



County of Santa Clara **HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE**

2023-2031



TABLE OF CONTENTS

How to Use the Housing Element Update	17
Chapter 1: Overview of Housing Element Update 2023-2031	22
Introduction	22
Executive Summary	23
Terminology Used in the 2023 Update	27
Housing Policy and Development in Relation to Smart Growth General Plan Policies and Climate Change Policies	28
The County's Special Role in Housing Production	29
ABAG Allocation Methodology and Unique Aspects of County Planning	30
Sustainable Communities Strategy and Plan Bay Area	31
Community Participation and Outreach	32
Communication Methods	35
Engagement Methods	36
Outreach Events	38
Summary of Feedback	40

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Online Survey Results	43
Ongoing Reporting, Referral Requirements, and Program Maintenance	46
Consistency of the Housing Element with Other Elements of the General Plan	46
Chapter 2: Housing Needs and Production	47
Introduction	47
Unincorporated County Housing Needs	48
Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing	55
Unincorporated County Housing Development Capacity	63
Opportunities for Energy Conservation	124
Governmental Factors Influencing Housing	126
Non-Governmental Factors Influencing Housing Production	168
Chapter 3: Fifth Cycle Performance Review and Sixth Cycle Housing Strategies and Policies	172
Review of County's Fifth Cycle RHNA Assignment Performance	172

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Recent Unincorporated County Housing Development Activity	173
Review of County's Investment in Countywide Housing Efforts During Fifth Cycle and Beyond	174
2015 Housing Element Update Program Outcomes	177
Sixth Cycle Housing-Related Strategies and Policies	178
Chapter 4: County Housing Strategies, Policies, and Programs	200
Overview	200
List of Implementation Programs	201
Program Descriptions	204

TABLES

Table 1.1: Summary Capacity to Meet RHNA Allocation	25
Table 1.2: Outreach Efforts and Public Meetings	34
Table 1.3: Communications Methods	35
Table 1.4 Stakeholder and Community Workshops	39
Table 2.1 2022 Household Income Category Thresholds by Household Size	49
Table 2.2 Population Growth Trends	49
Table 2.3: Housing Value Trends	53
Table 2.4: Rental Values	53
Table 2.5 Population by Race in the Unincorporated County, 2000-2019	59
Table 2.6 Summary Capacity to Meet RHNA assignment	67
Table 2.7 Criteria Utilized to Map Housing Suitability Areas	68
Table 2.8: Housing Capacity on Stanford Sites	72
Table 2.9 Housing Capacity on Sites within Unincorporated USAs of the City of San José	79

TABLES

Table 2.10: Fruitdale / Santa Clara Valley Medical Center Sites	81
Table 2.11: Parkmoor /Burbank Neighborhood	86
Table 2.12: Parkmoor /Burbank Sites vs. Nearby Redeveloped Sites	86
Table 2.13: Hostetter Station	97
Table 2.14: Alum Rock / East Foothills Neighborhoods	101
Table 2.15: Alum Rock / East Foothills vs. Nearby Redeveloped Sites	102
Table 2.16: Cambrian Park Neighborhood	110
Table 2.17: Pleasant Hills Site	113
Table 2.18: New Construction in Unincorporated County, 2023-2031	119
Table 2.19: Quantified Objectives for Unincorporated County, 2023-2031	119
Table 2.20: Zoning for a Variety of Housing Types	120
Table 2.21: Residential Development Standards	136
Table 2.22: Parking Requirements	137

TABLES

Table 2.23: Accessible Parking Requirements	137
Table 2.24: Land Use and Development Application Fees	148
Table 2.25: Land Use and Development Application Processing Timelines	153
Table 2.26: Time Between Approval of Housing-Related Land Use Entitlements and Building Permit Application	155
Table 2.27: Median and Average Characteristics of Home Sales in Unincorporated Santa Clara County	170
Table 3.1: RHNA, Projections, and Achieved Housing Production	172
Table 3.2: Accessory Dwelling Permit issued 2015-2021	174
Table 4.1: List of Implementation Programs	201
Table 4.2: SHDF NOFA	206
Table 4.3: LEHCs	208
Table 4.4: Homeownership Projects	210
Table 4.5: Empower Homebuyers SCC	211

TABLES

Table 4.6: Mortgage Credit Certificate (MCC) Program	212
Table 4.7: Below Market Partnership Program	213
Table 4.8: County-Led Housing Development	216
Table 4.9: Joint Development Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)	218
Table 4.10: Housing Trust of Silicon Valley	219
Table 4.11: Santa Clara County CDBG and Housing Coordinators' Convenings	221
Table 4.12: Internal County Coordination of Housing Funds and Services	223
Table 4.13: Coordinate with Bay Area Housing Finance Authority	225
Table 4.14: Supportive Housing and Innovation Fund	226
Table 4.15: Fair Housing Assistance Program	227
Table 4.16: Fair Housing Audit & Education Program	229
Table 4.17: Collaborate with the Santa Clara County Housing Authority (SCCHA)	231

TABLES

Table 4.18: Permanent Supportive Housing for Persons with a Serious Mental Illness 233

Table 4.19: Tenant/Landlord Dispute Mediation Services 234

Table 4.20: Eviction Diversion Program 235

Table 4.21: San Andreas Regional Center 236

Table 4.22: Homelessness Prevention System 238

Table 4.23: Emergency Assistance Network 239

Table 4.24: City Revenue Agreements 240

Table 4.25: Community Plan to End Homelessness 242

Table 4.26: Temporary Housing Programs 244

Table 4.27: Homekey Application Strategy 245

Table 4.28: Service Enriched Shelter Forgivable Loan Program 246

Table 4.29: Lived Experience Advisory Board (LEAB) 247

TABLES

Table 4.30: Farmworker Affordable Homeownership and Farmworker Housing Pilot Program 249

Table 4.31: Asset Management Portfolio Expansion 250

Table 4.32: Minor Home Repair and Maintenance 251

Table 4.33 Community Development Corporation Grant Program 253

Table 4.34 Expand Access to UPLIFT Program 254

Table 4.35 Housing Suitability and Prioritization Tool for County-Owned Properties 255

Table 4.36: Planning for Housing Development in Unincorporated USAs and Stanford University Lands 259

Table 4.37: In-Lieu Fee Program for State Density Bonus and Affordable Housing 261

Table 4.38: Assess Farmworker Housing Needs and Collaborate with Other Jurisdictions 262

Table 4.39: Rent Price Monitoring Program 264

TABLES

Table 4.40: Streamline ADU Processing	265
Table 4.41: Housing Adjacent to Transit	266
Table 4.42: Santa Clara County Association of Planning Officials	267
Table 4.43: Digital Tracking System for ADUs, JADUs & SB9 Units Promoting Housing Mobility	268
Table 4.44: Joint Urban Development Policies	269
Table 4.45: Update Zoning Ordinance for Re-use of Non-Residential Buildings to Residential	270
Table 4.46: Monitor R/ECAP and Burdened Households Areas	271
Table 4.47: Universal Design in Housing Development	272
Table 4.48: Expanded Streamlining of Agricultural Employee Housing	273
Table 4.49: Adoption of "Reach" Codes	274
Table 4.50: Expand Home Repair and Modifications to Include ADA Upgrades	275
Table 4.51: Training and Support to Homeowners Aging in Place	276

TABLES

Table 4.52: Facilitate State Permit Streamlining Laws	277
Table 4.53: Streamline Multi-Family Housing Development	278
Table 4.54: Tracking and Ongoing Compliance with State Housing Laws	280
Table 4.55: Streamlined Rehabilitation and Replacement	282
Table 4.56: Objective Standards for Multi-Family Housing	283
Table 4.57: Tracking Housing Conditions	284
Table 4.58: Apply for Prohousing Designation	285
Table 4.59: Incentivize Lot Consolidation	286
Table 4.60: Mid-Cycle Review	288
Table 4.61: Replacement Housing Policy	289
Table 4.62: Reasonable Accommodation Policy	290
Table 4.63: Place-Based Planning and Neighborhood Improvements	292
Table 4.64: Housing Mobility and Opportunities in the RCAA	295

TABLES

Table 4.65: SCC Behavioral Health Services Department Evans Lane Wellness and Recovery Center	296
Table 4.66: Substance Use Recovery Residences (formerly Department of Alcohol and Drugs Service)	297
Table 4.67: Dispute Resolution Program	298
Table 4.68: Agricultural Worker Housing Workplan	299
Table 4.69: Coordinated Annexation and RHNA Transfer	303

FIGURES

Figure 1.1 RHNA County Assignment	24
Figure 1.2: Housing Element Update Community Participation and Outreach Process	33
Figure 1.3: Housing Issues Priority Rating Exercise (average scores out of five from 167 responses)	43
Figure 1.4: Participant Ethnicity (out of 99 responses - 20 participants chose not to answer)	44

FIGURES

Figure 1.5: Participant Income Level (out of 80 responses - 39 participants)	44
Figure 1.6: Participant Zip Codes	45
Figure 2.1 Santa Clara County Urban and Rural Areas	47
Figure 2.2 Population Growth Trends	48
Figure 2.3 Unincorporated Santa Clara County Housing Need, by Income Category	51
Figure 2.4: Diversity of Population in Santa Clara County	60
Figure 2.5: Diversity of Population in Santa Clara County	60
Figure 2.6: Racially/Ethnically Concentrated Areas of Poverty (R/ECAPs) in Santa Clara County	61
Figure 2.7: Estimated Displacement Risk	62
Figure 2.8: Affordability Index & Displacement Risk	63
Figure 2.9: Housing Sites on Stanford Campus	73
Figure 2.10: Housing Sites on Stanford Campus	74

FIGURES

Figure 2.11: Housing Sites and the City of San José Development Plan for Midtown and Burbank/Parkmoor	77
Figure 2.12: Housing Sites and the City of San José Development Plan for Alum Rock and East Foothills	78
Figure 2.13: Housing Sites in Fruitdale/VMC	82
Figure 2.14 – APN: 277-12-029, County housing opportunity site (2024)	89
Figure 2.15 – APNs: 277-07-027 and 277-07-029, County housing opportunity site (2024)	90
Figure 2.16 – APN: 277-08-029, County housing opportunity site (2024)	90
Figure 2.17– APN: 277-08-030, County housing opportunity site (2024)	91
Figure 2.18: APN: 274-14-152, nearby redeveloped site (2024)	91
Figure 2.19: APN: 277-06-025, County housing opportunity site (2022)	92
Figure 2.20: APN: 277-08-031, County housing opportunity site (2024)	92
Figure 2.21: APNs: 277-18-019 & -020, nearby redeveloped site (2024)	93
Figure 2.22: APN: 277-20-066, nearby redeveloped site (2019)	93

FIGURES

Figure 2.23: Housing Sites in Parkmoor / Burbank	94
Figure 2.24: Housing Sites at Hostetter Station	98
Figure 2.25 – APN: 599-01-064, County housing opportunity site (2024)	104
Figure 2.26 – APN: 601-07-066, County housing opportunity site (2023)	104
Figure 2.27: APN: 254-29-028, nearby redeveloped site (2022)	105
Figure 2.28: APN: 484-41-168, nearby redeveloped site (2020)	105
Figure 2.29 – APN: 599-39-047, County housing opportunity site (2022)	106
Figure 2.30: APN: 481-19-003, nearby redeveloped site (2017)	106
Figure 2.31: APN: 481-12-070, 069, &109, nearby redeveloped site (2022)	107
Figure 2.32: Housing Sites at Alum Rock / East Foothills	108
Figure 2.33: Housing Site in Cambrian Park Neighborhood	110
Figure 2.34: Housing Sites at Pleasant Hills	114
Figure 2.35: Urban Islands – Communications Hill	128
Figure 2.36: Urban Islands – Cambrian Park	129

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 Strategies, Policies, and Programs

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 2.06 - Streamline Accessory Dwelling Unit \(ADU\) Processing](#).

- **Chapter 4:** [Program 2.17 - Training and Support to Homeowners Aging in Place](#).

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 2.11 - 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:** Housing Needs and Production
- **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 permit streamlining and zoning reform. 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.