

THOUSAND OAKS CITY COUNCIL



Supplemental Information Packet

**Agenda Related Items - Meeting of September 28, 2021
Supplemental Packet Date: September 28, 2021**

5:00 p.m.

Supplemental Information:

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From: Lisa Evans Powell <lisaesings@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 28, 2021 12:34 PM
To: Claudia Bill-de la Peña <claudia4slowgrowth@gmail.com>; Al Adam <AAdam@toaks.org>; Bob Engler <BEngler@toaks.org>; Ed Jones <EJones@toaks.org>; Kevin McNamee <KMcNamee@toaks.org>; City Manager's Office <CityManager@toaks.org>
Subject: Housing Element Draft; September 28, 2021

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Dear Madam Mayor and Councilmembers:

Greetings. As you are aware, I have written to this Council several times in 2021, as well as given public comment at many meetings. As a longtime social worker (currently Chair of the Ventura County chapter of the National Association of Social Workers), I will continue to "strongly nudge" our city leaders whenever possible on issues related to populations residing in our city who traditionally have been underserved.

My most recent public comments, at the last Council meeting, focused on the "why" behind the housing element process and the importance of AFFH (Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing). My most recent email to you all expressed my disappointment in the refusal to form or support any sort of community advisory committee related to diversity and equity issues, and in that email I provided many examples of cities similar to ours who have successfully forged such initiatives.

I won't be making public comment this evening, but wanted to submit written comments in light of the housing element draft that has been released in the last week. This is basically what I shared with the Planning Commission last night.

Thousand Oaks gets the chance every several years to update its Housing Element. This year is special because it aligns with the General Plan update. This is an extraordinary opportunity to put intentional and creative plans in place for the future of our city.

We have RHNA targets set by the state because all cities need to play their part in addressing the housing shortage and related issues here in California. During the last Housing Element cycle (2013 Housing Element), the city did not meet its target of low-income housing development. This time around, the targets are much greater in number - yet, the current draft's action plan is not significantly different than that of the previous housing element. I'm not clear how we are going to meet these goals.

I do not wish to discount the tremendous amount of work that I know goes into putting a document of this size and scope together. Yet, I am bothered by the tendency to stay vague when setting goals, and the lack of clear and measurable goals and timelines in this draft document.

Here are some of the specific elements I believe that should be incorporated into the Housing Element:

- A strong and specific Inclusionary Housing Ordinance (I believe others have written to you with suggested elements that such an ordinance should include);
- Mid-cycle reviews that are public and allow for input;
- New environmental building standards; and
- For projects qualifying for a density bonus: a reduction of parking requirements, by-right concessions, as well as a height increase.

Frankly, I am also concerned with the limited scope of the section focused on Goal #2 (Providing housing opportunities for persons with special needs). There are two programs listed, both of which consist solely of the City providing funding to other organizations that is not necessarily specific to housing. There are no other specific policies that make commitments to incentivize the building of housing that is needed here in Thousand Oaks for these populations: housing geared toward our senior residents, our residents living with disabilities, for residents who are homeless or at risk for homelessness, and for residents on limited or fixed incomes. One example might be specific policies that focus on developing new housing units designated for our elderly or persons with disabilities to be in close proximity to public transportation and community services. That is just one example (from many) of policies specific to our "special needs populations" that I have seen in other cities' housing elements. Especially given the demographic trends that will only continue, such as our aging population continuing to increase, our housing element should contain specific policies and plans for action that address these trends.

Ultimately, all that is not addressed in this housing element draft aligns with a long-held frustration of mine, that being the unwillingness of the city to take visible concrete action and ensure that city policies are aligned with what is now the city's "number one goal" (to be an equitable and inclusive city). I don't see this goal or related themes shining through this document. In fact, much of the action plan of this housing element seems to be copied over from 2013. Where is the reflection, the acknowledgement that we need to do things differently, that we need bold action that is intentional and inclusive? Similar to the refusal to move forward on any sort of community equity commission or advisory group, the housing element draft content makes me wonder how serious our city is about this city goal.

I hope it's a good discussion tonight and that the City will incorporate the feedback it is receiving from residents on this draft housing element. I and so many others want to be partners with the City in ensuring that Thousand Oaks will be a livable, economically vibrant, inclusive, and accessible place to live for the foreseeable future.

Yours Truly,

Lisa Evans Powell
Thousand Oaks

TO COUNCIL: 09/28/2021
AGENDA ITEM NO.: 13A
MEETING DATE: 09/28/2021

From: Jon E <extribulations@gmail.com>
Date: September 28, 2021 at 14:20:18 PDT
To: Claudia Bill de la Pena <ClaudiaBDLP@toaks.org>
Subject: Tonight's Council Meeting

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Hello Claudia,

My name is Jonathan Ely. I grew up in Thousand Oaks and I've lived here for all of my adult life. I'm emailing to urge you to vote to go through with tonight's vote on approving the homeless shelter in Thousand Oaks.

I myself struggled with homelessness soon after my dad became ill and unable to provide for our family my senior year of high school. I received no help from Many Mansions, sitting on the waitlist for well over 2 years struggling from paycheck to paycheck.

I've luckily reinvented and created opportunities for myself but not all are so fortunate. I've developed skills and I'm happy to say I work a salaried position and afford rent for a room in an apartment with my friends.

I think the homeless shelter would take a lot of stress off of our (severely lacking) services for homeless and less fortunate peoples, and I think we should push forward and approve the plans.

Thank you for your time,
Jonathan Ely

Name (Optional)	City	Item #	In favor/ Opposed	Comment
Brian Stark	Thousand Oaks	13A	In favor	<p>I support City efforts to address homelessness through the provision of emergency and permanent supportive housing in our community. Homelessness cannot be solved simply by forcing homeless people elsewhere by neglect or willful denial of basic necessities such as shelter. A City that commits to a real effort to help move vulnerable people into supportive housing is one that is exhibiting leadership that is scarce in CA. The City has the opportunity to work with organizations and agencies with proven records to do something that will make a real difference in people's lives. The location is also good for this use and the project will move a degrading asset back to a more productive and socially beneficial use. People make a lot of assumptions about homeless people, and these assumptions haven't helped a single person. Compassion and a well thought-out effort to secure shelter for those in need will help people (most of whom are local). I hope the Council will support this effort and show that Thousand Oaks is a place that addresses community problems through rational and compassionate decisions.</p>
Brandon	Thousand Oaks	13A	Opposed	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I hope you know what you're doing if you approve this location. Be careful.</p> <p>As all the boxes get checked for all of the changes our city must make, the influence of the adopted changes will be felt in the everyday experience of living in our town.</p> <p>I'm not sure it's a good idea to make the proposed location permanent. I'm also not sure it's a good idea to center this kind of thing in the middle of the main commercial area.</p> <p>Maybe a year or two trial period first? We can see what happens, and go from there.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>