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November 4, 2011

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Ms. Nancy Mackle
City Manager
City of San Rafael
1400 Fifth Ave, Room 203
San Rafael, CA 94901

Dear Ms. Mackle:

RE: Review of the City of San Rafael's Adopted Housing Element

Thank you for submitting San Rafael's housing element adopted July 18, 2011 and received for review on September 1, 2011. The Department is required to review adopted housing elements and report the findings to the locality pursuant to Government Code Section 65585(h). An October 12, 2011 memo providing supplemental information and telephone conversations with Ms. Linda Jackson, Principal Planner, facilitated the review. In addition, the Department consulted with the Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California pursuant to Government Code Section 65585(c).

The housing element addresses the statutory requirements described in the Department's May 19, 2011 review. For example, the element now demonstrates adequate sites to accommodate San Rafael's regional housing needs allocation. Please note, the preservation of the Martinelli House was not considered in the Department's determination of adequate sites. As a result, the Department is pleased to find the element in full compliance with State housing element law (Article 10.6 of the Government Code).

Successful implementation of Programs H-9g H-9h, H-18g, and H-21c, to provide a variety of financial and regulatory incentives for housing affordable to lower-income households, and Programs H-18e and H-23a, to provide incentives to encourage development on mixed-use and commercial sites, is critical to facilitate housing opportunities for persons with special housing needs, and low-, very low-, and extremely low-income families. Such strategies facilitate more compact development to address climate change, energy conservation and air quality objectives, maximize existing land resources, and promote the feasibility of developing housing for lower-income families and workers while strengthening the local economy. San Rafael should continue to engage the public and critical stakeholders including housing developers, non-profit organizations, and advocacy groups throughout the planning period to facilitate the successful implementation of housing element policies and programs.

Ms. Nancy Mackle
Page 2

The Department is pleased to report San Rafael now meets specific requirements for several State funding programs designed to reward local governments for compliance with State housing element law. For example, the Housing Related Parks (HRP) Program and Building Equity and Growth in Neighborhoods (BEGIN) programs include housing element compliance either as a threshold or competitive factor in rating and ranking applications. Details about these and other programs are available at http://www.hcd.ca.gov/hpd/hrc/plan/he/loan_grant_hecomp1011708.pdf.

Specifically, the HRP Program, authorized by Proposition 1C, is an innovative new program rewarding local governments for the approval of housing for lower-income households and provides grant funds to eligible local governments for every qualifying housing start, beginning calendar year 2010. Additional information on the HRP Program can be obtained at <http://www.hcd.ca.gov/hpd/hrpp/>.

The Department appreciates the hard work and cooperation of Ms. Jackson in the development of the housing element. Her dedication to the housing element update process was instrumental in creating a valuable tool to address the community's housing and community development objectives. We wish San Rafael success in implementing the housing element and look forward to following its progress through the General Plan annual progress reports pursuant to Government Code Section 65400. If the Department can provide assistance in implementing the housing element, please contact Melinda Coy, of our staff, at (916) 445-5307.

Sincerely,



Glen A. Campora
Assistant Deputy Director

cc: Paul Jensen, Community Development Director, City of San Rafael