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## **REPORT TO 2023-2031 SAN RAFAEL HOUSING ELEMENT WORKING GROUP**

**Subject: Welcome!**

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Welcome to the San Rafael Housing Element Working Group!

Our first meeting will take place on December 14, 2021 via Zoom. Log-in information has been provided through a separate email. Please keep in mind that this is a public meeting, and it will be recorded and available for viewing on the City's website afterwards. All meetings of the Working Group are subject to the Brown Act, with an opportunity for public comment provided at the end of the agenda. Our first meeting is intended as a "meet and greet" event. As the agenda indicates, we will ask each member to introduce themselves and describe their connection to San Rafael and interest in local housing issues. We will also have a short staff presentation on the Housing Element, including expectations for the Working Group and the project schedule and timeline.

### **REPORT**

This staff report serves as a "cover page" for a number of attachments, labeled "A" through "E." Each attachment is described below.

#### **A. Roster of Members**

Attachment A is a roster listing the 13 members of the Working Group. Only your name and affiliation have been provided.

#### **B. Housing Element Overview**

This attachment provides a quick summary of the State requirements for the Housing Element. We will provide additional information in the PowerPoint presentation on December 14.

#### **C. Working Group Purpose and Expectations**

Attachment C summarizes the purpose of the Working Group and the expectations for members. Please review this material prior to the meeting and let us know if you have any questions. We will take some time to discuss this information during the December 14 meeting.

## **D. Schedule**

This attachment includes a tentative timeline for the next six meetings, including a preliminary list of topics to be addressed at each meeting. We will be setting up a recurring monthly meeting date for January to May. At the time this staff report was prepared, there was still no date/time that worked for all 13 members. We will keep exploring options (including daytime meetings rather than 6 PM meetings) until we find a time that works for everyone.

## **E. Reading List**

We have assembled a reading list so that you can learn more about the Housing Element and housing issues in general. There's a lot of material here (and some of the links on this page lead to more links!). We've highlighted a few documents that we think are "must reads" (or at least our top picks). Please have a look at the existing 2015-2023 San Rafael Housing Element, as that is the document we'll be updating and the starting point for our work. We also encourage you to add your own suggestions to the reading list as the project goes on. This is intended to be a dynamic document that is a resource for the whole community.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- (A) Roster
- (B) Housing Element Overview
- (C) Working Group Purpose and Expectations
- (D) Tentative Schedule
- (E) Reading List



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## 2023-2031 San Rafael Housing Element Working Group - **Roster**

Member	Affiliations
<b>Omar Carrera</b>	CEO, Canal Alliance
<b>Don Dickenson</b>	Marin Conservation League
<b>Andrew Hening</b>	Opening Doors Marin
<b>Linda Jackson</b>	Marin Environmental Housing Collaborative, Sustainable San Rafael
<b>Lorenzo Jones</b>	Eden Housing (Sr. Director of Diversity and Inclusion)
<b>Cesar Lagleva</b>	Multi-Cultural Center of Marin, Fair Housing Advocates Board Member
<b>Amy Likover</b>	Federation of San Rafael Neighborhoods
<b>Diana Lopez</b>	San Rafael Age-Friendly Task Force, Marin County Commission on Aging
<b>Rina Lopez</b>	Long-time resident and tenant
<b>Tom Monahan</b>	Monahan Pacific Development
<b>Jon Previtali</b>	San Rafael Planning Commission
<b>Daniel Rhine</b>	EAH Affordable Housing Development
<b>Joanne Webster</b>	President and CEO, San Rafael Chamber of Commerce



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## 2023-2031 San Rafael Housing Element Working Group – **Housing Element Overview**

### So—what's in a Housing Element?

The State Government Code includes prescriptive requirements for what must be covered in a Housing Element. Every Element must include the following components:



**Evaluation of Prior Element.** The Update process begins with an evaluation of the prior Housing Element, which in this case covers the period 2015-2023. The evaluation considers the type and amount of housing produced over the planning period, and the City's track record in implementing the programs adopted in its current Element. Simply, it asks: Did we do what we said we were going to do? Where we've fallen short, the Element looks at ways we can improve our performance or modify our objectives.

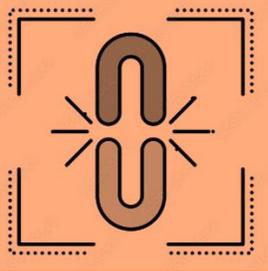


**Needs Assessment.** Next, there's an assessment of housing needs. Once again, there are very detailed State requirements for what is included. The Needs Assessment analyzes citywide demographic and housing data, evaluates trends and forecasts, and draws conclusions about local needs based on the data. The source for most of the data is the US Census, but State and local sources may also be referenced. The Needs Assessment looks at population, age, race, ethnicity, language, tenure, household size and composition, income, employment, percent of income spent on housing, and similar factors. It also looks at housing trends, housing mix and density, housing condition, rent and sales price trends, overcrowding, and other characteristics of the housing stock. An important part of the Needs Assessment is to evaluate the housing needs of specific populations, including seniors, single parents, unhoused residents, extremely low income households, farmworkers, and people with disabilities.



**Resources Analysis.** Each Housing Element includes an evaluation of housing resources. This may include local funding, grants, private investment, loans, and other tools that are needed to finance housing construction and rehabilitation. It also looks at opportunities for reducing home energy costs, which can be a big part of housing expenses. While this section focuses on all housing types, its focus is on low and very low income households.

**Constraints Analysis.** The Housing Element includes an analysis of constraints—in other words, obstacles to building housing in the community. These include governmental constraints and non-governmental constraints. Governmental constraints include zoning regulations, parking standards, fees, permitting processes, and other locally imposed controls that affect the way housing is built. Non-governmental constraints are typically factors out of the city’s control—such as market conditions, environmental conditions, natural hazards, and infrastructure. Where the constraints analysis identifies a specific obstacle, the Housing Element should include a program that reduces or eliminates that obstacle.



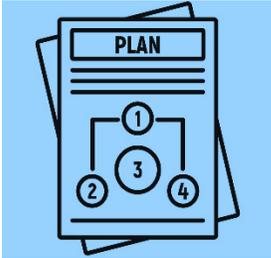
**Sites Analysis.** Every Housing Element must include a map and analysis of housing opportunity sites. These are the individual parcels of land where housing may be built during the eight-year planning period. Cities must demonstrate that they have a sufficient number of sites to meet their Regional Housing Needs Allocation (“RHNA”). A RHNA is assigned to each city and county in the Bay Area by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). The Sites Analysis requires that the City demonstrate the realistic capacity of each site, particularly if the site is currently not vacant.



**Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing.** The upcoming Housing Element must meet a new State requirement showing that the City is “affirmatively furthering fair housing.” This requires a thorough analysis of segregation, poverty, and resources in the community, as well as an analysis of fair housing and discrimination issues. Based on this analysis, the City must develop a strategy to become more inclusive and economically balanced in the future.



**Goals, Policies, Programs, and Objectives.** This is the City’s Housing Plan for the next eight years. It includes broad goals for the future, followed by topical policies that address all of the housing issues facing the community. This section also includes measurable objectives for the next eight years, including the number of housing units to be built (by income category), conserved, and rehabilitated. Most importantly, the Housing Plan includes an Action Program identifying the programs the City will implement to meet its housing needs, and the resources that will be necessary to carry out these programs.





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## 2023-2031 San Rafael Housing Element Working Group – Purpose and Expectations

### Purpose and Expectations

The purpose of the Working Group is to represent a broad constituency in providing input and direction on the 2023-2031 update of the San Rafael Housing Element. The specific charge of this group is to:

- Provide direction on the vision, goals, objectives and policies of the plan, including suggesting new content and evaluating ideas for feasibility
- Share your ideas on possible new housing programs and provide feedback on ideas proposed by staff and by others
- Review and provide feedback on the Draft Housing Element chapters as they are developed, including the Evaluation of the Prior Element, the Housing Needs Assessment, the Constraints Analysis, and the Sites Evaluation
- Provide guidance on steps the City can take to affirmatively further fair housing, promote more equitable and inclusive engagement of all stakeholders, and develop programs that benefit everyone in the community
- Articulate the concerns and input of any constituency represented by Working Group members
- Promote Housing Element outreach and engagement efforts in the community

### Member Responsibilities

To uphold the purpose and charge of the Working Group, each member is asked to fulfill the following responsibilities:

- Attend all Working Group meetings
- Listen actively to the ideas and opinions expressed by all members, project staff and team members, and all members of the community
- Engage in constructive discussion and be open to alternative solutions and points of view
- Discuss all ideas respectfully, acknowledging the diversity of viewpoints in the room and understanding that full agreement is not always the goal
- Present the views of constituencies, acknowledging and drawing on the diversity of opinions and outlooks represented
- Inform constituencies and other community members about the Housing Element Update Process
- Advise staff in advance if you need to miss a meeting. Otherwise, please be present and engaged during all discussions.

Thank you for your participation!



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## 2023-2031 San Rafael Housing Element Working Group – Tentative Schedule

The Working Group will be convened six times in 2022. Due to the Housing Element production and review schedule, all six meetings will occur between January 1 and May 31, 2022. There will be five meetings held on a recurring date each month (to be discussed at the December 14 meeting) and a special sixth meeting to be scheduled for a weekday (or weekday evening) in March.

A list of topics to be covered at each meeting is provided below. The list is tentative and may change over the course of the project.

Meeting Date	Topic(s)
December 14, 2021	Meet and Greet/ Project Overview
January 2022	Review existing Housing Element and major accomplishments Discuss housing vision and goals
February 2022	Review Housing Needs Assessment and Market Conditions Discuss policies and programs related to housing needs and market conditions
March 2022	Review Housing Constraints Analysis Discuss obstacles to housing, potential zoning revisions, and other strategies to reduce constraints to housing development
March 2022 (extra)	Review Sites Analysis Special meeting to discuss housing sites inventory and related issues
April 2022	Fair Housing Analysis Discuss equity, discrimination, and segregation issues in housing, along with strategies and programs to affirmatively further fair housing
May 2022	Review Draft Housing Programs Review “working draft” of Housing Element and provide feedback on proposed housing programs

The City is aiming to have a Draft Housing Element, including comments from the Working Group, ready for review by the Planning Commission and the City Council by the end of May 2022. The process of adopting the Draft Housing Element takes at least six months. It involves a preliminary review by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (June to September), followed by revisions in response to State comments (October-November). Adoption hearings will occur in December and January. Working Group members will be encouraged to attend public hearings, provide feedback to staff in response to HCD’s comments, and offer ideas for revisions and edits to the document as it goes through the approval process.



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## 2023-2031 San Rafael Housing Element Working Group – **Reading List**

### Interested in learning more about the Housing Element, housing needs, fair housing issues, and affordable housing?

We've assembled a library of documents, articles, and other resources for you. The links below will open documents that have been assembled by staff on various housing-related topics. For each topic area, we've highlighted "must read" items (like the existing Housing Element), along with other items you may find interesting. We encourage you to browse the items on this list and share your thoughts with us.

We also invite you to add to the list! This is intended to be a dynamic library that grows over time. If you have a document you'd like to add (even a link to a news article, podcast, or video), please let us know, and we'll include it. The Reading List will be periodically updated and posted to the project website.

#### *Existing Plans and Programs*

A MUST  
READ!

**Existing 2015-2023 San Rafael Housing Element**, adopted in 2015. This has two parts:

- [Policy Document](#)
- [Technical Document](#)

[Marin County Consolidated Plan](#). This is a county-level document that identifies program goals for federal funding

[Plan Bay Area 2050](#). This is the recently adopted regional plan for the nine-county Bay Area and provides a high-level framework for local housing policy.

[San Rafael General Plan 2040](#). This is the City's long-range plan for growth and development. It was adopted by the City Council on August 2, 2021 following a four-year planning process.

A MUST  
READ!

In particular, please check out the new [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Element](#).

[Downtown Precise Plan](#). The Precise Plan was also adopted on August 2, 2021. It provides for approximately 2,200 new dwelling units in Downtown San Rafael and includes an Affordable Housing and Anti-Displacement Strategy.

[Voces de Canal](#). This document was prepared by Canal Alliance in 2014 to articulate the concerns and aspirations of residents in the Canal community. Much of the focus is on the need for safe, secure, affordable housing.

## **Regional and State Housing Information**

[ABAG's Housing Website.](#) This links to a webpage with a variety of resources for housing planning and production in the Bay Area.

[Final Regional Housing Needs Allocation Plan.](#) This will open a document that shows the final “fair share” housing assignments for the 9 counties and 101 cities in the Bay Area adopted by the ABAG Executive Board in December 2021.

[HCD Building Blocks.](#) This is the guidance provided to local governments by the State of California for how to prepare a compliant Housing Element.

[Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing State HCD Guidance.](#) This was issued by California HCD in April 2021 and provides direction for local governments on how to meet the AB 686 mandate to “affirmatively further fair housing” through the Housing Element.

[Housing Element Library.](#) This link opens a “dashboard” managed by HCD showing the compliance status of every Housing Element in California. It also includes links to the housing elements of each city and county.

## **Best Practices**

[Local Housing Solutions.](#) This is a helpful website designed to help cities understand the policy tools available to address local housing issues. Starting with “Housing 101”, it provides helpful information about housing issues and possible solutions. It is operated by the Furman Center at New York University and is national in focus.

[Tips for the Site Inventory.](#) This link will open a page with additional hyperlinks, displaying information compiled by Abundant Housing LA, a Southern California non-profit advocacy organization

[Why Housing Messages Fail and What to Do About It.](#) This provides guidance on how can retool our messaging and communication strategies related to housing.

[SOLD OUT: Rethinking Housing in America on Apple Podcasts.](#) This November 29, 2021 podcast from KQED addresses the housing crisis in California and explores possible new solutions.

[Housing Element Primer.](#) Here's a great primer prepared by the Marin Environmental Housing Collaborative that explains the Housing Element process and the impediments to success.

[Emeryville: Where Housing Gets Built.](#) An article and accompanying podcast from the San Francisco Chronicle about the City of Emeryville's successes in meeting its housing needs.

## [Housing Issues](#)

A MUST  
READ!

[California's High Housing Costs-Causes and Consequences.](#) This is a 2015 report from the California Office of the Legislative Analyst that takes a look at what's behind high housing costs in California.

A MUST  
READ!

[Housing Affordability Update.](#) This is a PowerPoint Presentation summarizing the state of housing costs in California as of the Second Quarter in 2021.

[Encouraging Diverse Middle Housing Near Transit.](#) This hyperlink will lead to a document from the Lewis Center that describes the benefits of building moderate density moderate cost "missing middle" housing near transit stations.

[Housing Crisis that Fails to Match Jobs to People.](#) This presentation from Dowell Myers (an urban planning professor at USC) looks at the root of the housing crisis, and common misperceptions about the rate of multi-family housing growth in California.

[Hard Construction Costs.](#) This report from the Turner Center in Berkeley looks at the cost of building multi-family development in today's market.

[White Paper on Anti-displacement Strategy Effectiveness.](#) This report from Karen Chapple, an urban planning professor at UC Berkeley, examines the effectiveness of different strategies to avoid displacement of lower income residents in communities with rising rents.

[How Housing Supply Affects Access to Home Ownership.](#) This report from the Turner Center in Berkeley takes a new look at home ownership, with a focus on the challenges for first-time buyers.

[How Housing Supply Affects Access to Opportunity for Renters.](#) This is the companion document to the report above but looks at how current market conditions are affecting the rental housing market.

## [Special Needs Populations](#)

A MUST  
READ!

[San Rafael Age Friendly Action Plan.](#) This recently completed Plan discusses the needs of older adults in San Rafael, including the need for housing and home retrofits that help residents "age in community."

A MUST  
READ!

[Marin County 2019 Homeless Report.](#) This presents the results of the last Countywide point-in-time survey for unsheltered residents in Marin County.

[Impact of Supportive Housing on Neighborhoods.](#) This report from the Furman Center in New York looks at the benefits of including supportive services for persons with special needs as a component of new affordable housing development.

[Marin County Homeless Vehicle Count.](#) This provides data on the number of persons living in vehicles in Marin County.

[Marin County Cities Case Management Fund.](#) This is a recent application for American Rescue Plan funding to help persons transition out of homelessness by developing supportive housing in Marin County, submitted jointly by the County, San Rafael and other cities.

## *Racial Equity and Fair Housing*

A MUST  
READ!

[Marin County Analysis of Impediments](#). This is a federally mandated document that looks at impediments to fair housing in the County of Marin, including its incorporated cities. It is the starting point for conversations and strategies to affirmatively further fair housing and end housing discrimination.

A MUST  
READ!

[Racial Equity Toolkit](#). This menu of strategies prepared by the Government Alliance on Race and Equity is intended to help cities advance racial equity and opportunity for all through their policies, programs, and operations.

A MUST  
READ!

[Segregation Data for San Rafael](#). This is a one-page table from the Othering and Belonging Institute at UC Berkeley showing the demographic distribution of San Rafael neighborhoods. The results may surprise you.

[Race Counts](#). This is a link to the Race Counts Advancement Project, which includes data and policy assessments related to race and equity in California, including specific data on housing.

[GARE Communications Guide](#). This publication of the Government Alliance on Race and Equity is aimed at helping local governments improve their communication and messaging on issues related to race and equity and overcome structural racism in their communities.

[Trends in Wealth Holding by Race and Ethnicity](#). This article from the US Federal Reserve looks at disparities on wealth between White and non-White populations related to home ownership.

[Paying an Unfair Price: LGBT People of Color](#). This article looks specifically at the systemic housing challenges of LGBT communities of color.

[Bay Area Advancing Racial Equity](#). This is a PowerPoint presentation on how local governments in the Bay Area can advance racial equity in their language, services, and operations.

## *Affordable Housing*

A MUST  
READ!

[Myths and Facts About Affordable Housing](#). This publication from the State Department of Housing and Community Development dispels common myths about affordable housing, while also providing important facts.

A MUST  
READ!

[Why We All Benefit from Affordable Housing with Supportive Services](#). This publication from SPUR (San Francisco Planning and Urban Research) speaks to the many benefits of affordable housing in our communities.

[Affordable Housing Primer](#). This is a short primer with some basics about affordable housing from the Lewis Center at UCLA.

[How Affordable Housing Can Improve a Neighborhood](#). This is a case study about the Richardson Apartments in San Francisco, describing the benefits and positive effects of having affordable housing in the neighborhood.

[The Costs of Affordable Housing.](#) This Turner Center (Berkeley) publication looks at the cost of Low Income Housing Tax Credit projects, with a focus on construction costs and the benefits of federal tax credits.

[Supply Skepticism.](#) This report from the Furman Center (New York) addresses housing supply and affordability issues.

### **[Affordable Housing Effects on Property Values](#)**

[HCD Library of Resources on Affordable Housing and Property Values.](#) This document provides useful hyperlinks to other reports and studies that assess how affordable housing has affected property values around California.

[Does Affordable Housing Negatively Impact Property Values?](#) This is another “meta-level” literature review of this topic, with a recap of various studies and some interesting conclusions.

[There Doesn't Go the Neighborhood.](#) This interesting research study from on-line real estate platform Trulia looks at the impacts of affordable housing on property values in surrounding neighborhoods.

[Who Wants Affordable Housing in their Backyard?](#) This graduate-level research study from Stanford looks at the impacts of Low Income Housing Tax Credit projects on surrounding neighborhoods, using complex mathematical models and formulas.

### **[Videos from Other Communities](#)**

A number of Southern California cities received grant funding to prepare videos explaining the Housing Element process. Several of these videos have been translated into other languages, including Spanish and Mandarin. The links below provide easy-to-understand animated explanations of Housing Elements and what they cover. While they were prepared for communities in other parts of the state, the content is transferable to San Rafael.

[Housing Element – Orange County \(in Spanish\)](#) – 3 min 49 sec (this is focused on RHNA)

[Housing Element – Temecula \(in Spanish\)](#) – 24 min 35 sec

[Housing Element – Los Angeles \(in Spanish\)](#) – 1 min 33 sec

[Housing Element – Azusa \(Mandarin Subtitles\)](#) – 3 min 59 sec

In addition, Sonoma County has prepared [this video](#) as part of their update process (in English)