



# CITY OF SAN MATEO

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## Agenda Report

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**TO:** City Council and Planning Commission

**FROM:** Drew Corbett, City Manager

**PREPARED BY:** Community Development Department

**MEETING DATE:** February 07, 2022

**SUBJECT:**  
Housing Element Goals, Policies and Programs – Study Session

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Receive an update on the Housing Element process and provide direction to staff on Housing Goals, Policies and Programs to include in the updated Housing Element for 2023-2031.

**BACKGROUND:**

The City of San Mateo, along with all of the Bay Area jurisdictions, is preparing its Housing Element for the eight-year period from 2023-2031 (the Sixth Housing Cycle). The Housing Element is a "chapter" of the City's General Plan, which focuses on the policies and strategies necessary to meet the community's housing needs. It is the only element of the General Plan subject to State requirements for content and it must be approved by the State Housing and Community Development Department (HCD).

Preliminary work to prepare the Housing Element was initiated over a year ago and started with creating a community profile and an analysis of the community's Housing Needs and Constraints. To that end, extensive demographic data, primarily based on the Census, was compiled to create a profile of San Mateo, which includes a summary of key facts, graphs and maps about the City's population, employment and household characteristics. A draft of this report, which includes a breakdown of this information by neighborhood, is posted on the Housing Element website: ([www.cityofsanmateo.org/HousingElement2023](http://www.cityofsanmateo.org/HousingElement2023)).

A final version of this report, with more detailed information, will be included in the draft Housing Element, which is scheduled to be published in late March or early April. In general, the data demonstrate that the high cost of housing impacts a significant percentage of residents, disproportionately impacting renters, seniors, minority households and those with special needs. It also shows that geographically, the City's northeastern neighborhoods, including North Central and North Shoreview, are disproportionately impacted by lower incomes, lower education opportunity, lower economic opportunity, lower environmental scores, and higher percentage of cost burdened households and overcrowding. They are also the City's most racially diverse neighborhoods.

To support the preparation of the updated Housing Element, a robust and inclusive community outreach and engagement process was initiated this past summer and has been ongoing for over six months. A number of workshops, focus group discussions, small group presentations, stakeholder meetings and community surveys were conducted to promote the housing element process, gather information to supplement the demographic data, and solicit feedback on housing priorities and strategies. Surveys conducted included personal intercept surveys at "pop-up" locations as well as City events, and an online survey was posted from October 11, 2021 to January 16, 2022, which generated 594 responses. Workshop presentations and comment summaries, as well as survey results, are posted on the Housing Element [website](#).

Although there are numerous technical requirements that must be addressed for certification, the heart of the Housing Element are the policies and programs that address the housing needs of all types of households and income levels, both existing and into the future. The purpose of this study session is to get high level feedback and direction from the Planning Commission and City Council on the goals, policies and programs that will go into the updated Housing Element.

### **Housing Element Goals**

Before the policies and programs are defined, the City must establish its overall housing goals. The existing goals in the current Housing Element, the first two of which have been in place since 1990, are as follows:

- Maintain the character and physical quality of residential neighborhoods.
- Provide a diversity of housing types, responsive to household size, income and age needs.
- Ensure that all new housing is developed or remodeled in a sustainable manner.
- Encourage conservation improvements and measures to existing housing stock to make them more energy and water efficient.

One option is to update the goals based on the categories adopted by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Association of Bay Area Governments known as the three P's:

- *Production* of new housing at all income levels, especially affordable housing.
- *Preservation* of existing housing that is affordable to lower- and middle-income residents.
- *Protection* of current residents to prevent displacement.
- Staff also recommends adding a sustainability goal.

### **Policies and Programs**

Once the goals are established, policies and programs will need to be prepared to support the goals based on projected housing needs and community input. The final Housing Element will include the ongoing policies and programs that will carry forward or be revised, as well as new strategies with specific actions, milestones, and timelines. These policies and programs will also need to include efforts to meet the State's Fair Housing requirements, which are based on the following:

- Address significant disparities in housing needs and access to opportunity.
- Replace segregated living patterns with truly integrated and balanced living patterns.
- Foster and maintain compliance with civil rights and fair housing laws.

To provide additional context and to help focus the discussion around what new policies and programs should be included in the updated Housing Element, the following information is attached:

- Existing policies and programs from the City's current Housing Element ([Attachment 1](#)).
- The City's existing Fair Housing Plan, which was adopted in 2017 in conjunction with the Consolidated Plan as part of the federal funding process for Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Home Investment Partnership (HOME) programs ([Attachment 2](#)).
- New policies and programs based on initiatives that are already underway that will be completed or implemented during the upcoming Housing Cycle, and new suggestions collected during the community outreach and engagement process ([Attachment 3](#)).

Given the number of potential initiatives that can be contemplated, it is important to consider the eight-year Housing Element horizon, and the capacity to implement new programs in order to focus on the highest priorities. With that in mind, staff requests direction on the following questions:

- Which of the existing Housing Element policies should be retained?

- Which of the existing Fair Housing Plan components should be incorporated into the Housing Element?
- Which of the suggested new programs/policies are high priority and should be included in the updated Housing Element?

At this point, staff is only asking for high level direction on goals, policies and programs, and not specific details. The Housing Element itself does not implement programs; but rather, it provides the blueprint to deliver such programs. Each program will include a work plan and timeline, and will be considered independently for adoption, including community input and environmental review as required.

### **Next Steps**

Based on the feedback and direction received at this study session, staff will continue preparation of the City's draft Housing Element. The timeline for the Housing Element moving forward is as follows:

- March/April 2022 Publish Draft Housing Element (30-day public comment period)
- April 26, 2022 Planning Commission review of Draft Housing Element
- May 16, 2022 City Council approval of Draft Housing Element
- May/June 2022 Draft Housing Element submitted to HCD for first review
- Summer 2022 Update Draft Housing Element in response to HCD comment and resubmit for second review
- Fall 2022 Planning Commission and City Council Public Hearings to review and approve final Housing Element
- January 2023 Submit final Housing Element to HCD for certification

It is anticipated that HCD will provide comments on the Draft Housing Element and that at least one round of revisions will be required before HCD certifies the final Housing Element, which will need to be approved by City Council and submitted to HCD by January 31, 2023.

### **BUDGET IMPACT:**

There is no budgetary impact related to this agenda item.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:**

This study session is not a project subject to CEQA, because the City Council and Planning Commission are providing direction to staff and are not taking action at this time. (Public Resources Code Section 21065.)

### **NOTICE PROVIDED**

All meeting noticing requirements were met.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Att 1 - 2015-23 Housing Element Goals, Policies and Programs

Att 2 - 2017 HUD Fair Housing Plan

Att 3 - Potential New Programs and Policies

### **STAFF CONTACT**

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