

# City of Gardena 2014-2021 Housing Element

City of Gardena  
Community Development Department

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# I. INTRODUCTION

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## A. Community Context

Located in the South Bay region of Los Angeles County, 13 miles south of downtown Los Angeles, Gardena is a dense urban community encompassing 5.7 square miles. Nicknamed the Freeway City, Gardena is situated near four major freeways: the Harbor (I-110), San Diego (I-405), Century (105), and Artesia (SR-91). Surrounding communities include Hawthorne and Los Angeles County to the north and west, Torrance to the south and west, and Los Angeles to the east. Figure 1 shows the location of the City of Gardena in relation to the region.

Incorporated in 1930, Gardena experienced its fastest growth during the 1950s, when population more than doubled and the number of housing units grew by more than 150 percent. Part of this growth was the result of annexation of the northwest portion of the City. Growth in the City slowed during the 1960s and 1970s, but the City has seen its population increase by more than 30 percent over the past 20 years.

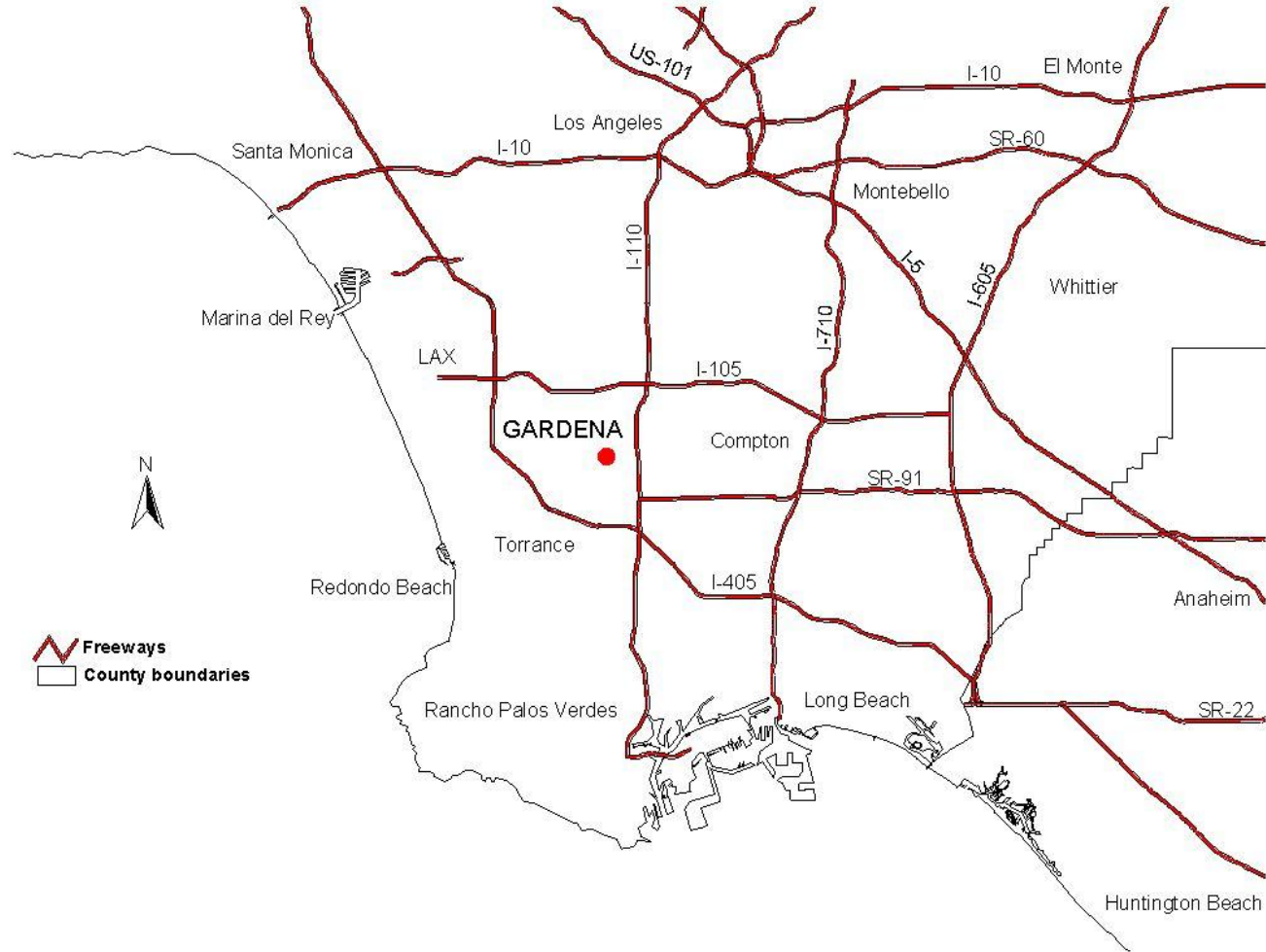
Housing in Gardena originally consisted almost entirely of single-family homes. However, as the City grew and vacant land became more limited, higher density housing was necessary to accommodate the population. The housing stock now consists of a balance between single-family homes and multi-family units.<sup>1</sup> During the 1980s, a majority of the housing growth was attributable to the replacement of single-family dwellings with multi-family units.

Much of the recent new housing construction in the City has occurred through the implementation of specific plans. The first three specific plans (Emerald Square, Redondo Village and Gardena Village) were adopted in 1999 and resulted in the development of 283 residential units. While most of the specific plans have been fully developed, the Artesia Corridor Specific Plan adopted in 2006 is currently being developed with residential and commercial mixed uses. Once fully developed, the 44-acre Artesia Corridor Specific Plan site will accommodate approximately 300 units and over 400,000 square feet of commercial uses. In 2013, there are nine specific plans, with the Ascot Village Specific Plan recently adopted in 2011. In total, over 660 residential units could be developed in the specific plan areas.

Although the City is builtout and lacks available vacant land for development, the City must look at creative methods to provide decent affordable housing for all economic segments of the population of today and tomorrow.

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<sup>1</sup> The Gardena Municipal Code defines a “multiple dwelling” as a residential building having an occupancy of more than two separate living quarters. The term “multi-family” as used in the Housing Element means any building/development designed for two or more living quarters.



*City of Gardena  
2014-2021 Housing Element*

**Figure 1  
Regional Perspective**

The 2014-2021 Housing Element continues the City's focus on maintenance of the housing stock and continues existing housing programs designed to increase homeownership in the community, as well as to provide incentives for the development of affordable housing. The City will also continue other programs aimed at meeting the needs of lower-income households and special needs populations.

## **B. Role and Organization of the Housing Element**

The Housing Element is an eight-year program extending from 2014 through 2021, unlike other General Plan elements that typically cover a ten-year planning period. Housing Element law, first enacted in 1969, mandates that local governments adequately plan to meet the existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community. The law recognizes that in order for the private market to adequately address housing needs and demand, local governments must adopt land use plans and regulatory systems that provide opportunities for, and do not unduly constrain, housing production. Housing Element statutes also require the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to review local housing elements for compliance with State law and to report their findings to the local government.

California's Housing Element law requires that each city and county develop local housing programs to meet its "fair share" of existing and future housing needs for all income groups. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is responsible for assigning these regional needs, in the form of a Regional Housing Need Assessment (RHNA), to Southern California jurisdictions. The fifth-cycle of the SCAG RHNA Allocation Plan, which was adopted in 2012, indicates that between 2014 and 2021, the City of Gardena will need to accommodate the development of 397 units.

The Gardena 2014-2021 Housing Element identifies strategies and programs that focus on: 1) conserving and improving existing affordable housing; 2) providing adequate sites for residential development; 3) assisting in the provision of affordable housing; 4) removing governmental and other constraints on housing development; and 5) promoting equal housing opportunities.

The Housing Element is organized into the following main sections:

**Housing Needs Assessment** – Includes a city profile and assessment of the City's population, housing characteristics, employment trend and special housing needs. The Needs Assessment also includes the City's share of the regional housing needs. (Chapter II)

**Housing Constraints** – Includes an analysis of actual and potential governmental and non-governmental constraints upon the development, improvement or maintenance of housing, including construction cost, government regulations, financial costs, permit fees, regional constraints, etc. (Chapter III)

**Housing Resources** – Identifies land suitable for residential development, opportunities for recycling, redevelopment, as well as financial resources for the development of housing. (Chapter IV)

**Housing Plan** – Includes a progress report and a discussion of the overall effectiveness of the programs in the previous 2008-2014 Housing Element. In addition, the City's goals, policies and programs to be undertaken during the 2014-2021 period of the Housing Element are identified in this chapter. (Chapter VI)

An Acronym Index is included as Appendix A of this Housing Element.

## **C. Data Sources and Methods**

In preparing the 2014-2021 Housing Element, various sources of information are consulted. The 2010 U.S. Census and the 2009-2011 American Community Survey (ACS) provide the basis for much of the population, household and employment information<sup>2</sup>. Other information sources used in this Housing Element include:

- Southern California Association of Governments' 2012-2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS).
- State Department of Finance (DOF) and the State Employment Development Department (EDD) estimates used to update population and demographic data.
- Housing market information, such as home sales, rents, vacancies, and land costs are updated by property tax assessors' files, internet sources listing sales and rent data, interviews with the local real estate community, and through rental data collected by the City.
- City of Gardena 2010-2015 Consolidated Plan and the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) for City housing program.
- Consultation with local and county service agencies for information on special needs populations, the services available to them, and the gaps in the system.
- Housing conditions and land use survey conducted by GRC Associates, Inc. in 2013.

## **D. Relationship to Other General Plan Elements**

The Gardena General Plan was updated in 2006. The General Plan consolidated the seven mandated topics into four elements: Community Development Element (Land Use Plan,

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<sup>2</sup> Please note that the 2010 Census is an actual count for the year 2010; however, detail information at the city level was still not available at the time of this Draft Housing Element. The ACS information, which provides more detailed socioeconomic information, is presented as an annual average for the 2009-2011 period and is based on a Census survey that samples a small percentage of the population every year. Thus, there may be some differences in the information provided by the two sources; however, the City has attempted to be as consistent as possible in presenting the information in this Draft Housing Element.



Economic Development Plan, Community Design Plan, and Circulation Plan); Community Resources Element (Open Space Plan and Conservation Plan); Community Safety Element (Safety Plan and Noise Plan); and Housing Element. The 2008–2014 Housing Element was adopted by the City Council and received certification from HCD in August 2011.

Since the adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element in August 2011, the City Council has amended the Land Use Plan of the Community Development Element of the General Plan through the following resolutions:

**Resolution No. 6037 (adopted June 26, 2012).** Changed the land use designation for the property located at 1942 El Segundo Boulevard from High Density Residential to Public/Institutional.<sup>3</sup>

**Resolution No. 6041 (adopted June 26, 2012).**

- Change in the land use designation for the properties, or portions thereof, located at the northeast corner of 154th Street and Van Ness Avenue and those properties on the western side of Vermont Avenue between 149th Street and Rosecrans Avenue from Medium Density Residential to High Density Residential.
- Change in land use designation for the property located at 14417 S. Vermont Avenue from Commercial to High Density Residential.
- Designation of the nine existing specific plan areas as Specific Plan in the Land Use map.
- Revision of the Mixed-Use Overlay boundaries.
- Change in land use designation for the property located at 1942 El Segundo Boulevard which change was approved by Resolution No. 6034 from High Density Residential to Public/Institutional.
- Revision to High Density Residential to provide for a stepped density of: 25 units per acre for lots less than .5 acre; 27 units per acre for lots between .5 acre and 1.0 acre; and 30 units per acre for lots greater than 1.0 acre.
- Revision to Mixed-Use Overlay to provide a stepped density of: 20 units per acre for lots less than .5 acre; 25 units per acre for lots between .5 acre and 1.0 acre; and, 30 units per acre for lots greater than 1.0 acre.

**Resolution No. 6067 (adopted March 19, 2013).**

- Increase in the maximum density of the Mixed-Use land use designation to 34 dwelling units/acre from 20 dwelling units/acre.
- Change in the land use designation of those properties on the northern side of 166th Street between Normandie Avenue and Vermont Avenue from Medium Density Residential to High Density Residential.

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<sup>3</sup> In May 2011, the City processed a General Plan Amendment and zone change for the property located at 2010 El Segundo Boulevard, which is adjacent to the 1942 El Segundo Boulevard property, from General Commercial to Public Institutional.

- Change in the land use designation of the property located at 1520 170<sup>th</sup> Street from Low Density Residential to Medium Density Residential.
- Change in the land use designation of the property directly west of Nader Place from Public/Institutional to Commercial, with a Mixed Use Overlay.
- Change in the land use designation of the property located at 14020 and 14028 Van Ness Avenue from Public/Institutional to Industrial.

The Zoning Ordinance was amended to reflect the changes to the Land Use Plan and to implement the Housing Programs.

This Housing Element builds upon the Plans in the other Elements of the General Plan and is consistent with the policies and programs set forth therein the General Plan. Examples of consistencies include residential development capacities and standards established in the Land Use Plan, which are incorporated within this Housing Element. The distribution of the City's desired development patterns is presented in the Land Use Policy Map which is shown in Figure 2. This policy map identifies a land use designation for each parcel within the City. Other Plans within the General Plan Elements provide economic and community design opportunities, as well as infrastructure and environmental constraints on housing development. Whenever any element or plan of the General Plan is amended, the Housing Element will be reviewed and modified, if necessary, to ensure the continued consistency between the elements.

## **E. Public Participation**

As required by State law, all economic segments of the community must be provided an opportunity to review and comment on the Housing Element. In compliance with this requirement, the City held three community meetings on the Draft Housing Element at the Gardena City Hall Council Chambers, 1700 W. 162<sup>nd</sup> Street, Gardena. The first community meeting was held on February 11, 2013. The second and third community meetings were held in conjunction with the Planning Commission study session (April 2, 2013) and the City Council study session (April 9, 2013), respectively.

Notifications of the community meetings were published in the local papers. Copies of the published notices, the notice flyers and the signup sheets are included as Appendix A. In addition, the community meeting notices were posted at City Hall, Gardena Nakaoka Community Center and the library. Notices were also sent to Gardena's City Council and Planning and Environmental Commission members and to housing groups, lenders, real estate agencies and local housing agencies. The community meetings were announced on the City's official website [www.ci.gardena.ca.us](http://www.ci.gardena.ca.us).

The first community meeting held February 11, 2013 was attended by 12 people. The purpose of the first public community meeting was to discuss and receive input on the Draft Housing Element and to identify the community's housing concerns. One of the key issues

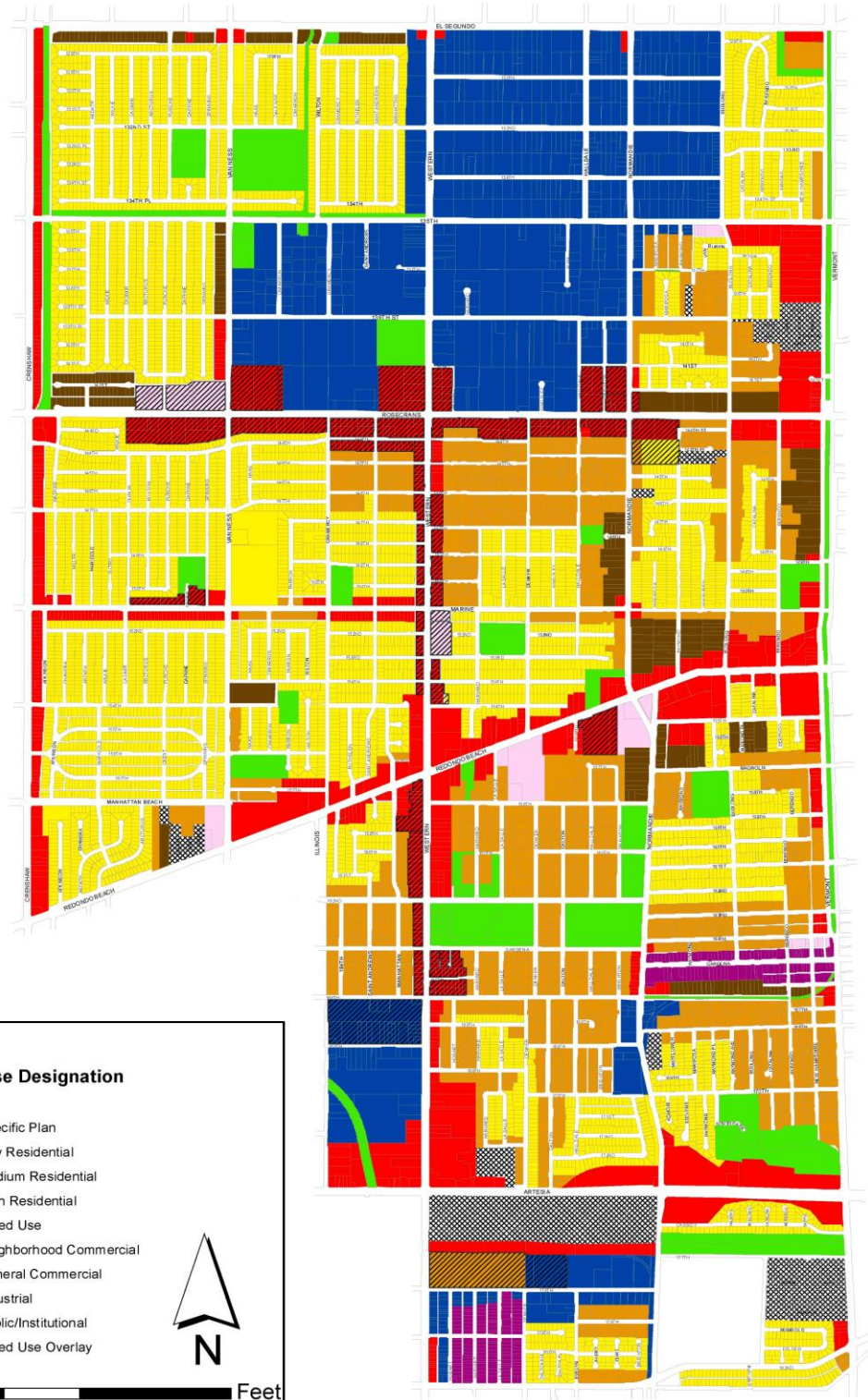
expressed at the meeting was the desire to learn more about the existing housing programs available to residents, specifically home improvement loans.

The second community meeting held on April 2, 2013 was conducted along with Planning Commission's study session on the Draft Housing Element. On the following week, on April 9, 2013, City staff held another community meeting and study session on the Housing Element with the City Council. The focus of both the community meetings/study sessions were to discuss: 1) available housing programs to residents of the City; 2) recent housing accomplishments by the City; and 3) possible new housing programs.

Copies of the Draft Housing Element were available for review at City Hall and at the City's public library as well as on the City's website prior to the document being considered by the Planning Commission and City Council.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), any resident in need of special assistance to participate in these meetings could contact the Office of the City Clerk by phone or email. Assistive Listening Devices were available at the meetings if requested by the public.

Appendix B includes the community meeting notices and mailing list.



City of Gardena  
2014-2021 Housing Element

**Figure 2**  
**General Plan Land Use**