



County of Santa Clara HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE

2023-2031



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Overview of Housing Element Update 2023-2031	19
Introduction	19
Executive Summary	20
Terminology Used in the 2023 Update	25
Housing Policy and Development in Relation to Smart Growth General Plan Policies and Climate Change Policies	26
The County’s Special Role in Housing Production	27
ABAG Allocation Methodology and Unique Aspects of County Planning	28
Sustainable Communities Strategy and Plan Bay Area	29
Community Participation and Outreach	30
Communication Methods	32
Engagement Methods	33
Outreach Events	36
Summary of Feedback	37

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Online Survey Results	40
Ongoing Reporting, Referral Requirements, and Program Maintenance	43
Consistency of the Housing Element with Other Elements of the General Plan	43
Chapter 2: Housing Needs and Production	44
Introduction	44
Unincorporated County Housing Needs	45
Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing	48
Unincorporated County Housing Development Capacity	56
Opportunities for Energy Conservation	78
Governmental Factors Influencing Housing	80
Non-Governmental Factors Influencing Housing Production	113
Chapter 3: Fifth Cycle Performance Review and Sixth Cycle Housing Strategies and Policies	117
Review of County’s Fifth Cycle RHNA Assignment Performance	117

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Recent Unincorporated County Housing Development Activity	118
Review of County’s Investment in Countywide Housing Efforts During Fifth Cycle and Beyond	119
2015 Housing Element Update Program Outcomes	122
Sixth Cycle Housing-Related Strategies and Policies	122
Chapter 4: County Housing Strategies, Policies, and Programs	143
Overview	143
List of Implementation Programs	144
Program Descriptions	146

TABLES

Table 1.1: Summary Capacity to Meet RHNA Allocation	23
Table 1.2: Outreach Efforts and Public Meetings	32
Table 1.3: Communications Methods	32
Table 1.4 Stakeholder and Community Workshops	46
Table 2.1 2022 Household Income Category Thresholds by Household Size	46
Table 2.2 Population Growth Trends	52
Table 2.3 Population by Race in the Unincorporated County, 2000-2019	57
Table 2.4 Summary Capacity to Meet RHNA assignment	58
Table 2.5 Amenities and Hazard utilized to map housing suitability areas	60
Table 2.6: Housing Capacity on Stanford Sites	62
Table 2.7 Housing Capacity on Sites within Unincorporated USAs of the City of San José	63
Table 2.8: Fruitdale/ Santa Clara Valley Medical Center Sites	65
Table 2.9: Parkmoor/Burbank Neighborhood	66

TABLES

Table 2.10: Hostetter Station	66
Table 2.11: Alum Rock / East Foothills Neighborhoods	68
Table 2.12: Cambrian Park Neighborhood	70
Table 2.13: Pleasant Hills Site	72
Table 2.14: Total Probable Units in Unincorporated County 2023-2031	75
Table 2.15: Quantified Objectives Per Income Group	76
Table 2.16: Zoning for a Variety of Housing Types	76
Table 2.17: Residential Development Standards	89
Table 2.18: Parking Requirements	90
Table 2.19: Accessible Parking Requirements	91
Table 2.20: Land Use and Development Application Fees	100
Table 2.21: Land Use and Development Application Processing Timelines	104
Table 2.22: Median and Average Characteristics of Home Sales in Unincorporated Santa Clara County	117

TABLES

Table 3.1: RHNA, Projections, and Achieved Housing Production	119
Table 3.2: Accessory Dwelling Permit issued 2015-2021	121
Table 4.1: List of Implementation Programs	146
Table 4.2: SHDF NOFA	149
Table 4.3: LEHCs	150
Table 4.4: Homeownership Projects	151
Table 4.5: Empower Homebuyers SCC	152
Table 4.6: Mortgage Credit Certificate (MCC) Program	153
Table 4.7: Below Market Partnership Program	154
Table 4.8: County-Led Housing Development	156
Table 4.9: Joint Development Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)	157
Table 4.10: Housing Trust of Silicon Valley	157
Table 4.11: Santa Clara County CDBG and Housing Coordinators Convenings	158
Table 4.12: Internal County Coordination of Housing Funds and Services	160

TABLES

Table 4.13: Coordinate with Bay Area Housing Finance Authority	161
Table 4.14: Supportive Housing and Innovation Fund	162
Table 4.15: Santa Clara Fair Housing Consortium	163
Table 4.16: Fair Housing Audit & Education Program	164
Table 4.17: Collaborate with the Santa Clara County Housing Authority (SCCHA)	166
Table 4.18: Permanent Supportive Housing for Persons with a Serious Mental Illness	167
Table 4.19: Tenant/Landlord Dispute Mediation Services	168
Table 4.20: Eviction Diversion Program	169
Table 4.21: San Andreas Regional Center	170
Table 4.22: Homelessness Prevention System	171
Table 4.23: Emergency Assistance Network	172
Table 4.24: City Revenue Agreements	173

TABLES

Table 4.25: Community Plan to End Homelessness	174
Table 4.26: Temporary Housing Programs	175
Table 4.27: Homekey Application Strategy	175
Table 4.28: Service Enriched Shelter Forgivable Loan Program	177
Table 4.29: LEAB	178
Table 4.30: Farmworker Affordable Homeownership and Farmworker Housing Pilot Program	178
Table 4.31: Asset Management Portfolio Expansion	179
Table 4.32: Minor Home Repair and Maintenance	180
Table 4.33 Housing Suitability and Prioritization Tool for County-Owned Properties	181
Table 4.34: Planning for Housing Development in Unincorporated USAs	182
Table 4.35: In-Lieu Fee Program for State Density Bonus and Affordable Housing	183
Table 4.36: Update of Flood Hazard and Flood Management Information (AB 162)	184

TABLES

Table 4.37: Assess Farmworker Housing Needs and Collaborate with Other Jurisdictions	185
Table 4.38: Rent Price Monitoring Program	185
Table 4.39: Streamline Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Processing	186
Table 4.40: Housing Adjacent to Transit	187
Table 4.41: Santa Clara County Association of Planning Officials	187
Table 4.42: Digital tracking system for ADUs, JADUs & SB9 units	188
Table 4.43: Joint Urban Development Policies	189
Table 4.44: Update Zoning Ordinance for Re-use of Non-Residential Buildings to Residential	190
Table 4.45: Monitor R/ECAP and Burdened Households Areas	190
Table 4.46: Universal Design in Housing Development	190
Table 4.47: Streamlining Agricultural Employee Housing	192
Table 4.48: Adoption of "Reach" Codes	193

TABLES

Table 4.49: Expand Home Repair and Modifications to Include ADA Upgrades 194

Table 4.50: Training and Support to Homeowners Aging in Place 195

Table 4.51: Fire Safety Standards 196

Table 4.52: Update Safety Element 197

Table 4.53: Adopt Local Hazard Mitigation Plan 198

Table 4.54: Educate homeowners in high fire risk areas of hazards 199

Table 4.55: SCC Mental Health Department Evans Lane Wellness and Recovery Center 200

Table 4.56: Substance Use Recovery Residences (formerly Department of Alcohol and Drugs Services) 201

Table 4.57: Dispute Resolution Program 202

FIGURES

Figure 1.1 RHNA County Assignment	21
Figure 1.2: Housing Element Update Community Participation and Outreach Process	31
Figure 1.3: Housing Issues Priority Rating Exercise (average scores out of five from 167 responses)	40
Figure 1.4: Participant income level (out of 80 responses - 39 participants chose not to answer)	41
Figure 1.5: Participant ethnicity (out of 99 responses - 20 participants chose not to answer)	41
Figure 1.6: Participant Zip Codes	42
Figure 2.1 Santa Clara County Urban and Rural Areas	44
Figure 2.2 Population Growth Trends	47
Figure 2.3 Unincorporated Santa Clara County Housing Need, by Income Category	48
Figure 2.4: Diversity of Population in Santa Clara County	53
Figure 2.5: Diversity of Population in Santa Clara County	53

FIGURES

Figure 2.6: Racially/Ethnically Concentrated Areas of Poverty (R/ECAPs) in Santa Clara County	54
Figure 2.7: Affordability Index & Displacement Risk	55
Figure 2.8: Affordability Index & Displacement Risk	55
Figure 2.9: Housing Sites on Stanford Campus	60
Figure 2.10: Housing Sites in Parkmoor, Burbank, and Fruitdale/VMC Neighborhoods	64
Figure 2.11: Housing Sites at Hostetter Station	67
Figure 2.12: Housing Sites at Alum Rock/East Foothills	69
Figure 2.13: Housing Site in Cambrian Park Neighborhood	71
Figure 2.14: Pleasant Hills Site Inventory	73
Figure 2.15: Urban Islands – Communications Hill	84
Figure 2.16: Urban Islands – Cambrian Park	84

How to Use the Housing Element Update

A Housing Element is a planning document required by California state law as part of the local government's General Plan. The Housing Element is intended to address the current and future housing needs of a community, including the development, preservation, and improvement of housing for all income levels.

The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) sets forth specific requirements for the Housing Element, including an assessment of housing needs, identification of sites suitable for housing development, and policies to promote affordable housing. The Housing Element must be updated every eight years to reflect changing community needs and to ensure that the local government is meeting its goals for housing production.

The Housing Element plays a critical role in California's efforts to address its housing crisis by providing solutions to affordability and quality in housing. By requiring local governments to plan for housing growth and development, the Housing Element helps ensure that California's communities can provide a range of housing options for residents at all income levels.

The 2023-2031 update to the County of Santa Clara Housing Element is divided into the following chapters:

Chapter 1: Overview of Housing Element Update 2023-2031

Chapter 2: Housing Needs and Production

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

Chapter 4: County Housing Programs, Projects, Studies, and Activities

How the Housing Element is used will vary greatly based on the user. This section gives some general suggestions based on different users. Please also review the Frequently Asked Questions section, for general questions about the Housing Element.

County Officials

As an elected or appointed official, you have a duty to oversee the development, preservation, and improvement of housing for members of your community. This includes future members of the community and those of varying income levels, abilities, ages, and backgrounds.

Professional staff employed by the County will also need to be familiar with the Housing Element to implement the goals, strategies, policies, and programs it contains.

The Housing Element contains goals and policies to guide you in your work to ensure that these goals are met while still allowing for an appropriate level of local control. Some of the key sections County officials should be familiar with include:

- **Chapter 2:** [2.04b Development Capacity Analysis](#).
- **Chapter 3:** [3.05 Sixth Cycle Housing-Related Strategies and Policies](#)
- **Chapter 4:** [County Housing Strategies, Policies, and Programs](#).

Homeowners

As a current or future homeowner, you may want to know how the Housing Element impacts you and your housing choices. The Housing Element contains information about housing-related programs for both first-time home buyers as well as current homeowners.

For those individuals looking to become first-time home buyers, the County has several programs that may be of assistance, including:

- **Chapter 4:** [Program 1.02 - Limited Equity Housing Cooperative Projects \(LEHCs\)](#).
- **Chapter 4:** [Program 1.04 - Empower Homebuyers SCC](#).
- **Chapter 4:** [Program 1.05 - Mortgage Credit Certificate \(MCC\) Program](#).
- **Chapter 4:** [Program 1.06 - Below Market Partnership Program](#).
- **Chapter 4:** [Program 1.31 – Minor Home Repair and Maintenance](#).

Existing homeowners can find several programs and policies that can assist them as well. Some of these programs may include additional information on how to add an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) and/or Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit (JADU), programs to assist in home repair or maintenance, and information on how to keep your home safe from wildfires. Chapter 4 describes a number of these policies and programs including:

- **Chapter 4:** [Program 1.31 – Minor Home Repair and Maintenance](#).
- **Chapter 4:** [Program 2.07 - Streamline Accessory Dwelling Unit \(ADU\) Processing](#).

- **Chapter 4:** [Program 2.18 - Training and Support to Homeowners Aging in Place](#).
- **Chapter 4:** [Program 2.22 – Educate homeowners in high fire risk areas of hazards](#).

Please see Chapter 4 for the full list of programs and policies.

Landlords/Tenants

The County of Santa Clara has housing programs geared at assisting tenants as well as landlords, including:

- **Chapter 4:** [Program 1.18 - Tenant/Landlord Dispute Mediation Services](#).
- **Chapter 4:** [Program 1.19 - Eviction Diversion Program](#).

Please see Chapter 4 for the full list of programs and policies.

Developers

Coordination with housing developers, especially affordable housing developers, is crucial to seeing more housing built in Santa Clara County. Developers can use the Housing Element to learn more about the sites identified for additional housing development. They can also take advantage of some of the County's on-going efforts to free up additional land for residential development such as: Program 2.12 - Update Zoning Ordinance for Re-use of Non-Residential Buildings to Residential. Some sections of the Housing Element that may be of interest to developers include:

- **Chapter 2:** [County Housing Strategies, Policies, and Programs](#).
- **Chapter 4:** [County Housing Strategies, Policies, and Programs](#).

Affordable Housing Advocates

The provision of affordable housing is critical for the continued vitality of the Bay Area. The County of Santa Clara has partnered with affordable housing developers in the past and will continue to provide support through a number of programs and funding mechanisms. To learn more about past projects, as well as future opportunities, please read the following sections:

- **Chapter 2:** [2.04b Development Capacity Analysis](#).
- **Chapter 3:** [3.03 Review of County's Investment in Countywide Housing Efforts During Fifth Cycle and Beyond](#).
- **Chapter 3:** [3.05 Sixth Cycle Housing-Related Strategies and Policies](#).
- **Chapter 4:** [County Housing Strategies, Policies, and Programs](#).

Special Housing Needs

Part of the role of the Housing Element is to plan for a variety of housing types for a wide variety of individuals and circumstances. This includes looking at situations such as housing for agricultural workers, Seniors, individuals with disabilities, and temporary housing. To learn more about these programs and policies please visit the following sections of the Housing Element:

- **Chapter 3:** [Sixth Cycle Housing-Related Strategies and Policies](#).
- **Chapter 4:** [County Housing Strategies, Policies, and Programs](#).

Members of the Community

Community engagement is a key part of the Housing Element update process. Throughout the process, the County of Santa Clara has reached out to community members like you for your input and feedback. Thank you for your participation in the Housing Element

process and for your continued interest. To learn about how public input was incorporated into the Housing Element, please refer to the following section:

- **Chapter 1:** [Community Participation and Outreach](#).

Housing Element FAQ

What is the purpose of a Housing Element?

The purpose of a Housing Element is to address the current and future housing needs of a community, including the development, preservation, and improvement of housing for all income levels.

What are the requirements for a Housing Element?

The requirements for a Housing Element include an assessment of housing needs, identification of sites suitable for housing development, and policies to promote affordable housing. The Housing Element must be updated every eight years and approved by HCD.

The main categories or types of information and analysis required in a Housing Element update are:

- Identification and analysis of existing housing needs and projected housing needs;
- A statement of goals, objectives, strategies, and policies relating to the maintenance, preservation, improvement, and development of housing;
- An analysis of the capacity of the existing General Plan and Zoning Ordinance to meet projected needs; and,
- A summary of housing programs and a five-year schedule of implementation measures.

The 2023-2031 update serves four additional important purposes:

- To document local housing needs in the context of existing County land use and growth management policies;
- To affirmatively further fair housing throughout Santa Clara County;
- To explain important components of planning policies in Santa Clara County, which has urban growth management policies that guide urban housing development to occur within cities and Urban Service Areas (USAs) to preserve open space and promote rural land use densities outside cities; and
- To document the many other ways, in addition to the approval of residential development, by which the County contributes significantly to meeting local and countywide housing needs.
- Who is responsible for preparing a Housing Element?
- Local governments are responsible for preparing a Housing Element. In this case, the County of Santa Clara is responsible for the preparation and update of the Housing Element for the unincorporated areas of the county.

How often does a Housing Element need to be updated?

A Housing Element needs to be updated every eight years. HCD will release a detailed timeline of when Housing Elements need to be submitted to HCD and approved for compliance with State law.

How does a Housing Element address affordable housing?

A Housing Element addresses affordable housing through policies that promote the production of affordable housing, such as inclusionary zoning and density bonuses. It also acknowledges the use of public funds (such as Measure A) to help subsidize the development of affordable housing.

How does a Housing Element address the needs of different income levels?

A Housing Element addresses the needs of different income levels by identifying the housing needs of all income levels and developing policies to promote the production and preservation of housing for all income levels. The Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) identifies housing production targets for a range of income brackets—ensuring that the County plan for housing at all income levels.

What role do public participation and community input play in the preparation of a Housing Element?

Public participation and community input are critical in the preparation of a Housing Element. Local governments are required to engage with the community in the development of the Housing Element, through public meetings and other outreach efforts, and the County of Santa Clara held numerous on-line and in-person events. Section 1.08 highlights the Community Engagement plan and all of the efforts that went into meeting with the community and integrating their feedback into the final draft of the Housing Element.

How are housing needs assessed in a Housing Element?

Housing needs are assessed in a Housing Element through an analysis of demographic data, population projections, and housing market data. In the case of the County of Santa Clara, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) developed the methodology to assess the housing need in the region, and then assigned a certain number of projected units to each member jurisdiction. This is called the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA).

RHNA methodology adopted by ABAG and approved by HCD intends to achieve five primary objectives: increase housing supply and mix of housing types; promote infill development and

socioeconomic equity; promote improved intraregional jobs-housing relationship; balance disproportionate household income distributions; and affirmatively further fair housing.

What is the role of the state government in the review and approval of a Housing Element?

The state government reviews and approves Housing Elements to ensure they comply with state law and meet the state's housing goals. HCD provides guidance and technical assistance to local governments in the preparation of the Housing Element.