



**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO**  
Inter-Departmental Correspondence  
Planning and Building



**Date:** December 29, 2014  
**Board Meeting Date:** January 27, 2015  
**Special Notice / Hearing:** None  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors

**From:** Steve Monowitz, Acting Community Development Director

**Subject:** EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Public hearing to consider submittal of the County's updated 2014-2022 Housing Element, which, on adoption, would replace the current 2007-2014 Housing Element of the County's General Plan, to the California Department of Housing and Community Development for review and approval, and certification of the associated Initial Study and Negative Declaration for the updated Housing Element.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Find that the proposed updated Housing Element of the General Plan is internally consistent with the remainder of the County's General Plan, as adopted in 1986, and as subsequently amended by the Board of Supervisors.
2. Find that adoption of the updated Housing Element advances the County's intent, as described in the County's Shared Vision 2025, to promote affordable, livable connected communities.
3. Find that adoption of the updated Housing Element is consistent with the requirements of State Housing Element law, including both substantive and procedural requirements, and with the requirements for a timely update on the schedule established in the California Government Code.
4. Certify the attached Negative Declaration as complete and correct.
5. Direct the Planning and Building Department to submit the updated Housing Element to the California Department of Housing and Community Development for certification.

## **BACKGROUND:**

Proposal: Submittal of the County's updated 2014-2022 Housing Element to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for review and approval, and certification of the associated Initial Study and Negative Declaration for the updated Housing Element. This Housing Element update is required by State law, and the updated Housing Element must also be submitted to HCD for HCD's certification of compliance with State law.

The draft of the updated San Mateo County's Housing Element is available at:  
[https://planning.smcgov.org/sites/planning.smcgov.org/files/SMCo%20Draft%20Housing%20Element%202014-2022.PUBLIC\\_2.pdf](https://planning.smcgov.org/sites/planning.smcgov.org/files/SMCo%20Draft%20Housing%20Element%202014-2022.PUBLIC_2.pdf)

On December 17, 2014, the Planning Commission recommended that the Board of Supervisors certify the Negative Declaration for the Housing Element update, and direct Planning and Building Department staff to submit the Housing Element to the State of California for review and approval.

## **DISCUSSION:**

The Housing Element. The Housing Element is a required component of the County's General Plan, mandated by State law. It is the County's document that assesses the County housing needs, identifies sites for housing production, and summarizes and establishes policies related to the production and promotion of housing. State law also requires periodic updates to the Housing Element, on a schedule established by the State. The current County's Housing Element covers the period for 2007 to 2014; the updated Element will, on adoption, replace the existing Element, and will cover the period from 2014 through 2022. The County must submit the revised Housing Element to HCD for review and approval; until certification by HCD, the Housing Element is not legally valid.

Regional Housing Needs Allocation. A core component of the Housing Element is a demonstration that the County can meet its Regional Housing Needs Allocation ("RHNA"), the County's share of overall regional housing need, as determined by the Association of Bay Area Governments. Analysis completed for the Housing Element update indicates that the County has enough available sites for development and/or redevelopment of housing to meet the County's RHNA, without changes to zoning or other land use and development policies.

Changes from the Prior Housing Element. The County's Housing Element has been revised and updated to reflect current conditions, housing needs, best practices, requirements of State law, and input received from stakeholders and County residents. However, because the prior Element was adopted very recently, most changes are relatively minor updates to existing data, existing policies and programs, and other information, including the adequate sites inventory, which must be modified to address changing conditions or new data. However, some changes include:

- a. A new assessment of the needs of the developmentally disabled in the County.
- b. Removal of policies relating to adoption of the North Fair Oaks Community Plan.

- c. Removal of policies related to Senate Bill 2 compliance, which relates to zoning appropriately for emergency shelters and transitional and supportive housing; these zoning amendments have been adopted and/or are in the process of adoption.
- d. Addition of a policy regarding pre-approved development prototypes for small lots.
- e. Addition of a policy committing the Housing Department and Planning Department to train County employees on housing policies, to ensure that the policies and programs in the Housing Element are correctly implemented by relevant staff.
- f. Addition of a policy committing the County to study areas for potential affordable housing overlay zones, which provide additional incentives.
- g. Commitment to explore policies to incentivize so-called “tiny houses,” which can be significantly cheaper than conventional single-family housing.
- h. Commitment to analyze the potentially displacing effects of MTC’s One Bay Area/PDA program, which provides resources for development and redevelopment of specifically targeted priority development areas. These resources are a valuable source of development funding, but any new development can have displacing effects on existing affordable housing and low income residents, and these impacts should be weighed against program benefits.

Public Participation. The updated Housing Element is based on public outreach and participation, including stakeholder forums through the 21 Elements Collaborative, public workshops, preparation and distribution of materials, an online survey, and a website.

Conclusion. The Housing Element was updated in collaboration with the County Housing Department, and with input from the 21 Elements Collaborative, County residents, and a variety of stakeholders. Since the prior, the 2007-2014 Housing Element was adopted recently, through a robust and comprehensive process, the revisions to this Housing Element are minor, and the updated Housing Element does not differ dramatically from the prior Element. However, this Housing Element accurately and adequately reflects both the analytical detail required by State law, and the County’s overall housing policy direction, and provides appropriate guidance for policy implementation over the next seven years.

The adoption of the updated Housing Element contributes to the 2025 Shared Vision outcome of a Livable Community by promoting affordable, livable connected communities.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no direct fiscal impact to the County from submittal of the Housing Element to California HCD, or from adoption of the updated Housing Element.