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Huntington Beach Responds to State Lawsuit

The City of Huntington Beach has always placed a high priority on complying with all applicable housing laws. While the City does not generally respond to pending litigation, we would like to set the record straight on a few inaccuracies contained in Governor Newsom's Press Release announcing the State's lawsuit against the City of Huntington Beach.

The City has been, in fact, complying with all applicable State housing and zoning laws. This fact is evidenced by the City's recent court victories in lawsuits challenging the City's actions to zone for additional housing, including affordable housing.

Unfortunately, the delay in the City's ability to amend its zoning or make additional progress on meeting its Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) numbers has been caused by court appeals filed by outside parties. Governor Newsom's new lawsuit may serve to only worsen those delays.

The City has been consulting with State Housing and Community Development (HCD) staff for the past two months to move forward with obtaining a certified Housing Element. This new lawsuit by the State may now interrupt months of discussions geared toward resolving this dispute. Instead of making progress in productive communications with HCD, the City will be potentially cut off from further negotiations because of the State lawsuit.

The City is committed to complying with all applicable housing laws and working with HCD towards a resolution. Since January 2014, the City has entitled almost 1,000 of its 1,353 RHNA units, representing a significant accomplishment in approving additional housing. Numerous Orange County cities had far lower numbers in comparison; some even in the single digits.

Lawsuits are not a cost effective way to reach common ground on shared goals. We stand ready to continue negotiations regarding a new certified Housing Element that meets our collective needs.

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