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**AGENDA ITEM NO.:** 8 (Workshop)  
**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING DATE:** May 28, 2025  
**SUBJECT:** Staff will conduct a second workshop regarding identifying updates and modifications to the Zoning and General Plan requirements that could help infill housing.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### Project Background

The County's 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle Housing Element Update identified several factors that pose constraints to housing development, including outdated zoning and General Plan requirements. In response, the County sought and was awarded REAP 2.0 grant funding from the California Department of Housing and Community Development ("HCD") to conduct a review of zoning and General Plan requirements, such as design and density requirements, and identify updates and modifications that could help accelerate infill housing, including accessory dwelling units, in the communities of Big Pine, Independence, and Lone Pine.

### Project Components

The primary outcome of the project will be to identify updates and modifications to the zoning and General Plan requirements that could help accelerate infill housing in the communities of Big Pine, Independence, and Lone Pine. Project components include:

1. **Development and Design Standards Review:** review existing standards applicable to residential development, Accessory Dwelling Units, and second units.
2. **Vacant and Underutilized Lands Inventory:** establish a database of parcels in Big Pine, Independence, and Lone Pine that are either undeveloped (vacant) or not being used to their full potential (underutilized), which could be developed or redeveloped for residential uses.

3. **Infill Residential Capacity Study:** apply the existing standards to infill parcels and develop recommendations for modifications to the zoning and General Plan requirements that could create more opportunities for infill residential development.

#### Community Outreach and Engagement

Staff, with the help of Precision Civil Engineering, facilitated the first round of community outreach and engagement for the project in February 2025. Community workshops were held in Big Pine (2/24/25), Independence (2/26/25), and Lone Pine (2/27/25), including a study session with Planning Commission (2/26/25). Approximately 70 residents attended. A community survey was open from February 3, 2025, to March 7, 2025. Twenty-one responses were received. Attached is a brief summary of the responses received and the full analysis of responses can be found at: <https://www.inyocounty.us/sites/default/files/2025-03/Summary%20of%20Community%20Feedback%20Workshop%20%231%20%26%20Survey%20%231.pdf>, which is on the Planning Department website, under the tab “Residential Infill Project – Big Pine, Independence, Lone Pine,” Workshop#1 and Survey Information menu.

#### Infill Options and Next Steps

Based on community input received so far, and the results of the analysis to date, Staff have identified the following options for further exploration and analysis:

1. **Accessory Dwelling Units:** Within the designated infill areas, consider a Bonus ADU Program to allow more ADUs than currently mandated by State Law.
2. **Modified Development Standards:** Within the designated infill areas, consider reducing the current front yard and rear yard setback for properties in R-1 and R-2 zones to increase the buildable area of these lots.
3. **Low-Density Multi-Unit Housing:** Within the designated infill areas, consider allowing low-density multi-unit housing such as duplexes and triplexes in the R-1 and R-2 zones, with the specific number of units to be guided by the General Plan allowable densities.
4. **Adaptive Reuse of Existing Buildings:** Consider establishing an ordinance that encourages the conversion of underutilized buildings (both vacant residential and non-residential in residentially permitted zones) within the designated infill areas into housing.

A second round of community workshops were held in Big Pine (5/20/25), Independence (5/21/25), and Lone Pine (5/22/25) and a second community survey is open from May 1, 2025, to June 6, 2025. The workshops and survey are focused on community input and feedback on the list of identified options. Study sessions are also being held with the Board of Supervisors (5/27/25) and Planning Commission (5/28/25).

Following the completion of the workshops, survey, and study sessions, Staff will proceed with further exploration, analysis, and refinement of the options and preparation of General Plan and Zoning Ordinance amendments (as required). In addition, environmental analysis in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act will be conducted.

**Project Timeline**

The project kicked off in January 2025 with an estimated completion in December 2025.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Workshops #1 and Survey #1 Brief Summary

**Inyo County  
Residential Infill Project  
Community Workshop and Survey#1  
Feedback Summary**

## **Introduction**

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This document summarizes the feedback received from the community workshop #1 and community survey #1. Feedback will be considered and incorporated into the Inyo County Residential Infill Project.

## **Community Workshop #1**

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Community Workshop #1 was held in Big Pine (2/24/25), Independence (2/26/25), and Lone Pine (2/27/25). Approximately 70 residents attended. Key themes are summarized below.

### **1. Housing Needs and Goals:**

- There's support for more housing to address current shortages and attract a more diverse population, including families and students.
- There's support for revitalizing main streets and utilizing existing buildings and vacant lots for housing.
- There's support for focusing on all types of housing, not just low-income housing.

### **2. Infrastructure and Resource Concerns:**

- There are concerns exist regarding the impact of increased housing on existing infrastructure, including water, sewer, fire protection, and emergency services.
- The need for a fiscal impact analysis and thorough CEQA review is emphasized.
- Water rights and water availability are of high concern.

### **3. Development Strategies:**

- Ideas include converting existing buildings, developing accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and utilizing vacant land.
- There's discussion about potential zoning changes, reduced setbacks, and the use of manufactured housing.
- Consider plans to encourage accessory dwelling units.

### **4. Community Concerns and Considerations:**

- Residents express concerns about potential negative impacts, such as increased crime and changes to the community's character.

- There's a desire for a "Main Street facelift" and economic development to support the increased population.
- There is a focus on how to sell these ideas to reluctant citizens.
- There is concern about vacant vacation homes.

#### **5. Regulatory and Planning Issues:**

- Discussions cover CEQA requirements, building codes, parking regulations, and new housing laws.
- The role of various agencies, including the county, DWP, and tribal entities, is considered.
- The use of grant funding is questioned.

#### **6. Future Steps:**

- Further site evaluations and planning are anticipated.
- The community wishes to know what decisions have been made.
- The community wants to know what comes next.

## Community Survey #1

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Community Survey #1 was open from February 3, 2025, to March 7, 2025. Key themes are summarized below. A summary of responses is attached.

### 1. Housing Preferences and Concerns:

- **ADUs are generally favored:** Many respondents support ADUs, particularly on residential lots, but some express concern about them becoming short-term rentals (STRs).
- **Single-family homes are preferred:** There's a strong preference for single-family homes to maintain the character of the small towns.
- **Concerns about increased density:** Respondents express concerns about:
  - Parking issues
  - Strain on water and sewer infrastructure
  - Loss of small-town character
  - Increased noise and traffic
  - Potential decrease in property values
  - Impact on emergency services
  - Short term rentals impact on housing availability.
  - Overcrowding.
- **Support for affordable housing:** There's recognition of the need for affordable housing options.

### 2. Regulatory and Development Issues:

- **Parking is a major concern:** Respondents emphasize the need for off-street parking and worry about reduced parking requirements.
- **Setback regulations:** There's a mixed response to reducing setbacks, with some supporting it on a case-by-case basis and others opposing it to maintain privacy and fire safety.
- **Building heights:** Most respondents prefer to maintain current building heights, with some open to limited increases in designated areas.
- **ADU development:** Respondents suggest streamlining permitting and providing financial incentives to encourage ADU construction.
- **Short-term rentals (STRs):** There are strong concerns about STRs impacting housing availability and neighborhood character.
- **LADWP land:** Many respondents call for the release of LADWP-owned land for development.
- **Enforcement:** There is a desire for stronger enforcement of existing ordinances, particularly regarding parking and nuisances.
- **Vacant/Underutilized buildings:** There is a strong desire to utilize already existing vacant buildings, before increasing density.
- **Community input:** Many people wish for more community input regarding housing decisions.

### **3. Multi-Unit Housing Preferences:**

- ADUs, duplexes, triplexes, and cottage-style housing are considered more appropriate than large apartment complexes.

### **4. Overall Sentiment:**

- While there's a recognition of the need for more housing, respondents are cautious about increasing density and want to preserve the rural character of their communities.
- Many people feel that the current regulations are adequate.
- Many people are unaware of the current regulations.
- There is a strong desire for the county to pressure the LADWP to release land.