



Agenda Report

Item #: 25-220

Meeting Date: 4/15/2025

TITLE: 2024 2015-2035 GENERAL PLAN ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT (APR)

DEPARTMENT: ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT/PLANNING DIVISION

PRESENTED BY: PHAYVANH NANTHAVONGDOUANGSY, PRINCIPAL PLANNER, AND CAITLYN CURLEY, ASSISTANT PLANNER

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RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council approve the 2024 Annual Progress Report for the 2015-2035 Costa Mesa General Plan for submittal to the State Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LUCI) [formerly known as the Office of Planning and Research (OPR)], and State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

BACKGROUND:

The Costa Mesa General Plan sets forth the vision, goals, objectives, and policies for the City. General Plan implementation ensures that development decisions and improvements to public and private infrastructure are consistent with the community's goals and visions. State Land Use and Zoning Law, Government Code Section 65000, et. seq., requires jurisdictions to submit a General Plan Annual Progress Report to the State agencies identified above. The State uses the General Plan APR to identify statewide trends in land use decisions to assess how local planning and development activities align with statewide planning goals and policies. Specifically, the General Plan APR provides an overview of the actions taken by the City during the 2024 calendar year to implement the City's General Plan programs and policies. All jurisdictions are required to provide the State with separate General Plan and Housing Element Annual Progress Reports. The 2024 6th Cycle Housing Element Annual Progress Report HCD was approved by City Council on March 18, 2025, and is available online at: <https://www.costamesaca.gov/home/showdocument?id=59930>.

ANALYSIS:

General Plan Annual Progress Report

The General Plan Annual Progress Report (APR) highlights the City's progress in implementing the goals and policies outlined in the General Plan. This annual assessment provides an opportunity to evaluate, adjust, and refine policies and implementation strategies to ensure continued alignment with the City's long-term vision. It summarizes key actions taken during the 12-month reporting period and demonstrates how land use decisions and City initiatives support the General Plan's adopted goals, policies, and implementation measures.

In the previous versions of the City's General Plan Annual Progress Reports, all City programs and actions were noted for each General Plan policy. On January 30, 2025, LUCI published guidance on a format to streamline the process. The focus of the APR is now on Major Planning/City Activities that implement the General Plan and a Summary of Housing Element Implementation.

While the APR is not intended to be an exhaustive record of all City initiatives and the technical guidance released this year emphasizes a streamlined approach to the report, the 2024 APR showcases several significant accomplishments. Highlighted accomplishments include the approval of land use projects consistent with General Plan policies, continued investment in public safety, emergency services, and community programs, and ongoing infrastructure improvements that promote active transportation and pedestrian mobility. The City has also reaffirmed its commitment to environmental stewardship and community well-being by prioritizing the preservation of open space and expanding access to high-quality recreational opportunities. Additionally, measurable progress has been made toward achieving the goals outlined in the Housing Element.

Land use projects and City activities are tracked through City Council and Planning Commission agendas, and those directly related to the General Plan are included in the APR. The Planning Division collaborates with other City departments to compile the report, which includes links to relevant staff reports and a map of completed Active Transportation Improvement Projects.

General Plan Consistency with the State's General Plan Guidelines

The City of Costa Mesa's General Plan consists of seven elements that are required by State statutes and three optional elements. For the seven required elements, the City's General Plan provides goals and policies that address these categories consistent with the State law. The seven required elements include:

- Land Use
- Circulation
- Housing
- Conservation
- Open Space and Recreation
- Noise
- Safety

The three optional elements address additional topics that are of particular local significance and include:

- Growth Management
- Community Design
- Historic and Cultural Resources

The General Plan goals and policies for these elements are consistent with state law and follow State General Plan Guidelines.

In the future, to implement the 6th Cycle Housing Element and, specifically, to accommodate the City's Regional Housing Needs Assessment allocation, the General Plan will be updated to ensure that the City's General Plan will remain internally consistent and remain an effective guiding document for orderly growth. Additionally, the City is reviewing other General Plan Elements to integrate

environmental justice policies in accordance with the Planning for Healthy Communities Act (SB 1000). This law mandates the development of General Plan policies that address the needs of lower-income areas disproportionately affected by pollution and other environmental hazards that contribute to negative health outcomes. As part of this effort, the City will identify existing policies that support environmental justice.

As shown through various City actions and approved projects that are summarized in the General Plan APR, the City's General Plan remains an effective guide for orderly community growth and development, preservation and conservation of open space and natural resources, and efficient expenditure of public funds. Examples of the City's actions for each General Plan Element are highlighted below.

1. Land Use Element

- a. The City approved amendments to the Costa Mesa Municipal Code (CMMC) to update Cannabis Regulations (Ordinances No. 2024-03 and 2024-04) on May 7, 2024. This project implements the Land Use Element Goal LU-6: *"Economically Viable and Productive Land Uses that Increase the City's Tax Base."*
- b. The City approved amendments to the CMMC to streamline Outdoor Dining Areas development (Ordinance No. 2024-01) on January 16, 2024. This project supports the Land Use Element Goals LU-1: *"A Balanced Community with a Mix of Land Uses to Meet Resident and Business Needs"* and LU-6: *"Economically Viable and Productive Land Uses that Increase the City's Tax Base"*. It also implements the Community Design Element Goal CD-1: *"Vehicular and Pedestrian Corridors."*
- c. The City continued its Business Improvement Area (BIA) Program to support the hotel and motel industry in promoting tourism. This program implements the Land Use Element Goal LU-6: *"Economically Viable and Productive Land Uses that Increase the City's Tax Base."*

2. Circulation Element

The following City activities achieve various goals of the Circulation Element, most notably Goal C-1: *"Implement 'Complete Streets' Policies on Roadways in Costa Mesa"*, Goal C-3: *"Enhance Regional Mobility and Coordination"*, and Goal C-5: *"Ensure Coordination between the Land Use and Circulation Systems"*.

- a. The City approved the Pedestrian Master Plan (PMP) and an amendment to the General Plan Circulation Element (PGPA-23-0001) on May 7, 2024. This update aligns Circulation Element policies with the PMP, ensuring its goals are integrated into future public and private projects.
- b. The City completed several pedestrian and bikeway improvements as part of the Active Transportation Plan (ATP) implementation, including:

- Installation of Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB) at Paularino and Coolidge intersection, Town Center, Avenue of the Arts, and Whitter and Parkhill intersection;
- Completion of the Adams Avenue Class II-B Bike Lane enhancements from the City boundary to Royal Palms Drive;
- Installation of Class III Bike Route on Fullerton Avenue between 18th Street and East Bay Street;
- Installation of Class III Bike Route on East Bay Street to West Bay Street from Fullerton Avenue to Thurin Street;
- Installation of a Class II-B Bike Lane on Santa Ana Avenue between Ogle Street and 17th Street;
- Installation of a Class II Bike Lane on Santa Ana Avenue between 21st Street and 22nd Street;
- Installation of High-Intensity Activated CrossWalk (HAWK) signals at Wilson Street and Fordham Drive, and at 18th Street and Lions Park;
- Installation of a pedestrian signal at West 19th Street and Wallace Avenue; and,
- Installation of K71 bike lane bollards on Placentia Avenue between Victoria Street and 18th Street, and on 19th Street between Wallace Avenue and Federal Avenue.

3. Growth Management Element

The City actively implements the Growth Management Element Goals by aligning land use and transportation policies with state, regional, and local growth management initiatives. To support informed decision-making, growth projections, and transportation modeling, the City provides data and reports to the Center for Demographic Research, Southern California Association of Governments, State Department of Finance, Orange County Transportation Authority, and Newport Mesa Unified School District upon request.

4. Housing Element

- a. The City approved its Annual Action Plan Funding Priorities for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Home Investment Partnerships Grant: \$1.5 million used for various activities that assist low- and moderate-income Costa Mesa residents. This City action implements the Housing Element Goals Goal #1: *"Preserve and enhance the City's existing housing supply"*, Goal #2: *"Facilitate the creation and availability of housing for residents at all income levels and for those with special housing needs"*, and Goal #4: *"Provide housing opportunities to residents of all social and economic segments of the community without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, disability/medical conditions, national origin or ancestry, marital status, age, household composition or size, source of income, or any other arbitrary factors."*
- b. The 2024 Housing Element APR is attached to the General Plan Annual Progress Report as Attachment 1. It provides a summary of the housing development activities that occurred in 2024, including how many building permits were issued that will count towards the City meeting its Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) goals.

In 2024, the City completed construction of 284 housing units including 209 multifamily units at the Lux Apartments on 2277 Harbor Blvd. The City issued 123 residential building permits and entitled four housing projects adding a net total of ten units. Additionally, it received eight planning applications for projects with two or more units, totaling 272 net new units.

From October 15, 2021 (start of the 6th Housing Element Cycle) to December 31, 2024, the City issued building permits for a total of 373 residential units, including 312 affordable units and 60 above moderate-income units (shown in Table 1 Below). The majority of the affordable units were accessory dwelling units (ADUs) with 58 ADUs in the very low-income category, 162 ADUs in the low-income category and 32 ADUs in the moderate-income category. Additionally, completion of Phase I of the Mesa Vista Homekey development (2274 Newport Boulevard) provided 40 extremely low-income units and one above moderate manager's unit. With the exception of the Mesa Vista project, these permitted housing units are all within existing residential neighborhoods.

Table 1: Total Building Permits Issued in 6th Housing Element Cycle					
Income Category	RHNA Allocation (Housing Units)	October 2021-December 2022	2023	2024	Total Progress in Housing Element Reporting Period (October 2021-December 2029)
Very Low Income	2,919 units	27	47	24	98
Low Income	1,794 units	56	61	45	162
Moderate Income	2,088 units	19	13	20	52
Above Moderate Income	4,959 units	16	11	34	61
Total:	11,760 units	118	132	123	373

Throughout the 2021-2029 Housing Element planning period, the City continues to monitor and track the number of housing units in the "pipeline" (constituting projects within entitlement review, entitled, under construction and recently constructed). These units officially count towards the City's RHNA obligation when a building permit is pulled. As of December 31, 2024, the City is processing ten housing development projects that includes two or more units that will provide a net increase of 1,368 units, if approved. Furthermore, as of February 28, 2025, there are an additional 1,238 entitled housing units expected to complete construction within the 6th Cycle Housing Element period.

5. Conservation Element

The following City activities help achieve the Conservation Element Goals CON-4: "*Improved Air Quality*" and Goal CON-3: "*Improved Water Supply and Quality*."

- a. The City accepted the CalRecycle Senate Bill (SB) 1383 Grant award that will fund activities to implement SB 1383. SB 1383 aims to reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants by 75% by 2025 and achieve 20% edible food recovery by 2025. The grant will be used to implement programs relating to outreach, collection, edible food recovery, enforcement and inspection, procurement, and recordkeeping.
- b. The City participated in the Clean Mobility Options (CMO) Pilot Program and the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Project Grant for Community-Based Transit. The CMO Voucher Pilot Program is a statewide initiative providing funding for zero-emission carsharing, carpooling, vanpooling, innovative transit, and on-demand ride services in underserved communities. With grant funds, the City launched Let's Go Costa Mesa in November 2024.

6. Noise Element

The City continuously implements the Noise Element Goals by evaluating the existing and anticipated noise environment for all projects. Each project is assessed for compatibility with adopted noise and land use criteria, as well as interior and exterior noise standards, including Title 24 requirements for new residential developments. Staff identifies potential noise mitigation measures during project evaluations and follows appropriate environmental review processes when needed. For example, acoustical studies lead to the incorporation of sound attenuation measures in both interior and exterior spaces. Additionally, mixed-use developments must position noise sources away from residential areas. The City also monitors developments related to John Wayne Airport operations, such as the recent General Aviation Program, to prevent increased noise levels. The Community Improvement Division investigates and addresses all noise-related concerns submitted for review.

7. Safety Element

The following City activities help achieve the Safety Element Goal S-1: "*Risk Management of Natural and Human-Caused Disasters*" by supporting emergency services and programs to ensure that the City can respond and reduce threats to life and property.

- a. Fire Station No. 4 Training Tower and Site Improvement Project
- b. Conceptual Design of Fire Station No. 2 Reconstruction Project
- c. Animal Care Shelter Services – Priceless Pets Rescue
- d. 2023 Operation Stonegarden Funds to be used to Deter Narcotics Trafficking
- e. Extend Term of PSA with Falck Mobile Health Corporation for Ambulance Services
- f. Annual Fire Inspection pursuant to SB 1205: inspect public and private schools, hotels, motels, lodging housings, and apartment buildings
- g. Acceptance and Allocation of the 2024-2025 Office of Traffic Safety Grant for the Selective Traffic Enforcement Program
- h. Subrecipient Agreement for the 2023 Urban Area Security Initiative Grant

8. Community Design Element

The City consistently implements the goals of the Community Design Element by ensuring that land use developments and capital improvement projects enhance the community's visual character and overall quality of life. Land use projects are reviewed and designed to align with urban plans, General Plan policies, and zoning standards, while ensuring compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods. Residential developments are evaluated to meet the City's Residential Design Guidelines, promoting design excellence in new housing projects. Where applicable, developments must also comply with the City's landscaping standards to ensure aesthetic appeal and environmental sustainability. The Capital Improvement Projects outlined in the Circulation Element, along with the recent approval of the Pedestrian Master Plan, reflect the City's ongoing commitment to improving its vehicular and pedestrian pathways.

9. Open Space and Recreation Element

The following City activities help achieve the Open Space and Recreational Element Goals OSR-1: *"Balanced and Accessible System of Parks and Open Spaces"*, R-2A: *"Community Services Programs Meeting Community Needs"*, and OSR -3: *"Conserved Open Space"*.

- a. The City approved the Shalamar Park design improvement and purchase of 778 Shalimar Drive to support the expansion.
- b. The City approved the Ketchum-Libolt Park design improvements.
- c. The City adopted plans to install new lighting facilities include Jack Hammett Sports Complex, TeWinkle Athletic Complex, Costa Mesa Tennis Center, and Bark Park.
- d. The City completed improvements to the sports complex included parking lot pavement improvements, concrete sidewalk, access ramps, installation of a new storage building, site grading, lighting, landscape improvements, and integrated art features.

10. Historical and Cultural Resources Element

The City approved the "Leroy Anderson House" located at 208 Magnolia Street to be added to the Local Historic Register on June 18, 2024. This project implements the Historical and Cultural Resources Element Goal HCR-1: *"Historical, Archeological, and Paleontological Resources Preservation."*

ALTERNATIVES:

The APRs summarize the City's efforts undertaken in 2024 to implement the General Plan. The APRs are required to be submitted annually to the State agencies and serves as an informational document. Therefore, there are no presented alternatives for City Council consideration.

FISCAL REVIEW:

There are no fiscal impacts to the City's Budget for the approval of the recommended actions.

LEGAL REVIEW:

The City Attorney's Office has reviewed this Agenda Report and the attached 2024 General Plan APR and approves them both as to form.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS AND PRIORITIES:

This item supports the following City Council goals:

1. Strengthen the Public's Safety and Improve the Quality of Life.
2. Diversify, stabilize, and increase housing to reflect community needs.
3. Advance environmental sustainability and climate resiliency.

CONCLUSION:

As required by the Government Code, the 2024 General Plan APR is required to be prepared and submitted to the State annually and provides a status on the City's General Plan implementation. Following City Council approval, the 2024 General Plan APR will be submitted to the State Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LUCI) and State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).