



# County of San Mateo

## Inter-Departmental Correspondence

---

**Department:** PLANNING AND BUILDING

**File #:** 23-407

Board Meeting Date: 6/13/2023

---

**Special Notice / Hearing:** None  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors  
**From:** Steve Monowitz, Community Development Director  
**Subject:** Review the California Department of Housing and Community Development's comments on the County's 2023-2031 Draft Housing Element Update

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Review the California Department of Housing and Community Development's comments on the County's 2023-2031 Draft Housing Element Update and provide direction regarding potential amendments.

**BACKGROUND:**

On November 15, 2022 and January 6, 2023, the Board of Supervisors considered the County's draft 2023-2031 Housing Element update, and adopted a resolution directing staff to submit the draft Housing Element to the Department of Housing and Community Development ("HCD") for review and comment.

The Housing Element is a required component of the County's General Plan under State law and must include:

- Identification of housing needs for all segments of the community;
- Goals, policies, and programs to address housing needs;
- Identification of developable or redevelopable sites to meet the County's fair share of regional housing needs (Regional Housing Needs Allocation, or RHNA) for all income levels over the next 8 years;
- An assessment of constraints on the development of housing;
- An evaluation of the existing Housing Elements; and
- A specific assessment of how the County's housing policies and programs and identified sites for development affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH).

All local jurisdictions must periodically update their Housing Element, on a schedule established by the State. The current Housing Element covers the period from 2014 to 2022. The updated Housing Element will, upon adoption, replace the existing Housing Element, and cover the period from 2023 to 2031. A description of the process to prepare the County's 2023-2031 Housing Element update, as well as a comprehensive summary of the contents of the draft Housing Element, are included as **Attachment B** to this memorandum. Among other information, those materials describe the County's RHNA, the residential sites identified to meet the County's share of housing need over the next 8 years, and the areas proposed for rezoning to meet the County's RHNA share that cannot be accommodated by existing developable or redevelopable sites.

The County, before adopting its 2023-2031 Housing Element update, must submit a draft to HCD for review. After review, HCD provides a comment letter summarizing its assessment of the draft Housing Element's compliance with State law, and describing recommendations regarding potential changes to achieve compliance, if necessary. After the County makes any necessary amendments to the draft Housing Element update in response to HCD's assessment and recommendations, the draft Housing Element update must be re-submitted to HCD for further review and adopted by the Board of Supervisors.

At the direction of the Board of Supervisors, the County submitted the draft Housing Element update to HCD on January 20, 2023. By law, HCD had 90 days to review the draft Housing Element update, and the County received HCD's comment letter on April 20, 2023. HCD's review letter, inventorying the requested changes to the draft Housing Element update, is included as **Attachment A** to this memorandum.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

After the Board of Supervisors' review and direction regarding HCD's currently proposed amendments to the County's draft Housing Element update, the amended draft must be circulated for public review. Following the public review period, the Housing Element update will return to the Board of Supervisors for review, potential adoption, and direction regarding resubmittal to HCD.

The County's current Housing Element, Chapter 7 of the General Plan, is available on the Planning and Building Department website.

The full draft of the 2023-2031 Housing Element submitted to HCD is available on the Planning and Building Department website.

The Housing Element Sites Inventory, including vacant single- and multifamily parcels, non-vacant multifamily parcels, and pipeline projects, demonstrating the County's ability to meet its RHNA, and the various sites proposed for rezoning to meet need that cannot be accommodated by existing sites, is available through an interactive web application, showing the location and various other characteristics of the sites identified in the inventory, [here](https://smcmaps.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=3a4d0b3bf4664927a844c41ff1525c00) <https://smcmaps.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=3a4d0b3bf4664927a844c41ff1525c00>.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:**

Adoption of the Housing Element update is a project requiring environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act. Staff prepared an Initial Study and Negative Declaration for the project, determining that the Housing Element update would not result in any potential environmental impacts. The Housing Element is a policy document, and its adoption would not, on its own, result in

any change in the physical environment. The Housing Element does propose a variety of future programmatic actions that will require subsequent discretionary approval and will be accompanied by separate environmental review to assess potential environmental impacts, if any. The Initial Study and Negative Declaration will be presented to the Board for adoption along with the draft Housing Element update at a later hearing, as described above. The Initial Study and Negative Declaration are available [here <https://www.smcgov.org/planning/san-mateo-county-housing-element-update-2023-2031>](https://www.smcgov.org/planning/san-mateo-county-housing-element-update-2023-2031).

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

This item is informational only.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- A. Department of Housing and Community Development Comment Letter to County of San Mateo
- B. Staff Report, January 6, 2023 Board of Supervisors hearing, Item 15,  
File No.22-933