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Orinda housing element one of earliest approved by state in Bay Area

By Sora O'Doherty

The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) informed the city of Orinda on March 30 that it found Orinda's 6th cycle housing element to be in full compliance with state law. According to city staff, Orinda was the second of the 20 municipalities in Contra Costa County and one of 13 within the 109 jurisdictions in the Bay Area to be found in compliance as of that date.

Receiving the HCD compliance letter in a timely manner means that the city is allowed three years to complete the required rezonings. Had the housing element not been found to be in compliance, it would have had only one year to complete the rezoning required.

City staff is now turning its attention to the implementation of the housing element and will be working with the community to ensure that Orinda remains a vibrant and inclusive community, according to the staff report prepared by Drummond Buckley, Director of Planning.

Like other cities in the state, Orinda was required to provide for the building of a far larger number of housing units in the 6th cycle housing element than ever before. Orinda has been assigned 1,359 Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) units for the 6th cycle housing element, while during the previous eight-years of the 5th cycle it only had to provide for a total of 227 units.

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