

Chapter 3: Fifth Cycle Performance Review and Sixth Cycle Housing Strategies and Policies

The purpose of this chapter is two-fold: to review the County’s performance in meeting the fifth cycle Housing Element goals and to introduce the County’s sixth cycle strategies and policies.

3.01 Review of County’s Fifth Cycle RHNA Assignment Performance

The County’s actual housing production during the fifth cycle, from 2015-2022, exceeded the RHNA assignment and projections for the planning period.

Table 3.1 summarizes the County’s fifth cycle RHNA targets, projected development, and actual production from 2015-2022. ABAG’s RHNA process for the fifth cycle allocated a housing need of 277 units to unincorporated Santa Clara County. A total of **3,214** units have been permitted as of December 31, 2022, over 1,000 percent above the assigned 277 units. Roughly eighty percent of the approved units were constructed in a series of high-density development projects on Stanford University campus in 2019. These units consisted of much-

needed moderate-income housing to meet the University’s faculty and graduate student housing demand.

During the fifth cycle, housing demand increased for the unincorporated county. The increase in housing permits can, in part, be attributed to the passing of new State legislation allowing Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (JADUs) in all areas zoned to allow single-family or multifamily uses, and other streamlining provisions. Following these laws coming into effect on January 1, 2020, there was a rise in ADU permit applications, and a related rise in permitting, to roughly three times the rate of applications preceding these laws.

Table 3.1: RHNA, Projections, and Achieved Housing Production

	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate	Total
Fifth Cycle, 2015-2022					
RHNA Assignment	22	13	214	28	277
Projected	440	87	0	1555	2,082
Achieved	86	0	2,597	531	3,214
Sixth Cycle, 2023-2031					
RHNA Assignment	828	477	508	1,312	3,125
Projected	975	637	1,186	3,945	6,745

3.02 Recent Unincorporated County Housing Development Activity

The purpose of this section is to document how the County met its RHNA target for the 2015-2022 planning period, as measured by permits issued during that period for different dwelling types.

3.02a Single-Family Residential Units

All primary single-family dwelling development is assumed to have been constructed and/or sold at market rates and are assumed to be affordable only to those with above-moderate incomes. Many single-family residences built within unincorporated urban pockets are new units that are replacing units that already existed, however, the statistic provided for single family dwellings is a 'gross' figure, consistent with the reporting standard for HCD's Annual Housing Element Progress Report.

3.02b Graduate Student Housing Development at Stanford University

Stanford University currently provides graduate student housing for 75% of its graduate students, and most graduate students occupy their apartments year-round for multiple years while they obtain their degrees. Additionally, the University houses approximately 97% of its undergraduates on campus. Of the graduate students at Stanford, an estimated 93% do not have children, including 70% in single households and 23% in couple households. Approximately 7% of graduate students are estimated to have one or more children under the age of 18.

From January 2015 to December 2022, the County reported the construction of 2,597 moderate-income units on Stanford lands.

According to Stanford University Graduate Student Housing Affordability Analysis Report (prepared by Keyser Marston Associates in May 2022), rents for 85% of graduate student housing spaces are within a range affordable to households with low- or moderate-incomes. Monthly rents for apartments at Stanford range from \$1,473 to \$3,616 per month, depending on the number of bedrooms in the apartment and the size of the household sharing the apartment. Using this analysis and the determination of affordability categories in the [HCD Official State Income Limits for 2022](#), the 493 studios for graduate students built since January 2015 would be affordable to low-income households. The remaining 892 two-bedroom apartments would be affordable to moderate-income households.

3.02c ADU Development

During the 2015-2022 planning period, 276 accessory dwelling units (ADUs) were permitted in unincorporated county, an average of 34.5 per year. In 2019, the State legislature passed multiple new laws streamlining the construction of ADUs and Junior ADUs (JADUs). These laws went into effect on January 1, 2020, and the County accordingly modified its Zoning Ordinance to reflect the updated State laws, effective March 10, 2020. These amendments resulted in a significant rise in ADU and JADU permit applications. From 2015 through 2019, the County approved roughly 21 ADU permits per year on average. In the three years since the ADU regulations were changed, 2020 through 2022, the County has approved increasingly more ADU permits each year: 40, 54, and 79, respectively. Looking forward, the County anticipates that the level of ADU permit applications will fluctuate over time and the best rate to project through the 2023-2031 planning period is the average taken from 2018 through 2022, approximately 45 permits per year, yielding a projected 360 units in total during the sixth cycle planning period.

Table 3.2: Accessory Dwelling Permit issued 2015-2021

YEAR	ADU PERMITS ISSUED
2015	20
2016	13
2017	16
2018	22
2019	32
2020	40
2021	54
2022	82
8-year average	34.875
2018-2022 average	46

3.02d Agricultural Employee Housing Development

From 2015-2021, there were no agricultural employee housing permits issued in unincorporated county. In December 2020, the County significantly updated its Zoning Ordinance provisions for agricultural employee housing to streamline the planning approval and expand options for such housing. Since the adoption of these changes, three permits have been issued for new single-family units of small-scale permanent agricultural employee housing.

Although not consisting of dwelling units for the purposes of reporting on RHNA progress in Annual Progress Reports, the County approved a

200-bed project for agricultural employees during the planning period, with building permits finalized in 2021.

3.03 Review of County’s Investment in Countywide Housing Efforts During Fifth Cycle and Beyond

The County of Santa Clara has a variety of County-controlled and County-owned properties, some of which are suitable for residential development. Many of the County-controlled and County-owned properties suitable for residential are located within cities and the County’s development of these properties to provide housing units does not count towards the County’s RHNA assignment. Nevertheless, the County has invested in numerous projects that create affordable housing in incorporated cities as a part of its longstanding commitment to providing all county residents with appropriate housing options. The County has established a process to give community stakeholders and other jurisdictions an opportunity to work in partnership with the County to develop County-controlled and - owned sites for affordable housing.

In 2019, the County Office of Supportive Housing (OSH) created a pool of prequalified affordable housing developers who could respond to solicitations to develop affordable housing on County-owned land. This Developer Qualified Pool (DQP) consists of 16 experienced developers that are aligned with the County’s goals of increasing affordable housing for Santa Clara County’s most vulnerable and poorest residents. As County-controlled properties become available, the County issues a Request for Offers to accept development proposals

from the DQP. The following five projects have been approved for development on County-owned sites, within city jurisdictional boundaries, utilizing the pool of selected developers:



231 Grant Avenue - Palo Alto

OSH is partnering with Mercy Housing and Abode Communities to develop 110 affordable rental workforce apartments for teachers, school employees, and their families. The project is being developed with a donation by Meta (formerly Facebook) and in partnership with the City of Palo Alto and five local school and community college districts. In January 2022, the Board of Supervisors approved of additional funding for this proposed new development. The developer is working on obtaining permits and securing the necessary financing to start construction by July 2023. Please visit the [231 Grant | Mercy Housing California & Abode Communities](#) project website for more information.



Mitchell Park - Palo Alto



Located at 525 East Charleston Road, this project is a partnership with Eden Housing to develop 50 affordable rental apartments and 2,750 square feet (sq. ft.) of service space for AbilityPath – a nonprofit that provides support services to individuals with special needs and developmental disabilities in the greater Bay Area. This development includes 25 apartments and services for individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and their families. Land use entitlements were approved by the Palo Alto City Council on March 8, 2022. The developer is in the process of resubmitting tax credit application for funding. Please visit the [Eden Housing project website](#) for more information.

The Hub - San José

Located at 1510-1540 Parkmoor Avenue, this project is a partnership with Allied Housing to develop affordable rental apartments, including units for transitioned age foster youth, and The Hub, a youth-led community center dedicated to supporting current and former foster

youth. The Planning application under review proposes 81 housing units. The developer is in the process of obtaining land use entitlements from City of San José. Please visit the [Abode Services](#) project website and [The Hub Youth Center](#) website for more information.

Distel Circle - Los Altos

Located at 330 Distel Circle, this project is a partnership between OSH, the City of Los Altos, and EAH Housing to develop affordable rental apartments. The development includes 90 housing units. Land use entitlements were approved by Los Altos in September 2022. The developer is in the process of submitting tax



credit application for funding. Please visit the [EAH Housing project website](#) for more information.

East Santa Clara – San José

Located at 725 East Santa Clara Street, this project is a partnership between OSH and Eden Housing and The Core Companies to develop affordable housing in accordance with the East Santa Clara Master Plan. Please visit the [County project website](#) for more information on the East Santa Clara Master Plan.

Retaining Ownership of Property in Housing Development Projects

The County Board of Supervisors has directed County Administration to, when possible and feasible, negotiate and incorporate County ownership of property into multifamily affordable housing transactions. Towards that directive, the County maintains ownership of property for the purposes of affordable and supportive housing by: 1) Negotiating property acquisitions as part of developer-led housing development projects, and 2) County-led efforts to increase the production of housing through proactive acquisitions of private properties or by using existing underutilized County-owned properties. In both cases, the County enters a long-term ground lease with the developer and all obligations to maintain and operate the site are the responsibility of the developer.

At present, using a combination of funds from the County's 2016 "Measure A" \$950 million Housing Bond, the State program *No Place Like Home*, and the County General Fund, the County has invested in, and OSH is managing, the following 68 projects:

- 17 developments funded by the 2016 Measure A Housing Bond, wherein the land is owned by the County and the housing development is managed/operated by a housing developer;



- 15 properties for which the County has approved Housing Bond funds and the Administration has negotiated an option to acquire;
- 12 properties for which the County has approved Housing Bond funds but the properties are not directly controlled by the County;
- 20 properties acquired by the County and funded by the Housing Bond, where the County is either already working with a development partner or will be issuing a request for offer to select a development partner; and
- 4 County-owned properties not funded by the Housing Bond, which are currently used for supportive housing and/or are under consideration to be used as supportive housing.

Additionally, the County distributes federal funding through a variety of housing programs (see Chapter 4 for a summary of the housing programs the County offers). The County's many housing programs affirmatively further fair housing and support the provision of housing, particularly affordable housing, across the entirety of Santa Clara County and not only those unincorporated areas within County's planning jurisdiction. The County will be continuing the above approach to housing investments and policies in the sixth cycle, serving the entirety of Santa Clara County and not only unincorporated areas.

3.04 2015 Housing Element Update Program Outcomes

Housing Element law requires an analysis and evaluation of programs implemented during the prior planning period as part of the 2023-2031 update process. A description of program outcomes from 2015-2023 for the programs identified during the previous housing cycle is captured in Appendix "x," and references the housing program numbers for the 2015-2023 cycle. Most of the programs listed in the 2015 Update were successful in meeting their objectives, and in

general the County was highly engaged and productive in creating housing opportunities countywide, including by developing County-owned lands, funding development of affordable housing in the incorporated cities, and offering robust housing-related services to county residents. As County agencies evolve, many of the programs have been closed out and/or consolidated into new programs.

3.05 Sixth Cycle Housing-Related Strategies and Policies

This section lists the strategies and policies of the County's General Plan related to housing, including new strategies that are being added for the sixth cycle. This section is an update and continuation of the County's 2015 Update. In addition, this section lists the implementation programs relevant to each strategy and policy, with more detailed program descriptions provided in Chapter 4.

The Housing Element Update is a part of and is required to be consistent with the County's General Plan, including the countywide growth management policies, health and transportation elements, and relevant portions of other elements. However, with a RHNA assignment that has increased by 1,028 percent from the previous cycle, the County will need to make a few significant changes to the County's General Plan policies, namely, to enable the County to plan for development within urban unincorporated islands inside of an adjacent city's USA. Nevertheless, this 2023 Housing Element Update will ensure that the General Plan goals, strategies, and policies related to the promotion of compact, urban development and preservation of open space and prime farmland will continue to be promoted in a purposeful manner.

The strategies and policies of the 2015 Update have been reviewed in accordance with current State requirements as part of the 2023

Update. There are modest changes to the 2015 Update policies and strategies, and the addition of a significant set of new policies and a new strategy addressing the impacts of climate change on housing in the county. Furthermore, the 2023 Update adds new policies to address the Federal program of Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) in accordance with new State law requirements.

The policies delineated below are organized according to overall strategies or topics that provide a broad policy direction.

3.05a Strategies

Over the last two Housing Element cycles, the County has focused on increasing the housing supply countywide in the urban areas as well as on the Stanford University campus. Market-rate housing development has largely been led by individual cities, through development within urban unincorporated county islands that are annexed into adjacent cities. Concurrently, through the direction of the Board of Supervisors and implemented by OSH, the County has focused its efforts on assisting with the development of primarily extremely low-income and low-income units. The provision of adequate housing for a growing and diverse population requires a complex, comprehensive approach beyond development alone. To successfully address current and projected housing needs, the location, the type, and the price of new housing are all key factors. Accordingly, the primary objective of the strategies and policies of the County's Housing Element is to achieve and maintain a balanced housing supply countywide while affirmatively furthering fair housing and remedying past harms. A balanced housing supply is defined here as one that is affordable and accessible to all residents, adequate to meet the overall demand, and appropriately distributed across the county. A balanced housing supply depends upon maintenance, preservation, improvement, and development of housing.

The below strategies will guide the County as it progresses toward achieving balance in its housing supply. They ensure increased housing opportunities for households at all economic levels and do so while balancing other economic, social, and environmental objectives that enjoy broad popular support in Santa Clara County. In doing so, the strategies and the policies that seek to balance the practical and constitutional limits on local governments while taking into account the genuine and universal need of all our residents for just and affordable housing.

To ensure that these strategies meet the needs of the community, substantial outreach was conducted (see Chapter 1, Section 1.08). The outreach led to the creation of new strategies and policies to address concerns raised by local housing advocates and the community at large. Existing policies were modified, where appropriate. The categorization of policies under strategies, and in some cases, the creation of a policy cluster headed by a new strategy, was guided by the results of the outreach.

Brief descriptions of the County's ten strategies are below, followed by detailed tables linking each strategy—explained in further detail—to policies and implementing programs.

Strategy No. 1: Plan for a Balanced, Countywide Housing Supply

Support every Santa Clara County jurisdiction in developing diverse housing types within existing and new communities to meet the needs of all households, affordable housing production goals, State Housing Element requirements, and regional land use and transportation planning objectives.

Strategy No. 2: Promote Cooperation and Collaboration on Residential Development

Explore every feasible opportunity to assist developers in building more affordable housing projects. By working with neighborhood

residents, community organizations, and the private sector to promote a diverse housing supply, the County can capitalize on all the ideas, expertise, and untapped resources within the county.

Strategy No. 3: Provide Financial Assistance for Extremely Low-Income Housing

Housing in the county, and in the Bay Area in general, is expensive to build and these costs have been increasing over the last decade. To ensure that the housing needs of all residents are met—and with a focus on extremely low-income housing—the County will continue to work with developers and use “Measure A” Housing Bond funds to make housing projects financially feasible.

Strategy No. 4: Remove Unnecessary Barriers to Housing

Utilize expedited project review, adaptable development standards, funds for affordable housing programs, additional density bonuses, and other measures to reduce housing development costs.

Strategy No. 5: Ensure Support for Fair Housing Law and Practices

Discriminatory housing practices are still a challenge for low-income, disabled, and racial/ethnic minority households. This discrimination further restricts access to permanent housing and temporary housing. This strategy focuses on furthering fair housing efforts and educating residents on tenant and landlord rights and responsibilities.

Strategy No. 6: Provide for Special Needs Households

To create a balanced housing supply, the County must include housing suitable for to meet the needs of households with special needs. This includes housing for people of all ages who have physical or intellectual challenges, or those with extremely low or no income. The policies pertaining to housing for special needs households encourage a closer partnership between developers and the County and cities to

ensure that new housing is built to accommodate different type of households.

Strategy No. 7: Address Homelessness Consistent with Housing First Principles

The County and cities are experiencing a crisis of homelessness, and there is a need to prioritize and increase programs and efforts to provide immediate shelter and assistance in attaining permanent housing. Homeless shelters shall continue to be supported by service providers with the full range of assistance needed by the homeless. Temporary emergency shelters shall be used only as part of a continuum of care that leads to permanent housing.

Strategy No. 8: Maintain and Expand the Supply of Farm Worker Housing

The State considers housing for farm workers to be one form of special needs housing. Farm worker housing is vital to a viable agricultural economy and healthy communities in the county. This strategy focuses on addressing farm worker housing needs, particularly for year-round farm workers and their families.

Strategy No. 9: Conserve and Rehabilitate the Existing Housing Stock

Preserving and rehabilitating existing homes is an effective way to sustain the supply of affordable housing. The policies in this strategy encourage replacement of older, affordable housing lost through redevelopment or conversion to market rate housing. The policies also promote timely neighborhood improvements to prevent decay. The reuse and repurpose of underutilized buildings should be encouraged with adequate improvements to meet building and safety codes.

Strategy No. 10: Plan for Climate Change Impacts on Existing and Future Housing Stock

Santa Clara County is already experiencing the effects of the climate crisis. The County needs to ensure that existing and future housing stock is resilient to the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events. Policies under this strategy promote greater energy efficiency and resiliency in new and existing housing stock.

These strategies are designed not only to implement policies and programs that will effectively address countywide housing needs, but also to promote the other land use and development objectives expressed elsewhere in the General Plan, thereby supporting the housing-related goals in the Vision Statement of the General Plan and indirectly supporting other community goals. The strategies also span the entire County, though individual implementation measures may apply to only the unincorporated areas, to the County as a governmental entity, or countywide.

3.05b Completed Policies & Programs

The strategies and policies of the 2015 Update have been reviewed in accordance with the State requirements as part of the 2023 Housing Element Update. Changes to the 2015 Update primarily focuses on consolidating and updating policies and programs to reflect the County's current organizational structure and its focus on ending and preventing homelessness in Santa Clara County. The main changes include removing programs where funding sources for affordable housing production have been consolidated into a single over-the-counter Notice of Funding Availability, organizing the County's homelessness policies to be more consistent with the [2020-2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness](#), and introducing new policies and programs that address the County's commitment to affirmatively further fair housing. Appendix "x" provides an assessment of the status, progress, and accomplishments of each of the policies and programs in the 2015-2022 Housing Element. Notable accomplishments during fifth Housing Element cycle include:

- The voter-approved \$950 million 2016 "Measure A" Affordable Housing Bond, which is projected to fund 120 new affordable housing developments over ten years, including 4,800 new units dedicated to extremely low-income and very low-income households. As of November 1, 2022, the Board of Supervisors has approved 47 developments that will yield over 4,000 affordable and supportive housing.
- Streamlined housing development funds into one over-the-counter Notice of Funding Availability, which allowed the County to fund over 50 new development projects across ten of the fifteen incorporated cities in the county.
- Merged the County's Office of Affordable Housing and Office of Homelessness Concerns to form the Office of Supportive Housing, which positioned the County to rapidly scale the production of supportive housing, adding more than 2,700 units and housed over 21,000 people since 2015.

3.05c Ongoing and New Policies and Implementation Measures by Strategy

In this section, each Strategy is discussed in turn, and the associated Policies and Implementation Measures are listed. Housing Policies are identified by an indicator of "HG" followed by the associated Strategy number and then the policy number. Policies with subparts are indicated with a hyphenated suffix—for example, HG1-1 is a subpart of Housing Policy HG1. Implementation Measures are labeled by the associated Strategy number, followed by an "(i)" and a letter—for example, HG1(i) A. Programs associated with each Implementation Measure are listed beneath each Measure. The full program descriptions are provided in Chapter 4.

Strategy No. 1: Plan for a Balanced Countywide Housing Supply

A balanced housing supply is one that is adequate to meet housing needs and is affordable and accessible to all residents. “Balanced” refers not only to a sufficient amount of housing at various income levels, but also refers to a variety of housing types appropriate for a range of needs, and a variety of locations that complement transit opportunities and concentrations in employment. “Balance” goes beyond mere parity between the quantity of housing and the number of jobs. The housing stock must reflect household income and lifestyle profiles. The existing housing crisis in the State and in the Bay Area underscores the urgent need to provide a balanced housing supply in the county, ensuring that new housing projects fill in the gaps in the housing market, as well as encouraging the creation of diverse, walkable neighborhoods where there is a mix of population, ages, and incomes. The County will support the production of housing of diverse size and type that is affordable to extremely low-income, very low-income, low-income, moderate-income, and special needs populations.

The County is obligated by State housing law to support equity and ensure that it plans for, to the extent feasible, housing opportunities in the unincorporated area that are affordable to moderate-, low-, very low-, and extremely low-income households. For a variety of reasons, the majority of those opportunities will continue to be more commonly found in the urban unincorporated areas inside city USAs. The County’s General Plan goal is to have all unincorporated areas within USAs annexed by the respective cities to ensure all urban areas are managed by cities, and therefore the cities are authorized to plan the future growth of these USAs. However, given the new housing allocation methodology utilized by ABAG – allocating units partly based on existing population within jurisdictions – the County will update its General Plan to allow the County to plan for housing in these urbanized islands when cities do not have a plan for annexation. The policies under this strategy are set forth below.

Policies		Implementation Measures
HG1-1	Planning for the supply and diversity of housing types in urbanized areas of the County shall include consideration of both current and projected employment, household income needs, and a variety of housing types.	<p>HG1(i) A</p> <p>Maintain and, where necessary, strengthen County and cities’ joint land use policies and agreements that direct urban development to areas within city urban service areas.</p> <p><i>Program 2.1: Joint Urban Development Policies</i></p> <p>HG1(i) B</p> <p>Encourage public support of city efforts to create a balanced housing supply, which includes housing affordable to special needs, farmworkers, and extremely low-income households.</p> <p><i>Program 1.01: Supportive Housing Development Fund Notice of Funding Availability (SHDF NOFA)</i></p>
HG1-2	Housing at urban densities shall generally be built within the cities and their urban service areas, not in rural areas.	
HG1-3	Focus the County’s limited housing production resources on special needs populations, farmworkers, and extremely low-income households.	

HG1-4	Encourage homeownership opportunities for lower-income households.	<p>HG1(i) C</p> <p>Continue to implement new homeownership programs that provide an opportunity for lower-income households that would otherwise struggle to afford a home, furthering the equity and sustainability of homeownership.</p> <p><i>Program: 1.01 Supportive Housing Development Fund Notice of Funding Availability (SHDF NOFA)</i></p> <p><i>Program 1.02 Limited Equity Housing Cooperative Projects (LEHCs)</i></p> <p><i>Program 1.03: Homeownership Projects</i></p> <p><i>Program 1.04: Empower Homebuyers SCC</i></p> <p><i>Program 1.05: Mortgage Credit Certificate Program (MCC)</i></p> <p><i>Program 1.06 Below Market Rate Partnership Program</i></p>
HG1-5	Prioritize suitable County-owned, underutilized parcels within cities and Urban Service Areas for affordable, supportive, and workforce housing development.	
HG1-6	Ensure housing development projects within unincorporated Urban Service Areas contain an equitable mix of housing typology and housing options for different household income levels.	
HG1-7	Work with local transit authorities to locate housing within one-quarter mile walking distance to a transit station or stop to provide connectivity to services (such as schools, grocery stores, parks, etc.), and to prioritize constructing multi-modal transportation networks (sidewalks, bicycle lanes, trails, etc.), and other amenities within existing unincorporated neighborhoods.	<p>HG1(i) D</p> <p>Continue consideration of County owned lands suitable for the construction of extremely low-income housing and prioritize the development of County-owned sites suitable for housing development and when possible adjacent to transit.</p> <p><i>Program 1.07: County-Led Housing Development</i></p> <p><i>Program 1.17: Permanent Supportive Housing for Persons with a Serious Mental Illness</i></p> <p><i>Program 2.01: Housing Suitability and Prioritization Tool for County-Owned Properties</i></p> <p><i>Program 2.08: Housing Adjacent to Transit</i></p> <p><i>Program 3.01: SCC Mental Health Department Evans Lane Wellness and Recovery Center</i></p>
HG1-8	Until a city annexes the unincorporated islands within its USA, the County will plan for housing development in these areas, as necessary to address Housing Element law during a planning cycle and Regional Housing Needs Allocations (RHNA).	<p>HG1(i) E</p> <p>Amend General Plan and Zoning Ordinance to Plan for Housing in Unincorporated USAs.</p> <p><i>Program 2.02: Planning for Housing Development in Unincorporated USAs</i></p>

Strategy No. 2: Promote Cooperation and Collaboration on Housing Development

There are numerous housing agencies and advocacy groups within the county with opportunities to cooperate and collaborate to address housing issues, thus saving time and money, and expediting the introduction of innovative ideas and best practices throughout the housing community. The County and cities are well-positioned to work jointly to promote interjurisdictional and public/private efforts to expand the housing supply, and within County Departments, there are several agencies that either rely upon or provide housing services. For example, the County's Office of Supportive Housing (OSH) has a mission to increase the supply of housing and supportive housing that is affordable and available to extremely low-income and/or special needs households. Additionally, the County administers the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME Program). The County CDBG program is administered for the cities of Campbell, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Morgan Hill, and Saratoga, while it manages the HOME program for the cities of Cupertino, Gilroy, and Palo Alto.

There are many instances of collaboration between County and city governments to attain balance in the county's housing supply. The primary existing mechanism is the set of 40-year-old joint growth management policies of LAFCO, the cities, and the County that focus urban growth inside cities' Urban Service Areas (USAs). These growth management policies are designed to place most of the County's housing growth in the cities of the County, and results in most of the high density and affordable housing being created primarily in the cities. In November of 2016, Santa Clara County voters approved Measure A – the \$950 million affordable housing bond (Housing Bond). The Housing Bond provides the County with an unprecedented opportunity to partner with cities, residents, and the affordable and supportive housing community to significantly address the housing needs of the community's poorest and most vulnerable residents. The County, through the Office of Supportive Housing, has accelerated the production of affordable, supportive, and workforce housing throughout the County in partnerships with cities and other governmental entities through its implementation of the Housing Bond.

Policies		Implementation
HG2-1	The County and the cities should work cooperatively to ensure that there is a balanced housing supply sufficient to achieve countywide economic, social, and environmental objectives. Further opportunities for inter-agency, intergovernmental, interregional, and public/private cooperation should be sought out and encouraged.	<p>HG2(i) A Maintain intergovernmental agreements to address countywide housing objectives and to ensure an adequate supply of affordable housing countywide.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.08: Joint Development Memoranda of Understanding (MOU)</i> • <i>Program 1.09: Housing Trust of Silicon Valley</i> • <i>Program 1.10: Santa Clara County CDBG and Housing Coordinators' Convening</i> • <i>Program 1.16: Collaborate with the Santa Clara County Housing Authority (SCCHA)</i>
HG2-2	Intergovernmental and public and private cooperation shall be encouraged to achieve an adequate supply of affordable housing that meets changing demographic needs in Santa Clara County.	<p>HG2(i) B Establish and expand intergovernmental processes to more effectively define and achieve local and regional housing objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.10: Santa Clara County CDBG and Housing Coordinators' Convening</i> • <i>Program 2.09: Santa Clara County Association of Planning Officials</i>
HG2-3	Housing resources should be combined, and their use coordinated, among County Departments.	<p>HG2(i) C Continue to support cross-agency integration of housing services within the County Departments through internal agency agreements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 2.09: Santa Clara County Association of Planning Officials</i> • <i>Program 1.11: Internal County Coordination of Housing Funds and Services</i>

Strategy No. 3: Provide Financial Assistance for Extremely Low-Income Housing

Extremely low-income (ELI) households are those households with an income less than 30% of the area median income (AMI). In a high-cost and low-vacancy housing market, such as Santa Clara County, financial assistance to home builders, buyers, and renters is necessary to ensure that housing affordable to ELI and special needs households is built. However, public funds for this purpose are limited. Therefore, publicly funded housing programs should give priority to housing for ELI households. The goal of any public housing assistance program should be to ensure the availability of housing that is suitable and affordable to those not provided for by the current market.

By ensuring that a sufficient amount of new housing will be affordable to ELI households, the policies in this Strategy will also help to achieve the vision of the General Plan for social diversity and economic growth. Effective partnerships between home builders and local government will ensure that affordable housing is built in ways which also support the full range of land use objectives supported by Santa Clara County residents.

Policies		Implementation
HG3-1	Local funds for housing shall be targeted to households earning less than 30% of the County median income and special needs populations.	<p>HG3(i) A Participate in intergovernmental efforts to secure Federal and State legislation, which will ensure adequate funding for, and tax and other incentives for, the construction and preservation of extremely low-, very low-, low- and moderate-income ownership and rental housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.12: Coordinate with Bay Area Housing Finance Authority</i> • <i>Program 1.13: Supportive Housing and Innovation Fund (Destination Home)</i> • <i>Program 1.16: Collaborate with the Santa Clara County Housing Authority (SCCHA)</i> <p>HG3(i) B Continue to use suitably located surplus publicly owned lands for housing affordable to extremely low-, very low-, and low-income households through the sale or lease of such land to a government entity, or to nonprofit or private home builders with appropriate terms and conditions guaranteeing long term affordability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.16: Collaborate with the Santa Clara County Housing Authority (SCCHA)</i> • <i>Program 2.01: Housing Suitability and Prioritization Tool for County-Owned Properties</i> • <i>Program 1.07: County-Led Housing Development</i>
HG3-2	The provision of permanent supportive housing for extremely low-income households shall be given high priority in housing assistance programs.	

Strategy No. 4: Remove Unnecessary Barriers to Housing

Another important means by which County and city governments can cooperatively encourage affordable housing is to work with developers to reduce the costs of development. Lengthy project review times and important, but increasingly complex, development requirements (such as green building requirements), are costly for developers, who then pass additional costs to the future occupant.

State housing law requires each jurisdiction, as part of their Housing Element Update process, to review their development standards and review procedures for opportunities to remove unnecessary constraints. Over the last Housing Element cycle, the County has taken several steps to allow for more housing opportunities, as well as improving the permit review and approval process, primarily investing in new technological systems that improve the permitting and recordkeeping process. As part of the County’s commitment to keep improving the permit process, there is a continuous review of processes to seek improvements and revisions to ordinances to facilitate the building of housing.

With new State laws in response to the housing crisis that allow for the development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (JADUs) and second primary units (Senate Bill 9 or SB9 units – referred to as Urban Primary Units in the County ordinances) in areas zoned for single-family development, it is imperative that the County continue to streamline the regulatory and permit review process for these types of development.

To reaffirm this intent, the County continually reviews development trends, policy interpretation implications, and new State laws. If necessary, the County’s policies and standards are revised to ensure that housing and development objectives are met and are aligned with State objectives.

Policies		Implementation
HG4-1	The County should continually review its land use and development procedures for opportunities to remove unnecessary constraints to, and provide new opportunities to fund, the construction of affordable housing.	<p>HG4(i) A Identify and utilize a forum for sharing of best practices for removing governmental and nongovernmental constraints to housing development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 2.09: Santa Clara County Association of Planning Officials</i> • <i>Program 1.10: Santa Clara County CDBG and Housing Coordinators’ Convening</i>
HG4-2	Review and reduce, where appropriate, regulations and processing procedures regarding the development of ADUs, JADUs, and SB9 Units.	<p>HG4(i) B Implement Inclusionary Housing Fee Program for affordable housing project types.</p> <p><i>Program 2.03: In Lieu Fee Program for State Density Bonus and Affordable Housing</i></p> <p>HG4(i) C Monitor and modify development standards as needed, including the trends of ADU, JADU, and SB 9 development, to ensure development standards are objective, up to date with current State law, and reported to the State Department of Housing and Community Development annually.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 2.07: Streamline Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Processing</i> • <i>Program 2.10: Digital Tracking System for ADU, JADU, & SB9 Units.</i>
HG4-3	Update parking standards to allow more flexibility for a variety of housing types.	<p>HG4(i) D Create opportunities for adaptive reuse of non-residential buildings where single-family residential uses are allowed in the County Zoning Ordinance. The County will remove barriers related to development standards, such as providing exceptions to setbacks, building heights,</p>



and parking requirements, when a non-residential building is converted to a single-family residence.

- *Program 2.12: Update the Zoning Ordinance for Re-use of Non-Residential Buildings to Residential.*

Strategy No. 5: Ensure Support for Fair Housing Law and Practices

Illegal housing discrimination limits access to an already inadequate supply of affordable housing, which further exacerbates the imbalance between available housing and household needs, particularly for those of modest means. Discriminatory acts can be so subtle that many victims cannot readily detect them.

Ensuring equal access to housing for all residents is a responsibility of government. The County’s goal is to promote equal housing opportunities and to eliminate discriminatory housing practices. Despite the escalating costs of enforcement, County anti-discrimination programs have been effective. By ensuring equal access to housing, the County will achieve its housing goals and the objective of social equity and harmonious diversity expressed in the vision of the County General Plan.

Fair housing challenges often occur within an existing landlord / tenant relationship. Such challenges include unanticipated rent increases, changes in the terms of occupancy, evictions, lack of information regarding recourse for tenants, maintenance and condition of the leased property, late rental payments, and occupant behavior. Introducing financial assistance to rehabilitate properties and/or counseling services to address issues such as rent increases can help to resolve such tenant and landlord disagreements.

The County provides funding to several non-profit organizations that assist tenants and landlords. Funding is limited and these organizations are often understaffed. Consistent and adequate funding would increase the likelihood of both eliminating discrimination and improving tenant/landlord relations. In addition to aiding improvements in tenant and landlord relations. The efforts to resolve tenant/landlord problems should be continued and, where necessary, reinforced.

In 2018, the State passed Assembly Bill (AB) 686 as the Statewide framework to Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH). AB 686 requires that a local jurisdiction promote inclusive communities, further housing choice, and address racial and economic disparities through government programs, policies, and operations. This law is an important tool to address systemic racism in housing and achieve positive impacts for all. AB 686 applies to all public agencies in all activities related to housing and community development. In response to the new law, the County has added new policies and implementation programs to meet AB 686 under this strategy.

Racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty (R/ECAPs) have become a policy focus for the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). R/ECAPs are neighborhoods where residents are largely people of color and have lower incomes. State statute requires the Housing Element’s Assessment of Fair Housing to analyze R/ECAPs as well as racially concentrated areas of affluence (RCAAs). In contrast to R/ECAPs, RCAAs are neighborhoods where the population is disproportionately white and affluent.

“Burdened Households” are those with burdened with a rent cost that is 30 percent or more of their monthly income.

The policies and implementation programs set forth below continue existing policies and include new policies that work towards AFFH goals and serve county residents in all R/ECAPs countywide (i.e., not just in unincorporated areas).

Policies		Implementation
HG5-1	The County shall continue its work to enforce laws and foster policies and programs aimed towards preventing discrimination against people of protected status under Federal and State law.	<p>HG5(i) A Facilitate access to Federal and State home rehabilitation loans or grants to qualifying persons of extremely low-income.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.04: Empower Homebuyer SCC</i>
HG5-2	Fair housing services shall be available in all parts of the County.	<p>HG5(i) B Fair housing services shall continue to offer standardized protection and outreach services throughout the County.</p>

HG5-3	The rights of tenants and landlords shall be recognized and protected, and opportunities for mediation of disputes shall be provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.14: Santa Clara Fair Housing Consortium</i> • <i>Program 1.15: Fair Housing Audit & Education Program</i> <p>HG5(i) C Fair housing services provided shall be respectful of language, culture, and special needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.20: San Andreas Regional Center</i>
HG5-4	Reduce displacement of low-income household tenants and increase tenant protections prior to eviction proceedings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.14: Fair Housing Consortium</i> • <i>Program 3.01: SCC Behavioral Health Department Evans Lane Wellness and Recovery Center</i> <p>HG5(i) D Continue to support organizations active in ensuring the rights of all persons to obtain and retain housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.19: Eviction Diversion Program</i> • <i>Program 1.14: Fair Housing Consortium</i> • <i>Program 1.15: Fair Housing Audit & Education Program</i> <p>HG5(i) E Maintain tenant/landlord dispute mediation services in all areas of the County.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.18: Tenant/Landlord Dispute Mediation Services</i> • <i>Program 4.01: Dispute Resolution Program</i>
HG5-5	Identify and increase access to services and other opportunities for residents of historically disinvested low-income communities (R/ECAPs and Burdened Households) across unincorporated county.	<p>HG5(i) F Identify R/ECAP and communities with Burdened Households and identify areas of improvement that will increase access to amenities and resources such as (but not limited to) transit, parks, fresh groceries, and health improvement facilities.</p>
HG5-6	Support cities in improving opportunities within neighborhoods and areas identified as R/ECAPs and/or neighborhoods with a majority of Burdened Households.	
HG5-7	Promote residential racial and ethnic integration and reduce displacement by increasing the supply of affordable housing in High Opportunity Areas, in areas with ongoing displacement, and in areas where residents are at risk of displacement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 2.13: Identify R/ECAP and communities identified by HUD as burdened households.</i>

Strategy No. 6: Provide for Special Needs Housing

Many Santa Clara County households encounter extraordinary difficulty in finding both affordable and accessible housing. In addition to the housing constraints already imposed by limited income, there are additional burdens faced by special needs and vulnerable populations, such as the elderly, large families, female-headed households, at-risk youth, victims of domestic violence, agricultural employee families (addressed specifically in Strategy No. 8), the homeless (addressed specifically in Strategy No. 7), and by those that are differently abled. These types of households are identified as special needs households. The needs of these groups call for specific program responses.

Community input showed significant interest and concern for the housing needs of all special needs populations. The input affirmed the need for policies promoting housing with support services. In addition, the community emphasized the need to adopt new policies that facilitate aging in place, such as incorporating Universal Design²⁷ in building codes. The community input also sought collaborative efforts by and among all cities, County agencies, and nonprofit housing-related organizations to ensure housing resources are well advertised and better utilized to prevent homelessness, address special needs, and provide paths to permanent housing.

Because homes for special needs households often require design features not typically required by other households, housing suitable for special needs households is rarely provided by the private market without some public assistance. The County and cities can encourage the production of special needs housing by identifying the scope of need in each community and using housing funds to enable builders to construct the needed extremely low-income (ELI) units in coordination with County’s direct referral services to ensure access to vulnerable and special needs populations. Through reducing constraints, local governments can improve the economics of such projects without compromising standards for health and safety (this approach is implemented through Strategy No. 4 addressing constraints to housing production).

The latest U.S. Census continues to indicate a growing elderly population in the county. Since 2000, the population share of residents in unincorporated county 65 years and older has increased to 15% of the total population and is projected to increase to over 20% by 2030 and reach 25% around 2045. This is a higher percentage of elderly population than the State of California (11 %), and country (13 %) as a whole. As such, planning for the senior population will be a growing need for the County to address. It is imperative that new housing suitable to the needs of a variety of senior households be integrated into every community.

The following policies continue existing policies identified in the previous Housing Element, while adding new policies to help the County update its understanding of the demand for special needs housing in the county, including senior housing.

Policies		Implementation
HG6-1	Encourage the development of affordable housing that is suitable for a variety of special needs populations.	HG6(i) A Advocate for the expansion of Federal and State programs and funding to assist local government in developing special needs housing not provided through the private market. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.01: Supportive Housing Development Fund Notice of Funding Availability (SHDF NOFA)</i> • <i>Program 1.12: Coordinate with Bay Area Housing Finance Authority</i> • <i>Program 1.16: Collaborate with the Santa Clara County Housing Authority (SCCHA)</i> • <i>Program 1.17: Permanent Supportive Housing for Persons with a Serious Mental Illness</i>
HG6-2	An adequate supply of affordable housing suitable for individuals at all stages of life should be available in every community.	

²⁷ Universal Design is a building concept that incorporates products, general design layouts, and characteristics into residences in order to make the residence usable by the greatest number of people, respond to the changing needs of the resident, and improve the marketability of the residence.

HG6-3	Expand the Home Repair and Modification Program to include the retrofit of existing housing units to become ADA compliant.	<p>HG6(i) B Develop and implement policies and ordinances that create housing that is adaptable to the needs of physically, developmentally, and emotionally challenged persons.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.01: Supportive Housing Development Fund Notice of Funding Availability (SHDF NOFA)</i> • <i>Program 1.20: San Andreas Regional Center</i> • <i>Program 2.14: Universal Design in Housing Development</i>
HG6-4	Incorporate Universal Design Principles into existing residential building standards.	<p>HG6(i) C Maintain existing programs to provide "Housing for All Ages," including housing for multigenerational households.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.31: Minor Home Repair and Maintenance Program</i> • <i>Program 2.17: Expand Home Repair and Modifications to Include ADA Upgrades</i> • <i>Program 2.18: Training and Support to Homeowners Aging in Place</i>
		<p>HG6(i) D Maintain existing programs to provide housing suitable for families with children in need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.11: Internal County Coordination of Housing Funds and Services</i> <p>HG6(i) E Support implementation of housing-related policies in the county.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.24: Community Plan to End Homelessness</i> • <i>Program 3.01: SCC Behavioral Health Department Evans Lane Wellness and Recovery Center</i>

Strategy No. 7: Address Homelessness Consistent with Housing First Principles

Homelessness is a persistent and chronic problem for many individuals, but its effects touch whole communities. The countywide unhoused population remained between 7,200 and 7,500 people from 2007 to 2017, when there was a significant jump. From 2017 to the present, the unhoused population has increased. In a survey conducted in 2022, the unhoused population had grown to 10,000. Families with children, seniors, individuals with disabilities, veterans, youth, and young adults are all represented in the county’s diverse unhoused population.

The growing income gap between higher-income and lower-income populations in the county and the lack of housing development particularly at the lowest income levels contribute to the homelessness crisis. According to the Public Policy Institute of California, families at the highest income levels in the Bay Area (the 90th percentile) have more than 12 times the income of families at the bottom (the 10th percentile).²⁸ Those at the lower end of the income level have not shared in the region’s significant economic growth. In Santa Clara County, between 2000 and 2015, workers with earnings in the 10th percentile saw their income decline by 12%.²⁹

In 2015, the community came together to create a roadmap for ending homelessness in Santa Clara County. The *2015-2020 Community Plan to End Homelessness* centered around a collective impact response and the proven Housing First model. The Plan helped 8,884 households resolve their homelessness, doubled the number of supportive housing units, and increased temporary and emergency shelter capacity. Following a robust community engagement process and coordination, the County and its partners updated the roadmap for ending homelessness in the *2020-2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness*, focusing on three core strategies: 1) Address the root causes of homelessness through system and policy change; 2) Expand homelessness prevention and housing programs to meet the need; and 3) Improve quality of life for unsheltered individuals and create healthy neighborhoods for all. The *Community Plan to End Homelessness* continues to guide the County, cities, non-profit agencies, and community members on decisions about funding, programs, and needs for addressing the root causes of homelessness in the county.

Policies		Implementation
HG7-1	Expand homelessness prevention programs to support individuals and families most at risk of becoming homeless.	<p>HG7(i) A Transition the Homelessness Prevention System Pilot into an ongoing housing intervention within the Supportive Housing System and continue to secure public and private funding to aid 2,500 households annually.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.11: Internal County Coordination of Housing Funds and Services</i> • <i>Program 1.21: Homelessness Prevention System</i> • <i>Program 1.22: Emergency Assistance Network</i> • <i>Program 1.24: Community Plan to End Homelessness</i> <p>HG7(i) B</p>
HG7-2	Expand supportive housing programs, including permanent supportive housing and rapid rehousing programs.	
HG7-3	Improve the quality of life of unsheltered individuals by expanding the capacity of temporary housing programs and providing basic needs services to individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness.	

²⁸ Public Policy Institute of California, “Income Inequality in California.” 2020. <https://www.ppic.org/publication/income-inequality-in-california/>

²⁹ Bay Area Equity Atlas, “Earned income growth for full-time wage and salary workers: Santa Clara County, CA, 2000–2015.” <https://bayareaequityatlas.org/indicators/income-growth#/?geo=0400000000006085>

HG7-4	Continue to use hotels and motels to provide interim housing options for unsheltered households and seek additional Homekey funding from the State for capital improvements and to support ongoing operating funding.	<p>Continue to collaborate with affordable housing developers, non-profit agencies, county departments, local and regional partners to expand affordable and supportive housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.23: City Revenue Agreements</i> • <i>Program 1.24: Community Plan to End Homelessness</i> <p>HG7(i) C Continue to support community-based organizations that provide services to the unhoused population.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.24: Community Plan to End Homelessness</i> • <i>Program 1.25: Temporary Housing Programs</i> • <i>Program 1.28: Lived Experience Advisory Board (LEAB)</i> <p>HG7(i) D Coordinate with cities to construct service enriched emergency shelters consistent with the Community Plan to End Homelessness’s goal to double the number of temporary shelter beds by 2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.24: Community Plan to End Homelessness</i> • <i>Program 1.27: Service Enriched Shelter Forgiveness Loan Program</i> <p>HG7 (i) E Coordinate a Homekey Round 3 strategy with cities that focuses on expanding temporary and interim housing options to reduce unsheltered homelessness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.26: Homekey Strategy</i>
HG7-5	Continue to incentivize the construction of new service enriched emergency interim housing by partnering with cities.	<p>HG7 (i) F Promote the County’s Service Enriched Emergency Interim Housing Challenge Grant by partnering with cities to help achieve the goals contained in the Community Plan to End Homelessness to double the number of temporary shelter beds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.24: Community Plan to End Homelessness</i>
HG7-6	Continue to support feedback mechanisms that provide those with lived experience the opportunity to inform and shape improvements to the Supportive Housing System and the delivery of services.	<p>HG7(i) G Raise the voices of people with lived experience and share power with unhoused and recently housed neighbors by including them in the decision-making process when making decisions about homelessness-related policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.24: Community Plan to End Homelessness</i> • <i>Program 1.28: Lived Experience Advisory Board (LEAB)</i>

Strategy No. 8: Maintain and Expand the Supply of Agricultural Employee Housing

Santa Clara County has a long history as a significant producer of agricultural products. Once known as the Valley of the Heart’s Delight, the region still produces over \$320 million of agricultural products per year.³⁰ The County is proud of its agricultural heritage and desires to promote food security by ensuring viable agricultural production including access to affordable and safe housing for agricultural workers and their families. The provision of affordable and safe agricultural employee housing can also promote the continuation of the county’s agricultural tradition by making the farms throughout the County more productive and more competitive. Moreover, through the development and implementation of the *Santa Clara Valley Agricultural Plan* (Ag Plan), it has become clear that the County’s agricultural lands and the workers who steward them play an essential role in mitigating and adapting to climate change.

Agricultural employee households are considered a special needs household in State planning guidelines. Providing housing for agricultural employees continues to be a priority for the County and for communities and organizations countywide. Prioritizing agricultural employees extends to individuals who seasonally migrate to the County for employment at local farms and in processing plants, as well as to a substantial and growing portion of agricultural employees who are permanent, year-round County residents and who often live with their families. Year-round crops need year-round workers, and many farmers strive to provide work for their employees in the off-season to increase the likelihood that their employees will be available during crucial periods of high-labor needs. These dynamics are particularly true during times of labor shortages and a competitive job market. A large supply of seasonal workers is also necessary for the labor-intensive work of planting and harvesting highly perishable seasonal crops. Migrant and seasonal agricultural workers are often more challenged than year-round workers to find adequate housing and are more likely to endure long commutes from their place of residence to their place of work. By providing adequate opportunities for agricultural employee housing in Santa Clara County, the County’s agricultural industry can gain a competitive advantage, especially for seasonal workers during periods when agricultural workers are scarce. Importantly, the term agricultural employee also includes the significant population of self-employed farm and ranch operators, permanent County residents who also face significant housing challenges.

In 2018, the County adopted the Ag Plan, recognizing the need to ensure that the region’s agricultural economy continues to thrive, and that it is integrated into the County’s efforts to tackle climate change and regional resilience. The plan identifies the development of new agricultural employee housing as a crucial aspect to improving the agriculture-supportive infrastructure of the region. In response to the plan, the County updated its Zoning Ordinance to expand options for agricultural employee housing and streamline the planning approval process. The Ag Plan also calls for the facilitation of construction of more agricultural employee housing by identifying opportunities, including siting and funding options, for such projects.

The policies under this strategy continue existing policies identified in the 2015 Update, while adding new policies that work in conjunction with policies identified under Strategy No. 1 (Plan for a Balanced Countywide Housing Supply).

Policies		Implementation
HG8-1	Facilitate agricultural employee housing by streamlining permit and development process.	HG8(i) A Convene other jurisdictions for capacity-building and conduct a farmworker housing needs assessment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Program 2.05: Assess Farmworker Housing Needs and Collaborate with Other Jurisdictions</i> HG8(i) B
HG8-2	The County shall promote and support programs that maintain and expand appropriately located housing suitable for and affordable to farmworker households. Such support shall prioritize the needs of seasonal workers.	

³⁰ Source: [Santa Clara County 2021 Crop Report](#)

		<p>Identify and pursue additional opportunities to reduce regulatory constraints upon, and expedite development of, agricultural employee housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 2.15: Streamlining Agricultural Employee Housing</i>
HG8-4	Seek new funding sources to incentivize the construction of farmworker housing.	<p>HG8(i) C Monitor new State and Federal Funding regarding farmworker rental and homeownership programs and collaborate with housing developers to identify sites suitable for farmworker housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.29: Farmworker Affordable Homeownership and Farmworker Housing Pilot Program.</i>

Strategy No. 9: Conserve and Rehabilitate the Existing Housing Stock

One means of ensuring the availability of affordable housing is by maintaining the existing supply of older, less costly units. Rehabilitation programs assist lower income owners and tenants in upgrading their housing and maintaining its affordability. Older single-family houses provide starter homes for many first-time home buyers, and many older apartments and duplexes provide safe, decent, and affordable housing for low-income seniors, students, and an increasing number of families with children.

These more affordable housing opportunities can and have been lost through demolition and rebuilding of newer, larger homes. It is appropriate and necessary that some areas in every community evolve to different uses as time goes by. However, communities must address the resulting displacement of existing long-term lower income rental residents out of the area. Programs to rehabilitate existing homes should ensure that low-income households can continue to live in their existing communities. Additionally, the rehabilitation of owner-occupied housing could be a means for seniors to be able to age in place.

Funds from Federal and State housing programs have been used to assist qualified low- and moderate-income homeowners and rental property owners in rehabilitation and maintenance efforts. Many of these neighborhoods are also in need of public infrastructure improvements, such as street repaving, sidewalk repairs, and installation or repair of storm drains, curbs, and gutters. Community development funds have been used to make public improvements of this sort. These improvements in turn provide residents with a safer living environment, as well as an increased pride in their neighborhood and homes. They further encourage an increase in private investment in the area.

Those programs should be continued and, as resources permit, expanded to ensure that the maximum number of units affordable to lower income residents remain available in those areas.

When rental units are rehabilitated, owners or landlords will frequently raise rents either to cover costs or because the upgraded units command higher rent on the market. The County and the cities should make every effort to ensure that public grants or low interest loans for the purposes of rehabilitation do not result in the displacement of lower income tenants or the loss of below market rate housing. Monitoring of rental costs has also proven to help with tracking the increasing cost of housing in the county.

The policies under this strategy maintain the County's goal to facilitate the preservation of the existing housing stock, while also ensuring that displacements due to such improvements are limited.

Policies		Implementation
HG9-1	The conservation and rehabilitation of the existing housing supply shall be encouraged and facilitated.	<p>HG9(i) A Maintain ongoing programs for monitoring the physical condition of neighborhoods to assist in guiding rehabilitation program efforts, scheduling infrastructure maintenance activities, and to provide accurate information for Federal and State programs. Expand monitoring component to include rent price information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 1.31: Minor Home Repair and Maintenance Program</i> • <i>Program 2.06: Rent Price Monitoring Program</i> <p>HG9(i) B Maintain existing County and cities' joint land use policies and agreements that direct urban development to areas within city USAs and preserve rural areas for rural development.</p>
HG9-2	Publicly assisted housing rehabilitation efforts should not have the effect of reducing the available supply of housing for extremely low-income households.	
HG9-3	The inventory of land zoned and suitable for residential development shall be maintained.	

HG9-4

Support retaining existing deed restricted affordable and supportive housing units.

- *Program 2.11: Joint Urban Development Policies*

HG9(i) C

Strengthen the County's loan portfolio management system to track when existing affordable and supportive housing projects are eligible for syndication of their tax credits and work towards extending affordability terms.

- *Program 1.30: Asset Management Portfolio Expansion*

Strategy No. 10: Plan for Climate Change Impacts on Existing and Future Housing Stock

Santa Clara County is already experiencing the effects of the climate crisis.³¹ The County needs to ensure that future housing stock is resilient to the impacts of climate change. It also needs to ensure that the current housing stock are periodically upgraded to reduce the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events. The policies under this strategy promote greater energy and water efficiency in new and existing housing stock and promote the development of resiliency against extreme weather in future housing stock.

The County's *Climate Roadmap 2030* and its *Sustainability Master Plan* (adopted in 2021) provide the larger vision and broad goals for climate smart housing. The policies below complement Strategy 2.1 and Strategy 6.3 of the *Sustainability Master Plan*. These policies will ensure that existing and future housing stock are contributing to lowering our greenhouse gas (GHG) footprint and protecting our existing housing stock from extreme weather events and natural disasters.

Policies		Implementation
HG10-1	Promote energy and water efficiency and electrification in new and existing residential buildings to reduce energy costs, conserve water, provide quality and resilient housing, improve safety, and comfort, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.	<p>HG10(i) A Adopt new energy efficiency, electrification, water conservation and building performance standards for existing and new buildings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 2.16: Adoption of "Reach" Codes</i>
HG10-2	Limit development of new housing in areas likely to face high risk to climate related disasters, such as, wildfires and floods.	<p>HG10(i) B Adopt new land development standards to limit new development in high climate risk areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 2.04: Update Flood Hazard and Flood Management Information (AB 162)</i> • <i>Program 2.19: Fires Safety Standards</i> • <i>Program 2.20: Update Safety Element</i> • <i>Program 2.21: Adopt Local Hazard Mitigation Plan</i>
HG10-3	Facilitate programs and assistance to upgrade existing housing stock to better withstand extreme weather events, while keeping energy efficiency in mind.	<p>HG10(i) C Create an Education Program for property owners in high-risk areas in methods to reduce their risk of an event.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program 2.04: Update Flood Hazard and Flood Management Information (AB 162)</i> • <i>Program 2.22: Educate Homeowners in High-Fire Risk Areas of Hazards.</i>
HG10-4	Educate property owners in high-risk areas in methods to reduce their risk of a climate impact event.	

³¹ See [Silicon Valley 2.0 Climate Adaptation Guidebook](#) for more on the County's efforts to demonstrate the effects of climate change locally.