

# Zoning Code Amendment - Enhanced Density Bonus Policy Update to Chapters 21.15, 21.21 and 21.68 of the Long Beach Municipal Code

**City Council Hearing – June 9, 2026**

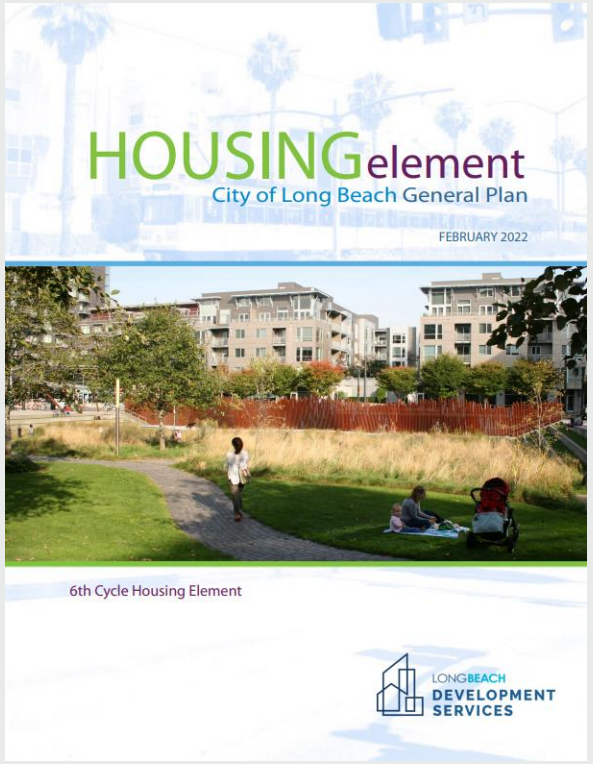
# What is Density Bonus?

**Residential Density** is the number of dwelling units allowed on a specific area of land. Residential Density is regulated by development standards outlined in land use and zoning documents. Density is expressed in the form of a single number (16 units for a parcel) or dwelling units per acre (44 du/acre).

**Density Bonus** is an optional program to allow for increased residential density beyond what would otherwise be allowed under development standards and / or a modification to development standards.

# Background

- **2021:** Long Beach starts **Enhanced Density Bonus (EDB)** to help make more sites citywide viable for multifamily housing.
- **2022:** City adopted 2021-2029 Housing Element, including commitment to further study EDB improvements.
- **2022 – Today:** Ongoing citywide rezoning to implement Land Use Element update through Zone In.
- **2025:** Inclusionary Housing expanded citywide.
- **Today:**
  - Use of State Density Bonus continues to be more common than use of local EDB.
  - Eroding federal funding, higher interest rates, construction costs, labor & land.



# Background – Inclusionary Housing Policy

**The City Council adopted key updates to the Policy on April 1, 2025:**

- Expanded the inclusionary housing requirement citywide
- Required restricted units at various affordability levels
- Made technical corrections and improvements to the Policy



# Inclusionary Requirements and Density Bonus

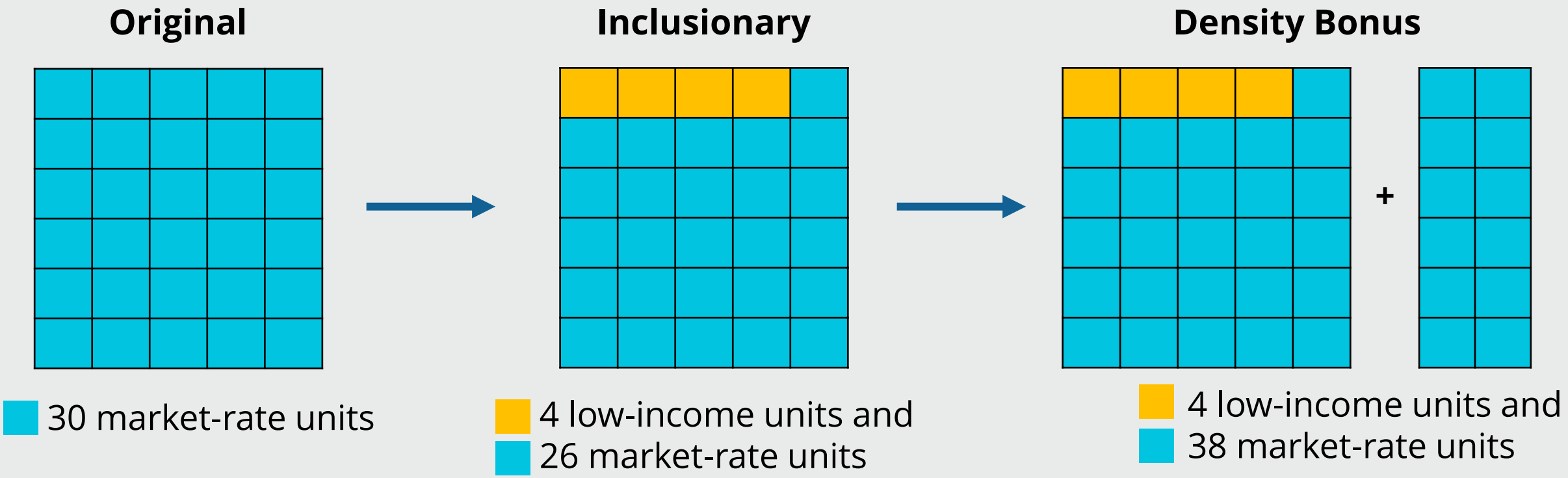
**Inclusionary** housing requires a certain percentage affordable units based a project's geography.

**Density bonus** provides a spectrum of benefits to a multifamily project in exchange for proving affordable units.

| Inclusionary Housing | Density Bonus |
|---|---|
| Required | Optional |
| All multifamily projects with 10+ units | Multifamily projects with 5+ units |
| Specific Affordable Units | Benefits for a variety of Affordable Units |

# Inclusionary and Density Bonus

Example: A 30-unit project has an Inclusionary requirement of 12% low-income units and wants to do a density bonus.



# Other Density Bonus Programs

## Insights from other Cities

- Provide density bonus for Extremely Low-Income Units.
- Provide density bonuses beyond 100%.
- Special bonuses for childcare facilities, public open space, neighborhood-serving commercial uses, and transit improvements.
- Predictable ways to calculate benefits, reduce uncertainty and streamline approvals.

# Other Density Bonus Programs

| | Long Beach (EDB Proposed) | State Density Bonus | Los Angeles | LA County | San Francisco | Culver City |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Benefits** | | | | | | |
| **Density Bonus** | 100% for affordable, 120% for special bonuses | 100%, unlimited if 100% affordable | 120% | 120% | Unlimited if 30% affordable | State DB + 40% |
| **Floor Area Ratio** | Modify with concession | Modify with concession | Modify with concession | Modify with concession | Unlimited if 30% affordable | Modify with concession |
| **Additional Height** | 3 stories (PC approval for more than 1 story* ) | 3 stories / 33 ft | 1 - 3 additional stories, close to transit | 3 stories close to transit | 2 additional stories + 5 ft | 22 ft |
| **Parking** | Reduced or no parking | Reduced or no parking | No parking | Reduced or no parking | Citywide parking exempt | Citywide parking exempt |
| **Concessions** | 6 | 5 | 5 | 7 | 7 zoning mods | 7 (State DB +2) |
| **Density Bonus Also Applies to Projects With** | | | | | | |
| **Extremely Low-Income** | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | No | Yes |
| **Special Bonuses** | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |

*except for 100% affordable projects which are subject to a ministerial review

# Progress on Meeting RHNA Targets

## Long Beach Annual RHNA Targets

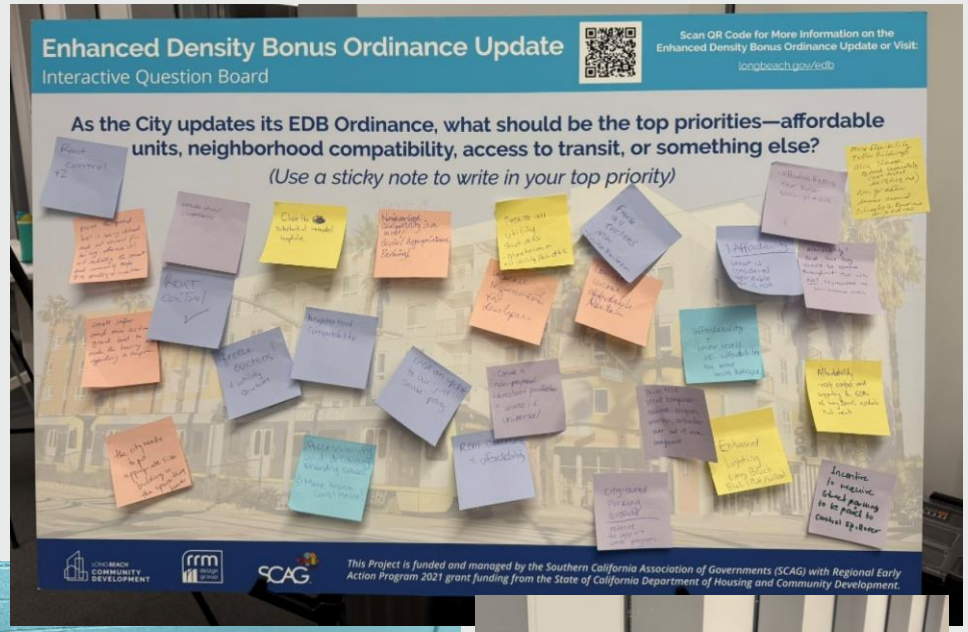
| Income Level | Total Annual RHNA Target (2021-2029) | Total units remaining to meet RHNA Target | Average Annual RHNA Target | % of RHNA met by # of permitted units (2021-2025) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Very Low-** | 7,141 | 6,653 | 893 | 7% |
| **Low-** | 4,047 | 3,561 | 506 | 12% |
| **Moderate-** | 4,158 | 4,158 | 520 | 0% |
| **Sub-total Affordable** | 15,346 | 14,372 | 1,919 | 6% |
| **Above-Moderate** | 11,156 | 7,493 | 1,394 | 43% |
| **TOTAL** | **26,502** | **19,806** | 5,231 | **25%** |

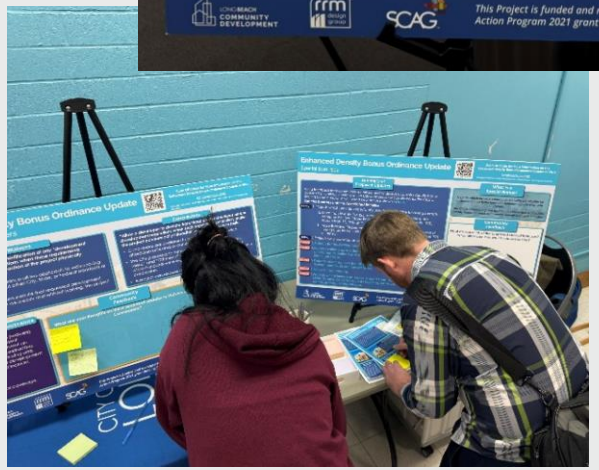
Through the fourth full year of the 6th RHNA Cycle, Long Beach permitted **25% of the overall RHNA** but only **6%** of its affordable housing unit RHNA target.

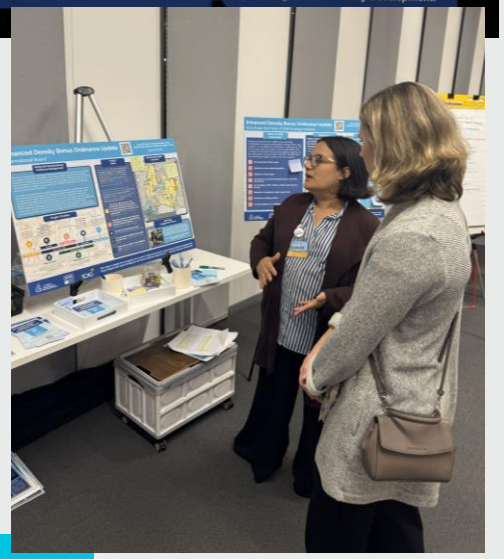
Going forward, in addition to making inclusionary requirements citywide, the City will need to significantly expand affordable housing incentives, preservation and development in order to permit the necessary number of units at the scale required by RHNA. Subsidy from State/Federal sources is the limiting factor in new affordable housing development.

# Community and Stakeholder Outreach

- Tabling at community events, hosted two citywide workshops, and hosted two citywide open houses, in addition to targeted focus groups with key stakeholders.
- Two open houses: 161 attendees
- 156 written comments (in-person and online)



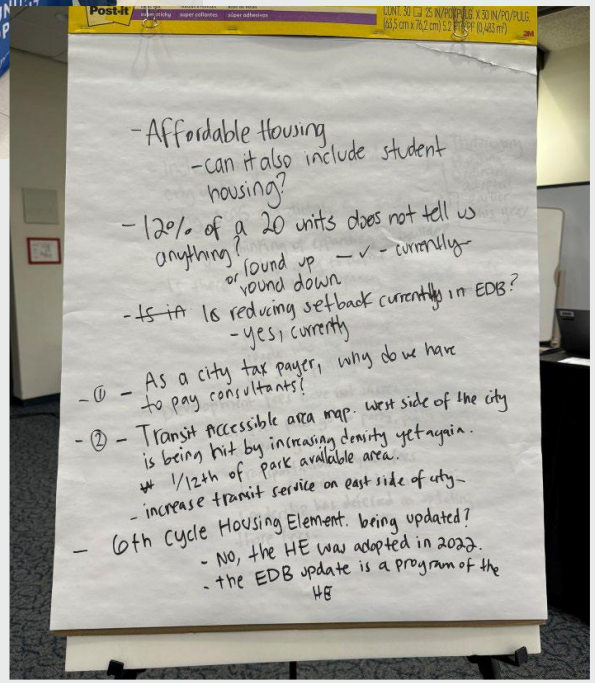





# Summary of Community Feedback

- Improve the usefulness of EDB
- Desire for increased affordable housing and affordability requirements citywide
- Concerns over impact of parking availability
- Concerns over preservation of single-family neighborhood character and impact of density
- Support for special bonus proposals, particularly proximity to parks
- Need for increased bonuses across all affordability levels



# Proposed Improvements: Special Bonuses

## Existing Special Bonuses

- Larger/family units or on-site childcare

## New Special Bonuses for Projects

- Within 1,000 feet of a park
- Removing a nuisance
- Providing senior housing
- Active ground floor use
- Adhering to the labor standards in State Law (union, prevailing wage)









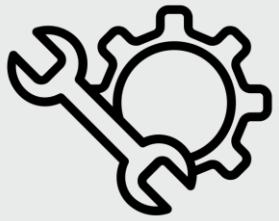






# Proposed Improvements: Improving the Ordinance

- New definitions to help with implementation
- One Citywide Table for Density Bonus and Concessions
- Adding Extremely Low-Income
- Expand Procedures relating to Inclusionary, concessions and waivers, replacement units, how to calculate Density Bonus, and timing affordable units
- Clarify when the ordinance sunsets
- Add an Enforcement section to align with Inclusionary Housing



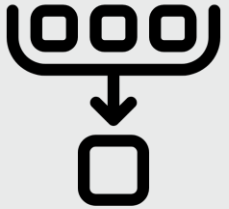
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# Public Noticing and Environmental Review

## Notice of Public Hearing

- Published in the Long Beach Press-Telegram newspaper on May 19, 2026.
- Posted in at least three public places, City Hall and City libraries with Ordinance available for public review.
- Posted on the Community Development Department's website and distributed through *LinkLB*.

## Public Comment

Since the publishing of the Public Hearing notice and distribution to interested parties, staff has received no comments in response to the proposed zoning code amendment.

## Environmental Review

Project is within the scope of what was analyzed in the previously adopted 2021 Initial Study/Negative Declaration prepared for the City's EDB Ordinance.

# Recommendation

Recommend that City Council adopt an Addendum (EIRA26-001) to the Initial Study/Negative Declaration (IS/ND) (SCH No. 2021050034) prepared for the City's Enhanced Density Bonus (ND 08-20) relating to an amendment to Title 21 for the Enhanced Density Bonus Program Update;

Recommend that the City Council approve Zoning Code Amendment (ZCA26-001) and Local Coastal Program Amendment (LCPA26-001), and adopt the proposed findings related thereto, to amend Chapters 21.15, 21.21 and 21.68 of the Zoning Regulations to update the existing Enhanced Density Bonus to align with the provisions of the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance; add special bonuses for projects providing community benefits; and implement other procedural and implementation streamlining changes to the Enhanced Density Bonus Ordinance. (Citywide)

# Thank you

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