The AHO zone will not change the current zoning on these properties and will continue to allow the land uses of the existing zoning. The AHO zone will allow an opportunity for high density residential pursuant to the development standards of the AHO zone in Corona Municipal Code Chapter 17.31, should the property owner want to consider redeveloping the site with residential.

Commensurate text changes are also included as part of the amendment that align with the land use changes. Development standards are proposed for the new R2 designation, which is for medium density residential. The new R2 standards model the R2 development standards in the Corona Municipal Code.

North Main Street Specific Plan (SP99-01)

The amendment will add an AHO zone to certain properties including commensurate text changes. The locations of the AHO zone are shown on the Land Use Plan exhibit of the specific plan, which is provided in Exhibit 3.

Plaza on Sixth Street Specific Plan (SP90-01)

The amendment will add an AHO zone to certain properties including commensurate text changes. The locations of the AHO zone are shown on the Site Plan exhibit of the specific plan, which is provided in Exhibit 4.

Corona Vista Specific Plan (SP90-05)

The amendment will change the land use on 5.4 acres located at the northwest corner of Chase Drive and California Avenue from Low Density Residential to Medium Density/Senior Citizen Residential. The property currently contains the existing United Methodist Church of Corona. The site is partially developed with an existing building that is used for religious purposes and a parking lot. The church currently uses approximately three acres with the rest of the site being undeveloped. The church has no plans for expansion and approached the City about rezoning the property to accommodate housing for senior citizens. The church will remain on the property, but the rest of the site would be used for housing.

The property is adjacent to a city park site and another religious facility used by Congregation Beth Shalom. Across the street on Chase Drive is Santiago High School and across the street on California Avenue are single family homes. Given the adjacent and nearby land uses, amending the land use on the property from single family to medium density is a compatible transition.

The Corona Vista Specific Plan already has development standards in place for Medium Density Residential (MDR). This amendment will add to the MDR designation a Senior Citizen Residential designation and commensurate development standards. The land use amendment is provided in Exhibit 5.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

SPA2022-0003 is an application by the City. Therefore, no application fees were paid for the processing of this application.

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.

PLANNING AND HOUSING COMMISSION ACTION:

At its meeting of January 23, 2023, the Planning and Housing Commission considered the subject matter and took the following action:

Motion was made, seconded (Alexander/Sherman) and carried unanimously, that the Planning and Housing Commission recommend to the City Council the approval of SPA2022-0003, with certain sites removed from SP98-01 and all sites removed from SP01-02, based on the findings contained in the staff report and 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. The minutes of the Planning and Housing Commission meeting are included as Exhibit 11.

PREPARED BY: JOANNE COLETTA, PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Attachments:

1. Exhibit 1 - City Ordinance No. 3363
2. Exhibit 2 - Downtown Revitalization Specific Plan Land Use Plan Amendment
3. Exhibit 3 - North Main Street Specific Plan Land Use Plan Amendment
4. Exhibit 4 - Plaza on Sixth Street Land Use Plan Amendment
5. Exhibit 5 - Corona Vista Specific Plan Land Use Plan Amendment
6. Exhibit 6 - Planning and Housing Commission staff report
7. Exhibit 7 - Zone 1 Area Map with Table

8. Exhibit 8 - Zone 2 Area Map with Table
9. Exhibit 9 - Zone 5 Area Map with Table
10. Exhibit 10 - Zone 11 Area Map with Table
11. Exhibit 11 - Minutes of the Planning and Housing Commission meeting of January 23, 2023