

Housing Element Update: Stakeholder Workshop #2

Meeting Summary

Subject	County of Santa Clara Housing Element – Stakeholder Workshop #2
Date Time	August 17, 2022 10:00am – 11:30am
Location	Virtual
Details	Visit the project website for the meeting recording and slide deck

Workshop Purpose

The County of Santa Clara (County) invited stakeholders to a second workshop in support of the 2023-2031 Housing Element Update. Building off the previous workshops, participants reviewed previous strategies, actions taken, and feedback heard to date; asking stakeholders for input on how the strategies could be updated to reflect current and forecasted housing challenges. The discussion focused on seeking input related to five key challenges, including housing production, housing affordability, access to housing, homelessness and climate change. Feedback from this meeting will be used to refine the strategies as the project team works to create policies for implementation over the 2023-2031 Housing Element cycle.

Attendance

Representatives from various stakeholder interest groups representing developers, advocates, county departments and other organizations were invited to attend the workshop. Over 30 participants attended the meeting representing the following organizations, groups or county departments:

- Burbank Community Association
- City of Morgan Hill
- County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors
- County of Santa Clara Department of Aging and Adult Services
- County of Santa Clara Department of Public Health
- County of Santa Clara Office of Supportive Housing
- Eden Housing
- Gilroy Historical Society
- Green Foothills
- Greenbelt Alliance
- Housing Choices
- Law Foundation of Silicon Valley
- LUNA
- Mountain View YIMBY
- New York Life
- Ruggeri-Jensen-Azar
- San Martin Neighbourhood Association
- Silicon Valley at Home (SV@Home)
- Silicon Valley Coalition for the Unhoused
- Silicon Valley Independent Living Center
- Stanford University
- West Valley Community Services

Feedback Summary

The County of Santa Clara team provided a brief presentation to review the most pressing housing-related challenges facing the county and outlined the strategies developed for the previous Housing Element relative to each challenge. The review also included a summary of the actions taken by the county to address each of the five challenges and a summary of feedback heard from the stakeholders and the community through the Housing Element Engagement Process to date. The presentation was followed by breakout group discussions to seek input on updates needed to refine the strategies to meet current and forecasted conditions. The following is a thematic summary of the feedback heard tied to each of the discussion questions.



A picture of the live notetaking Mural exercise can be found in **Appendix A**.

1. Question: How should existing Housing Element strategies be updated?

- **Key Theme: Current strategy update suggestions:**
 - Define what “balanced” means when planning for countywide housing supply, including a definition of affordability levels - currently most new housing is provided on Stanford lands
 - Examine the effectiveness of coordination between the County and cities in developing housing and what the challenges are to update the strategy
 - Update the “remove unnecessary barriers to housing” strategy to include and address the specific barriers to developing housing (e.g., public perception, financial barriers, development barriers)
 - Clarify what a “continued review” of land use policies means (e.g., what policies would be reviewed and what actions might be taken)

- **Key Theme: Factors to be considered when updating current strategies:**
 - Build more extremely low-income housing
 - Expand rent control
 - Create equitable access to housing
 - Explicitly address racism not just discriminatory practices
 - Create a strategy for farmworker housing
 - Ensure services are increased to match the demand for housing units
 - Ensure increased housing does not impact community services and health
 - Protect the health and wellbeing of all residents (e.g., in light of impacts of sewage runoff from Morgan Hill to San Martin)

2. Question: What do we need to consider when developing new strategies/policies related to...

- **Housing Production**
 - Preserve the existing stock of affordable units through rehab, maintaining protections and providing financing
 - Prioritize the reuse existing vacant buildings for affordable housing
 - Create more funding or subsidize accessory dwelling unit (ADU) production
 - Incentivize the production and rental of ADUs for low-income populations
 - Analyze threats to the existing housing stock and create safeguards tailored to address the threats

- **Housing Affordability**
 - Create rent control policies
 - Prioritize affordable housing on Stanford lands

- **Access to Housing**
 - Develop more socially and racially inclusive neighbourhoods that overcome past and present discrimination
 - Unit rehabilitation should consider the Americans with Disabilities Act
 - Expand County rental assistance to offset evictions
 - Create outreach to communities with high rates of rental assistance to prevent evictions and loss of housing
 - Create policies to prevent evictions and displacement (e.g., COVID housing programs)



- **Homelessness**
 - Secure state funding to create new housing for low-income populations
 - Create equal opportunity housing for all demographics
 - Create access to transitional housing

- **Climate Change**
 - Concentrate development in urban zones away from fire hazard and flood zones
 - Provide access to open space in proximity of new housing development
 - Consider environmental justice issues (e.g., natural resource disasters and inequitable impacts)
 - New housing development and existing housing stock needs to be adaptable to climate change
 - Limit the climate impacts caused by urban sprawl by prioritizing housing development in urban islands within unincorporated Santa Clara

Next Steps

Feedback collected during this meeting will inform refinements to the draft Housing Element Update strategies that will be presented for additional feedback during the third Stakeholder Workshop. The third stakeholder workshop is currently scheduled for August 29th, 2022. Visit sccgov.org/housing-element for event updates.



Appendix A: Discussion Activity



