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City Council Takes Proactive Steps to Create More Attainable and Affordable Housing Projects in Palm Springs

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For decades, Palm Springs has struggled with a lack of attainable and affordable housing for low-income residents, seniors and working families who need it, but recently the City Council has taken several proactive steps to reduce barriers and ensure that more housing is built in the city.

In January, the Council approved a development agreement with Community Housing Opportunities Corporation, (CHOC), for 60-unit multifamily housing project that is contingent upon federal funding. The project could break ground in 2020.

In addition, the City Council recently took the following important steps to increase attainable housing:

- Adoption of a **Density Bonus Ordinance**, which allows an increase in the number of units on site through a density bonus. The ordinance allows for waivers of certain development standards, such as height limits and setback requirements, as well as a reduced parking requirement. These elements help reduce the per unit cost for housing, making it possible to finance affordable housing developments.
- Adoption of a **Mixed Use Ordinance**, which encourages the development of housing in commercial areas by allowing additional residential density in the downtown area, reducing parking, setback and lot coverage requirements. The changes to these development standards make it easier to develop housing units by reducing unit hard costs and the timeframe for entitlements.
- Adoption of **Dwelling Unit Ordinance**, which further reduces the challenges to developing accessory dwelling units (often called casitas) in single-family neighborhoods. Property owners no longer have to file a Land Use Permit to build an accessory dwelling unit, the parking for the unit can be waived in many circumstances, and other similar restrictions have been eliminated. The units must be rented for a minimum of 28 days, which is intended to ensure that the units are used for long-term renters.
- Adoption of **Small Lot Ordinance**, which allows for reduced lot size of 5,000 feet for single-family residential subdivisions. The ordinance was modeled after the design characteristics in the Warm Sands area, and will allow for more affordable lot size while maintaining the general character of Palm Springs neighborhoods. The smaller lot size can assist in reducing the cost of housing and provides a product that may be more affordable to working families.

“Palm Springs prides itself on being a place for everyone and the City Council is committed to being proactive when it comes to creating more attainable housing options for residents and others who need help, such as seniors and working families,” said City Manager David H. Ready.

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