
MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chowchilla extends infill development program

Chowchilla, CA – September 15, 2016

The City of Chowchilla's Infill Program continues to gain momentum, leading the City Council Tuesday to extend the term of the program by another 18 months. Starting six months ago, the city adopted a policy decision to breathe new life into its older neighborhoods by encouraging housing and retail on its vacant and under-utilized lots. The benefit to the community from cleaned up lots is a rise in property values as new homes fill in empty spaces while reenergizing the livability of neighborhoods that are close to the city's downtown.

To qualify for the program, a builder must build on an empty lot within the older, more established parts of Chowchilla, at least 30% of its goods or services going into the home come from Chowchilla, and the houses and businesses must pass final inspection before the conclusion of the program. In exchange, the city has committed to waiving its developer impact fees, fees used to pay for infrastructure for new development, much of which already exists in older neighborhoods.

At the Tuesday Council meeting, staff reported that three homes have passed final inspection with an additional 17 in plan check. Another 65 homes are anticipated to be built over the life of this program. Through marketing and the City's quarterly Builder/Developer Breakfasts,

interest in the program has begun to grow. It was during these breakfasts that builders stated their difficulty in completing homes before the program expires. In an effort to address this constraint, the City Council has extended the term of the Infill Program to December, 2018.

According to City Administrator Brian Haddix, the “value of this program is to create stronger neighborhoods by ridding them of unsightly lots. In addition, our local purchasing requirement helps pump needed money into our local economy and the enhanced property values allow the city to offer greater services back to its residents.”

These sentiments were echoed by Mayor Waseem Ahmed who said, “Chowchilla’s strength is its friendly neighborhoods. When we enhance our neighborhoods, located within walking distance of our downtown, it becomes easier for people to enjoy our restaurants, retail stores, downtown events and more. It is programs like this that keep Chowchilla a close knit community.”

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