



County of Monterey

Item No.

Board Report

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

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REF260002 - MONTEREY COUNTY GENERAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND HOUSING ELEMENT ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

- a. Consider the 2025 Annual Progress Report for the Monterey County General Plan(s);
- b. Consider the 2025 Annual Progress Report for the 2024-2031 Housing Element; and
- c. Consider and provide direction regarding priorities for the 2026-2027 Long-Range Planning Work Program.

Proposed CEQA Action: Not a project per Sections 15060(c)(1) and 15378(b)(4) of the CEQA Guidelines.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

- a. Find that submitting these annual reports is not a project subject to CEQA per Section 15060(c)(1) and 15378(b)(4) of the CEQA Guidelines;
- b. Accept the 2025 Annual Progress Report for the Monterey County General Plan(s) pursuant to Government Code Section 65400 (**Attachment A**);
- c. Accept the 2025 Annual Progress Report for the 2024-2031 Housing Element to comply with State Department of Housing and Community Development requirements (**Attachment A and Attachment B**);
- d. Consider and provide direction regarding priorities for the 2026-2027 Long-Range Planning Work Program (**Attachment C**); and
- e. Authorize the Housing and Community Development Department Director to submit the final progress reports to the State Office of Planning and Research and State Department of Housing and Community Development; and

SUMMARY:

Annually, the County of Monterey Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) prepares a combined Annual Progress Report (APR) on the status of the General Plan and progress toward meeting Housing Element policies, including Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). **Attachment A** to this report contains the 2025 Annual Progress Report for the 2010 General Plan Implementation (2025 GPI APR) and the 2024-2031 Housing Element Progress (2025 Housing APR). Accomplishments for the 2025 reporting period are summarized as follows:

- a) Progress was made on 32 long-range planning work tasks.
- b) Of the work tasks that progressed, four were completed (and one is anticipated to be completed in the reporting period). Tasks completed were: Zoning Ordinance and Map Updates implementing the 2010 General Plan; Vacation Rental Ordinances (Coastal); Accessory Dwelling Unit (Coastal) Ordinance and associated Land Use Plan Amendments; North County Wildlife and Eucalyptus Removal Pilot Program; and Noise Ordinance Amendments

(anticipated to be complete March 2026).

c) Two amendments to the Local Coastal Program (LCP), which falls under the County's 1982 General Plan (Coastal), were processed including: 1) modifications to all Coastal Land Use Plans (LUPs) to allow for accessory dwelling units and junior accessory dwelling units (ADUs/JADUs); and 2) amended the County's LCP to regulate vacation rentals in the Coastal Zone.

d) A total of 193 units counted toward the County's Sixth Cycle 2024-2031 Regional Housing Allocation Needs (RHNA) affordable income units (8 low-income units, 6 moderate-income units and 179 above moderate-income units).

Work Program Highest Priorities for 2026-2027

The Long-Range Planning Work Program (Work Program) includes approximately 87 tasks, of which 32 are in various stages of completion. Please see **Attachment C** for the full list. The Work Program is primarily implemented by the HCD's Advanced Planning team of 7 (with two current vacancies), with substantive support from the Chief of Planning and HCD Director. Additionally, other departments contribute to the Work Program progress and lead certain tasks.

HCD proposes to continue to advance active projects/tasks on the Work Program during the 2026-27 period (April 1, 2026 to March 31, 2027) following general prioritization criteria as follows: 1) legal mandates; 2) Board directives and priorities; 3) grant or outside funding; 4) 2010 General Plan implementation; and 5) other tasks as time and resources allow. For the 2026-27 period, HCD proposed the 12 projects/tasks listed below as top priority projects in 2026-27 fiscal year. These top priority projects will receive necessary staff resources and funding allowing for the completion, or significant advancement toward completion, of those priorities. Other Work Program tasks will continue to be advanced during FY 2026-27, as time and resources allow.

HCD is specifically looking to the Board of Supervisors to provide input and direction to staff regarding the Work Program priorities for 2026-27, including the 12 top priority projects, listed in order of priority, and are proposed by staff as follows:

- 1) Housing Element 6th Cycle Update and Implementation, including:
 - Rezoning
 - Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinances (Inland)
 - Permit Streamlining
- 2) Priority Board Referrals, including:
 - Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Ordinance
 - Amended Vacation Rental Ordinances
 - Rooster Ordinance
- 3) Fire Preparedness/Home Hardening and Defensible Space
- 4) Chualar Community Plan
- 5) Water Allocation Policy
- 6) Safety Element Update
- 7) Environmental Justice Element, with Open Space Element updates as required by State Law
- 8) Fort Ord Habitat Resource Management Plan
- 9) Big Sur Coast Land Use Plan Update
- 10) Moss Landing Community Plan Update

- 11) Castroville Community Plan Update; and
- 12) Carmel River Floodplain Restoration and Environmental Enhancement (CRFREE) Project.

The list above reflects projects that are mandated by State Law, referred to HCD by the Board of Supervisors, are associated with grant funding time constraints or have had substantial progress that would be lost if efforts are interrupted. Staff are also continuing to prioritize and make progress on other Board Referrals as resources allow, including: Senior Housing at Laurel Yard, Tenant Relocation Assistance Ordinance updates, Safeguard Historic Resources, Cannabis Consumption Lounges, Outdoor Cannabis Cultivation Ordinance and Road Naming Conventions. These, among other Long-Range Work Program tasks, are listed in **Attachment C**.

Of the recommended priorities, HCD staff believes that tasks 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 will be completed in 2026. We anticipate progress toward completion, with likely completion in future years, on the remaining tasks.

Staff recommends the Board of Supervisors accept the 2025 General Plan Implementation and Housing Element Annual Progress Report and authorize the HCD Director to submit as required to the state. Staff also recommends that the Board of Supervisors provide direction regarding the Long-Range Planning Work Program and priorities.

DISCUSSION

See **Attachment D** - Detailed Discussion.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

Staff finds that progress reports are not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(3) and 15378. These reports are an administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes to the environment. They are for information purposes only. Activities identified in these reports implement policies of the 1982 and 2010 General Plans and the 2015 Housing Element, which were subject to CEQA review. In addition, CEQA will be addressed, as appropriate, with each task as it is completed.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Implementation of the 2010 General Plan (Non-Coastal) and the 1982 General Plan (Coastal) involves close coordination between all the land use departments and agencies (Planning, Building, Housing, Engineering/Public Works, Environmental Services, Environmental Health, County Administrative Office, Fire Districts, and Water Resources Agency). In addition, County Counsel's office actively participates in the legal review of ordinances and plans prepared as part of GPI and Work Program implementation.

On March 11, 2026, the Planning Commission considered the annual reports, Work Program, and provided input to staff. Upon its consideration of the Work Program, the Planning Commission recommended that the Board of Supervisors consider the following 2010 General Plan policy provisions be implemented and included as part of the top 12 priorities for the 2026-2027 Work Program:

- LU-1.19 - creation of a Development Evaluation System (DES); and
- LU-2.21 - development of the Pajaro Community Plan.

The Planning Commission also supported continued development of the Chualar Community Plan which is included in the top 12 priorities in the Work Program.

The Planning Commission discussion relayed concerns regarding how these 2010 General Plan priority policies have been included as top 12 priorities (Chualar, DES) or have been requested to be included as a top 12 priority (Pajaro) for prior Work Programs but have not yet materialized and been brought to fruition due to competing policy priorities and resource challenges. The Planning Commission also discussed how the implementation of DES, the Pajaro Community Plan, and the Chualar Community Plan have a direct nexus with furthering environmental justice for disadvantaged communities and have a direct nexus with the Draft Environmental Justice Element being developed by staff. The Planning Commission also discussed how implementation of these three projects also clarifies the community's vision for how and where housing growth can occur in the County, which has a nexus with the County's Housing Element Update. Therefore, the Planning Commission recommended that the Board consider changes to the 26-27 Work Program priorities as outlined above.

HOUSING IMPACTS:

- ☒ X Reduces constraints on Housing Development
☐ Increases constraints on Housing Development
☐ Neutral
☐ Not applicable [N/A]

Implementing the County's General Plan and the Work Program is neutral on Housing Development. However, furthering Task 1 - Housing Element 6th Cycle Update and Implementation will assist with streamlining housing production and permitting for residential development in unincorporated Monterey County, resulting in reduce constraints on Housing Development.

FINANCING

For FY 2025-26, HCD's Approved Budget was augmented by a total of \$748,787 for Work Program implementation, of which \$375,000 was approved for the Chualar Community Plan and \$373,787 was approved to fund General Plan updates of the Housing Element, Safety Element, and new Environmental Justice Element. Through the end of FY26, staff is anticipating spending on the General Plan updates approximately \$443,550 and Chualar Community Plan spending to be closer to \$195,000. The remaining balance of funds provided for the Chualar Community Plan will assist in offsetting additional costs related to the General Plan updates, specifically updates to the Housing Element. HCD has received a total of \$3,893,523 in augmentation funding from FY 2015-16 through FY 2024-25, which has been utilized to fund consultant work on General Plan Implementation (GPI) and other Work Program activities. See **Attachment E** for details these expenditures by project and fiscal year.

Staff continues to perform as much of the implementation work as possible and has been successful securing outside funding to pay for consultant costs and limited staff costs in recent years. HCD has been awarded several multi-year grants to fund Work Program activities that

are active this in FY 2025-26, including the following grant awards: Local Early Action Planning Program (LEAP) for \$500,000; Regional Early Action Planning Program (REAP 2.0) for \$169,380; and California Coastal Conservancy for \$938,960. Additionally, HCD utilizes outside funds for certain Work Program activities, when applicable, including Habitat Management (Fund 029) for the Fort Ord Habitat Resource Management Plan development; and Successor Agency to the Redevelopment Agency for the County of Monterey (Fund 406) and East Garrison Developer Reimbursements (Fund 182) for work related to the East Garrison development.

In addition, the General Plan Implementation Fee is levied on all development and planning permits. In FY 2023-24 a total of \$851,683 was collected in GPUI fees, FY 2024-25 a total of \$831,306 was collected, and fiscal year to date GPUI revenues are \$638,279.

On February 3, 2026, the Board of Supervisors approved an allocation of Measure AA funds to the following Long Range Work Program tasks: \$650,000 for Housing Element Implementation (Task 1), \$100,000 for Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Ordinance (Task 2), and \$100,000 for Fire Preparedness/Home Hardening and Defensible Space (Task 3).

FY 2026-27 Work Program unfunded consultant costs are estimated to be approximately \$800,000 and augmentation requests have been submitted for these costs as follows: \$300,000 for the General Plan Update (including Housing Element, Safety Element, Environmental Justice Element, and Open Space Element updates); and \$500,000 for the Chualar Community Plan.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS:

Implementing the County's General Plan and the Work Program helps further the objectives in Strategic Goal A: Well-Being and Quality of Life by supporting key objectives related to Housing and Strategic Goal B: Sustainable Infrastructure for the Present and Future by supporting key objectives related to Master Planning and Policies and Implementing Infrastructure Plans.

Specifically, implementing the County's General Plan and the Work Program helps further with the following Housing strategies: streamline permitting processes to encourage construction of affordable housing/alternative dwelling units, making measurable progress in achieving or exceeding the County's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), and expanding opportunities for affordable and workforce housing development.

Additionally, implementing the County's General Plan and the Work Program help assist other departments and agencies with the following Master Planning and Policies and Implementing Infrastructure Plans strategies: identify infrastructure needs and new technology options for enhanced water, wastewater, and water treatment and developing a platform for community-based planning to identify and execute projects to beautify disadvantaged unincorporated communities.

- ☒ Well-Being and Quality of Life
- ☒ Sustainable Infrastructure for the Present and Future
- ☐ Safe and Resilient Communities
- ☐ Diverse and Thriving Economy
- ☐ Dynamic Organization and Employer of Choice

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Approved by: Craig Spencer, HCD Director

The following Attachments are on file with the Clerk of the Board:

Attachment A -2025 General Plan & Housing Element Annual Progress Reports

Attachment B - 2025 Housing APR Table B

Attachment C - Draft Long-Range Planning Work Program Overview

Attachment D - Detailed Discussion

Attachment E - Work Program General Fund Augmentation Summary FY2015 to date

cc: Front Counter Copy; Fenton & Keller; Brian Finegan Law Office (Michael Harrington); Grower-Shipper Association (Christopher Valadez); Law Offices of Michael D. Cling (Michael Cling); Monterey County Farm Bureau (Norm Groot); Salinas Valley Water Coalition (Nancy Isakson); Prunedale Neighbors Group (Ed Mitchell); Anthony Lombardo and Associates (Dale Ellis); Horan Lloyd Law Firm (Pamela Silkwood); Big Sur Multi-Agency Advisory Council c/o Katie Scariot (HCD); Highway 68 Coalition (Mike Weaver); Carmel Residents Association; Carmel Valley Association; Marjorie Kay; The Open Monterey Project (Molly Erickson); LandWatch (Michael DeLapa); Janet Brennan; John H. Farrow; Craig Spencer (HCD); Cora Pantraud (CAO); Kelly Donlon (County Counsel); Planning File No. REF260002.