



CITY OF SONOMA

6TH CYCLE HCD REVIEW DRAFT HOUSING ELEMENT

Housing Plan Background Report

October 2022

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City of Sonoma

6th Cycle HCD Review Draft Housing Element

HOUSING PLAN

October 2022

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PART 1 - HOUSING PLAN

A. INTRODUCTION

This Housing Plan reflects: 1) community input; 2) Sonoma's housing needs; 3) land availability and constraints; and 4) experience gained during the past eight years (as summarized in the Housing Element Background Report). The Housing Plan sets forth the goals, policies, and programs to address the identified housing needs and issues for the 2023-2031 planning period and focuses on the following:

- * **Ensuring housing diversity:** Providing a variety of housing types affordable to all income levels, allowing those who work in Sonoma to also live here.
- * **Improving housing affordability:** Encouraging a range of affordable housing options for both renters and homeowners.
- * **Preserving housing assets:** Maintaining the condition and affordability of existing housing and ensuring development is consistent with Sonoma's town and neighborhood context.
- * **Reducing governmental constraints:** Minimizing governmental constraints under the City's control while facilitating the provision of housing and encouraging innovation in design, ownership, and living arrangements.
- * **Promoting equal housing opportunities:** Ensuring residents can reside in the housing of their choice, including Sonoma's special needs populations.
- * **Environmental sustainability:** Ensuring Sonoma grows in a responsible manner, in line with resource limitations such as water availability.

B. GOALS AND POLICIES

The goals and policies that guide the City's housing programs and activities are as follows:

HOUSING DIVERSITY

Goal H-1: Provide a range of housing types affordable to all income levels, allowing those who work in Sonoma to also live in the community.

Policy H-1.1: Encourage diversity in the type, density, size, affordability, and tenure of residential development in Sonoma, while maintaining quality of life goals for the community.

Policy H-1.2: Facilitate the development of affordable housing through regulatory incentives and concessions, and available financial assistance. Proactively seek out new models and approaches in the provision of affordable housing, including accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and cottage housing.

Policy H-1.3: Ensure the Growth Management Ordinance provides sufficient annual unit allocations to meet Sonoma's regional housing needs allocation (RHNA).

Policy H-1.4: Encourage the sustainable use of land and promote affordability by encouraging development at the higher end of the density range within the Medium Density, High Density, Housing Opportunity, and Mixed Use land use designations.

Policy H-1.5: Continue to provide opportunities for the integration of housing in commercial districts and the adaptive reuse of non-residential structures.

Policy H-1.6: Use inclusionary zoning as a tool to integrate affordable units within market rate developments, and increase access to resources, amenities, and affordable housing opportunities throughout the community.

Policy H-1.7: Support collaborative partnerships with non-profit organizations to facilitate greater access to affordable housing funds.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Goal H-2: Improve housing affordability for both renters and homeowners in Sonoma.

Policy H-2.1: Support the acquisition of existing market rate apartment units by non-profit housing developers, and conversion to long-term affordable housing for very low and low-income renters.

Policy H-2.2: Support the provision of rental assistance by the Sonoma County Housing Authority to extremely low and very low-income households.

Policy H-2.3: Advocate for the provision of financial assistance to low and moderate-income first-time homebuyers through County and State programs.

Policy H-2.4: Promote the availability of early mortgage counseling for homeowners at risk of foreclosure.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION

Goal H-3: Maintain and enhance the existing housing stock, preserve the affordable housing stock, and ensure that new residential development is consistent with Sonoma's town character and neighborhood quality.

Policy H-3.1: Maintain sustainable neighborhoods with quality housing, infrastructure, and open space that fosters neighborhood character and the health of residents.

Policy H-3.2: Encourage property owners to maintain rental and ownership units in sound condition through code enforcement and housing rehabilitation programs.

Policy H-3.3: Support efforts to identify and preserve important examples of historical or architecturally significant residences.

Policy H-3.4: Require the rehabilitation or remodeling of older cottages and bungalows to conform to the scale of the immediate neighborhood and retain the architectural character and integrity of the original structure.

Policy H-3.5: Regulate the conversion of existing apartment complexes to condominium ownership, and only permit when the citywide vacancy rate for rental units warrants.

Policy H-3.6: Support the preservation of mobile home parks as an important source of affordable housing.

Policy H-3.7: Ensure the continued availability and affordability of income-restricted housing for low and moderate-income households.

REDUCING GOVERNMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

Goal H-4: Reduce governmental constraints under the City's control on the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing while maintaining community character.

Policy H-4.1: Provide regulatory incentives and concessions to offset the costs of affordable housing development while protecting quality of life goals.

Policy H-4.2: Incentivize the development of affordable housing through growth management prioritization.

Policy H-4.3: Implement provisions for transitional housing, supportive housing, emergency shelters, and community care facilities.

Policy H-4.4: Support flexibility and variety in site planning, housing design, ownership, and living arrangements, including co-housing, shared housing, and live/work housing through the Development Code.

Policy H-4.5: Provide for the infill of modestly priced rental housing by encouraging ADUs on single-family zoned lots.

Policy H-4.6: Provide fee waivers to facilitate production of affordable housing.

Policy H-4.7: Provide reduced parking standards for affordable and special needs housing.

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

Goal H-5: Promote equal housing opportunities for all residents, including Sonoma's special needs populations and all classes protected under Federal and State fair housing laws, so that safe and decent housing is available to all persons and all income levels throughout the community and residents can reside in the housing of their choice.

Policy H-5.1: Ensure access to fair housing opportunities to the entire community and support the provision of fair housing services and tenant/landlord mediation to Sonoma residents.

Policy H-5.2: Support development and maintenance of affordable senior rental and ownership housing and supportive services to facilitate maximum independence and the ability of seniors to remain in their homes or within the greater Sonoma community.

Policy H-5.3: Continue to address the special needs of persons with disabilities, including developmental disabilities, through provision of supportive housing, accessibility grants, zoning for group housing, universal design, and procedures for reasonable accommodation.

Policy H-5.4: Work cooperatively with the County and other applicable organizations to address valley-wide special housing needs, such as housing for agricultural workers and the homeless, and including transitional housing and emergency shelters.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Goal H-6: Promote environmental sustainability through support of existing and new development that minimizes reliance on natural resources.

Policy H-6.1: Preserve open space, watersheds, environmental habitats and agricultural lands, while accommodating new growth in compact forms in a manner that de-emphasizes the automobile.

Policy H-6.2: Implement Sonoma's Green Building Ordinance to ensure new development is energy and water efficient, and consider establishing additional incentives to achieve energy and water conservation efficiencies higher than those required by the Ordinance. Revise and/or revisit the ordinance as necessary to reflect the introduction of a State-wide green building code.

Policy H-6.3: Promote the use of sustainable construction techniques and environmentally sensitive design for all housing to include best practices in water conservation, low-impact drainage, and greenhouse gas reduction.

Policy H-6.4: Promote the use of alternative energy sources such as solar energy, cogeneration, and non-fossil fuels.

Policy H-6.5: Incorporate transportation alternatives such as walking, bicycling and, where possible, transit, into the design of new development.

Policy H-6.6: Ensure sufficient water resources to serve existing and future residents provided for under Sonoma's 2020 General Plan: 1) take proactive steps to improve water conservation; 2) upgrade water supply infrastructure; 3) increase the local supply of water through new wells, groundwater banking, and the increased use of recycled water; 4) protect the quality and sustainability of groundwater resources; and 5) investigate alternative water supply options.

C. HOUSING PROGRAMS

The following programs are the implementing actions the City will take to address its housing goals. Each program identifies the objectives, timeframe for implementation, City department or agency primarily responsible for implementation, and the likely funding source.

1. HOUSING DIVERSITY

Providing a variety of housing types affordable to all income levels, allowing those who work in Sonoma to also live here.

PROGRAM 1: INCLUSIONARY HOUSING

The purpose of Sonoma's inclusionary housing ordinance is to ensure that a component of affordable housing is provided as part of residential development. The City's inclusionary housing requirements apply to projects with five or more units, and require:

- Rental projects to have at least 25 percent of the total parcels and/or units to be rental units that are affordable to households in the extremely low, very low, and low-income categories; and
- Ownership projects to have at least 25 percent of the total parcels and/or units to be ownership units that are affordable to households in the low, moderate, and middle-income categories.

An in-lieu fee may be paid instead of providing affordable units in a residential project of four or fewer units. Additionally, if the number of affordable units results in a fractional unit below 0.50, an in-lieu fee may be paid instead of providing an affordable unit.

Sonoma's Inclusionary Housing Program continues to be the City's primary tool to provide affordable housing throughout the community, ensuring equitable access to areas of opportunity, amenities, and housing available to a range of income levels. As a means of further enhancing the effectiveness of local inclusionary requirements, the City will reevaluate its current ordinance to ensure that the provisions remain appropriate and do not impede the development of housing and are effective in providing an affordable component to new development.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Funding Sources: | General Fund |
| 2023-2031 Objectives: | <p>Reevaluate the City's inclusionary housing provisions to ensure that they remain appropriate and do not impede the development of housing and are effective in providing an affordable component to new development.</p> <p>By July 1, 2024, revise the City's inclusionary housing provisions to require that inclusionary units remain affordable in perpetuity.</p> |
| Timeframe: | Review the inclusionary housing requirements and amend the Development Code, if necessary, by 2026. |

PROGRAM 2: PARTNERSHIPS WITH AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPERS

In today's housing market, creative approaches are required to finance, build, and rehabilitate affordable and special needs housing. Sonoma has partnered with several different non-profit developers in the provision of affordable ownership and rental housing. Nonprofits active in the Sonoma area include: Burbank Housing Corporation; Community Housing Sonoma County; Affordable Housing Associates; Habitat for Humanity; Community Land Trust of Sonoma County; and Eden Housing, among others. The City participates in the Sonoma County Housing Coalition, providing an ongoing opportunity for coordination with local housing nonprofits.

To specifically address the housing needs of farmworkers, the City will coordinate with the County's farmworker housing program, as well as nonprofits such as Burbank Housing Development Corporation, California Human Development Corporation, and Sonoma County Housing Coalition, to promote the construction of farmworker housing. The City will assist by partnering with the County and/or other organizations to support applications for funding to the State's Joe Serna Jr. Farmworker Housing Grant Program (FWHG).

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Responsible Department/Agency: | Planning Department |
| Funding Sources: | General Fund |
| 2023-2031 Objectives: | <p>Provide information annually via email and host an annual meeting with affordable housing developers and non-profits to identify housing opportunities and to identify City programs, including the Housing Trust Fund, and incentives that support affordable housing development, rehabilitation, and conversion of market-rate housing or non-residential development to affordable housing through provision of land write-downs, regulatory incentives, and/or direct assistance.</p> <p>Identify developer interest in at least 2 affordable projects, including at least 42 extremely low, 41 low, and 48 low income units, by 2026</p> <p>Annually meet with County representatives to discuss farmworker housing needs and to identify opportunities and potential applications for funding. Identify at least one project, locally or regionally, to provide at least 20 units of farmworker housing by 2026</p> |
| Timeframe: | <p>Annual mailing of information to housing developers and annual meeting with affordable housing developers.</p> <p>Ongoing implementation.</p> |

PROGRAM 3: ADAPTIVE REUSE

The conversion of outmoded buildings, including non-residential development and market-rate housing, can provide an opportunity for new residential uses and new affordable and special needs housing within a community. As a housing strategy, adaptive reuse can restore buildings to a useful purpose, and potentially provide higher density housing at a reasonable cost. Sonoma encourages the adaptive reuse of historic structures, permitting uses not otherwise allowed through the base zone as well as allowing for increased residential densities. Successful examples of conversion of commercial structures to residential use in Sonoma include the old Boys and Girls Club, and the Olde Bowl Center. Additional opportunities for adaptive reuse may include conversion of upper-story office and other uses in non-residential buildings to housing units.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Develop innovative strategies for the adaptive reuse of commercial structures and market-rate housing with potential to convert to affordable housing beyond only officially designated historic structures to provide for a range of housing types and residential uses.

Timeframe: Amend the Development Code to broaden the applicability of adaptive reuse by 2026.

Identify at least four sites with adaptive reuse potential, including underutilized commercial sites or underutilized residential sites, by 2026 and reach out to property owners of sites informing them of the City's methods of promoting adaptive reuse in 2027.

PROGRAM 4: ALTERNATIVE HOUSING MODELS

Sonoma recognizes the changing housing needs of its population, including a growing number of non-family households, aging seniors in need of supportive services, and single-parent families in need of childcare and other services. To address such needs, the City can support the provision of non-traditional and innovative housing types to meet the unique needs of residents, such as co-housing, shared housing, and assisted living for seniors, among others.

Cottage housing developments are groupings of small, attached or detached single family dwelling units, often oriented around a common open space (courtyard) area, and with a shared area for parking. Cottage housing is typically built as infill development in established residential zones and can provide increased density and a more affordable alternative to traditional single-family housing. Similarly, duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes offer an alternative to traditional single family housing and expand housing choices. Rather than codifying all parameters of expanded alternatives to single family and multifamily development, a more flexible approach of design guidelines and design review may be appropriate.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Establish design and development standards and a streamlined review process that supports a greater variety of housing types, including duplex, triplex, and fourplex units and cottage/courtyard housing.

Increase access to census tracts that have low racial or economic diversity and to census tracts in areas of higher opportunity by allowing a greater variety of housing types in order to promote greater racial and economic diversity

Permit 40 units of duplex, triplex, and fourplex units and cottage/courtyard housing census tracts that have low racial or economic diversity and to census tracts in areas of higher opportunity

Timeframe: Amend the Development Code to include design and development standards and a streamlined review process for at least duplex, triplex, fourplex, and cottage/courtyard housing by 2026.

PROGRAM 5: ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS AND JUNIOR ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

An accessory dwelling unit (ADU) is a self-contained living unit with cooking, eating, sleeping, and full sanitation facilities, either attached to or detached from the primary residential unit on a single lot. A junior accessory dwelling unit (JADU) is a unit that is no more than 500 square feet in size and contained entirely within a single-family residence with separate or shared sanitation facilities. ADUs and JADUs offer several benefits. First, they often are affordable to very low and low-income households and can provide options for seniors, single persons, and even small families. Second, the primary homeowner receives supplementary income by renting out the ADU, which can help many modest income and elderly homeowners afford to remain in their homes. ADUs offer an important opportunity to help Sonoma address its regional housing needs while maintaining the community’s small-town character.

The City will continue to apply Municipal Code regulations that allow ADUs and JADUs by right on properties with existing or planned single-family and multifamily uses.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Update the ADU/JADU requirements to comply with State law; pursue funding for ADU construction; provide financial assistance to build ADUs; provide technical resources; conduct outreach and education on ADUs; conduct a mid-cycle review of ADU assumptions; and achieve at least 64 ADUs

Timeframe:

- Update the City’s current ADU/JADU requirements (SMC Section 19.50.090) to comply with State law by December 2023.
- Pursue State funding available to assist lower- and moderate-income homeowners in the construction of ADUs.
- Provide financial assistance to qualified property owners to build ADUs using State funds (such as CalHOME funds).
- Provide technical resources online in 2024 to assist with ADU/JADU development, including an ADU factsheet with a summary of requirements for ADUs/JADUs and permit fees required for ADUs/JADUs, and information regarding CalHFA grants.
- Conduct outreach and education on ADU options and requirements to homeowners and Homeowners’ Associations in 2025.

- 32 permitted ADUs by January 31, 2027 and 32 additional permitted ADUs by January 31, 2031
- Conduct a mid-cycle review no later than January 31, 2027 of ADU assumptions included in the Housing Resources chapter of the Background Report. If the review finds that production is not consistent with the projections in the Housing Resources chapter, modify this program within one year to further incentivize ADU production so that the City’s projections can be realized.

PROGRAM 6: SECOND HOMES

As shown in Tables 26 and 27 of the Background Report, the City has an overall vacancy rate of approximately 11%. Of the vacant units, the majority are for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use (69%). These seasonal, recreational, or occasional use units do not provide permanent housing opportunities and reduce the availability of housing in Sonoma for permanent use. While new vacation rentals are prohibited in the residential, mixed use, and commercial zones, the City will further disincentivize second homes uses through economic tools that can be used to fund affordable and workforce housing.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Develop tools to disincentivize second homes and reduce the number of seasonal, recreational, or occasional use units by 5-10% during the planning period

Timeframe:

- In 2024/2025, evaluate programs that disincentivize second units, such as the property tax used by the City of Oakland or a real-estate transfer tax
- In 2026, pursue implementation of approaches to reduce second homes and capture a portion of the cost of second homes have on the need for permanent housing, including affordable and workforce

2. HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Encouraging a range of affordable housing options for both renters and homeowners.

PROGRAM 7: AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUNDING SOURCES

Successful implementation of Sonoma’s programs for development of affordable and special needs housing will depend on the leverage of local funds with a variety of federal, State, County, and private sources. The Financial Resources section of the Housing Element identifies the primary affordable housing funding programs available to Sonoma. In addition to applying for those funds directly available to municipalities, the City plays an important role in supporting developers to secure outside funds. City involvement may include review of financial pro-forma analyses; provision of demographic, market, and land use information; review and comment on funding applications; and City Council actions in support of the project and application. Many “third-party” grants may also require some form of local financial commitment.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Actively pursue federal, State, County and private funding sources for affordable housing as a means of leveraging local funds and maximizing assistance. Support developers in securing outside funding sources.

Funds will be used to support the City’s housing goals, policies, and programs including providing ADUs, alternative housing types, integration of housing into commercial areas, adaptive reuse of non-residential structures, rehabilitation and preservation of housing, including subsidized housing and mobile home parks, incentivizing affordable housing, infill housing, and furthering access to housing opportunities throughout Sonoma.

In 2023, pursue a Prohousing Designation from HCD in order to reflect the City’s significant housing achievements and to increase the City’s competitiveness for State grant and loan program applications

Work with developers and housing providers to identify at least 2 affordable new development projects, including at least 42 extremely low, 41 low, and 48 low income units, and 1 rehabilitation or conversion project that would assist at least 10 very low and 10 low income households by 2026

Submit, or support developer submission of, at least 3 affordable housing funding applications, such as development, preservation, maintenance/rehabilitation, and/or homebuyer assistance, to assist the above-referenced projects as well as other opportunities identified during the planning period

Timeframe: Ongoing review of potential funding sources and application submittals on or before July 1st of 2025, 2027, and 2029. .

PROGRAM 8: AFFORDABLE HOUSING IMPACT FEES

Sonoma faces a shortage of affordable housing opportunities for the local workforce, resulting in the vast majority of persons who work in the community commuting in from outside the City. Residential development further increases the demand for affordable housing, based on the growth in employment generated by residential households’ increased demand for goods and services. While Sonoma’s Inclusionary Housing Ordinance specifies affordable housing requirements for development of five or more residential units, the Ordinance does not currently apply to construction of individual single-family homes, or 2-4 unit projects.

To ensure individual single family homes and small projects address affordable housing needs, the City will evaluate the contribution towards affordable housing demand from such development. Pursuant to AB 1600, a nexus study will be prepared to demonstrate the linkage between smaller units and the demand for affordable units, and to establish the maximum supportable impact fee. To ensure that the impact fee is equitable, it shall be assessed on a per square foot basis.

To ensure that non-residential development addresses the demand it generates for workforce housing, the City will evaluate the Affordable Housing Fees for Nonresidential Development established by Resolution 12-2020 to ensure that the fees adequately address the demand for very low and extremely low income housing associated with development of commercial, recreational, visitor-serving, industrial, and other non-residential uses and prepare a nexus study to address the linkage between non-residential development and the demand for affordable housing.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Adopt an impact fee to address the demand for affordable housing generated by new single family units and smaller residential projects.

Adopt an impact fee to address the demand for affordable, including extremely low, very low, low, and moderate income, workforce housing generated by non-residential development.

Timeframe: Complete nexus studies by 2024 and adopt fees by 2025. .

PROGRAM 9: HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER RENTAL ASSISTANCE

The Federal Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Rental Assistance Program extends rental subsidies to extremely low and very low-income households, including families, seniors, and persons with disabilities. The Housing Choice Voucher Program offers a voucher that pays the difference between the current fair market rent (FMR) and what a tenant can afford to pay (i.e., 30% of household income). The voucher allows a tenant to choose housing that costs above the payment standard, provided the tenant pays the extra cost. Given the significant gap between market rents and what extremely low and very low-income households can afford to pay for housing, the Housing Choice Voucher Program plays a critical role in allowing such households to remain in the community, and is a key program to address the needs of extremely low and very low-income households.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department, Sonoma County Housing Authority

Funding Sources: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Housing Choice Vouchers

- 2023-2031 Objectives:
- Cooperate with the Sonoma County Housing Authority to continue to make Housing Choice Vouchers available in Sonoma.
 - Make information regarding the HCV program available on the City website and in an annual direct mailing to all residents and property owners, identifying available housing resources.
 - Provide referrals to the Sonoma County Housing Authority to households seeking rental assistance.
 - To increase housing mobility and opportunities in the City’s highest resource areas, provide annual outreach to property owners citywide encouraging owners of rental property to register with the Sonoma County Housing Authority to increase housing stock accessible to very low and extremely low-income households.
 - Perform additional outreach, with a minimum of three (3) presentations per year, to Homeowners’ Associations and Neighborhood Associations in the areas with the highest opportunity scores in the City, to provide education about the benefits of the HCV program and to encourage increased landlord participation.

Timeframe: Ongoing implementation and annual reporting throughout the planning period.

3. HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION

Maintaining the condition and affordability of existing housing and ensuring development is consistent with Sonoma’s town and neighborhood context.

PROGRAM 10: HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRAM

Since the City of Sonoma participates in the County’s Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, Sonoma residents are eligible to participate in the Sonoma County Community Development Commission’s Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program. This program offers below market rate loans to low-income owner-occupants of single-family homes or mobile homes, and owners of rental properties where at least half of the tenants are low-income households, to make necessary repairs to their dwellings.

During the 6th Cycle, the City will work to identify any areas of the City with concentrations of housing in need of repair, including dilapidated units, as well as individual multi-family developments that are in need of significant repair or rehabilitation and will coordinate connecting owners of such housing with federal, State, and regional resources for housing rehabilitation. Ensure that Code Enforcement staff provides information regarding available financial resources for housing rehabilitation, weatherization, and emergency repair to any owners of housing in need of repair.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department, Sonoma County Community Development Commission (SCCDC)

Funding Sources: CDBG

2023-2031 Objectives: Promote the availability of the Housing Rehabilitation Program on the City’s website, through social media, and by way of handouts available at the City Hall public counter and Sonoma Community Center as well as through the local real estate community. Continue to work with the SCCDC to ensure that funding remains available for housing rehabilitation activities. Seek to assist a total of 20 lower income households during the planning period.

Identify concentrations of housing in need of repair and multifamily developments in need of significant repair and connect property owners with resources for rehabilitation.

Timeframe: Ongoing implementation and annual reporting throughout the planning period. Identification of multifamily developments in need of significant repair by December 2024 and coordinate with property owners in 2025.

PROGRAM 11: TENANT AND RESIDENT PROTECTIONS

Rental units, including mobile homes, represent important sources of housing affordable to lower income households, the workforce, and persons with fixed incomes. The City has enacted protections since 1993 to preserve the affordability of its mobile home parks – which are primarily occupied by senior citizens. Residents of mobile home parks receive rent stabilization and other protections under Chapter 9.92 of the Municipal Code. Tenants living in apartment projects and mobile home parks that are proposed for conversion to condominium ownership are subject to Sonoma’s condominium conversion regulations (Section 19.65.030 of the Development Code). To build upon these tenant and resident protections, the City will consider methods to protect tenants from excessive rent increases and unjust evictions.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Continue to enforce the mobile home park rent stabilization and conversion ordinances to preserve the affordability and long-term use of mobile home parks in Sonoma.

Update the Chapter 9.92 of the Municipal Code by December 2024 to reflect the requirements of State law, including AB 2782 changes to Civil Code Section 798.17 (rental agreement requirements), Civil Code Section 798.56 (tenancy termination standards), and Government Code Sections 65863.7 and 66427.4 provisions regarding conversion or closure of a mobile home park.

Continue to provide tenant protections through implementation of the City's condominium conversion regulations. Utilize State provisions under SB 510 to ensure that mobile home park residents are afforded all protections specified by law pertaining to park conversions to resident ownership.

Adoption of additional tenant protection requirements to reduce displacement

Timeframe: Ongoing implementation of Chapter 9.92 and Section 19.65.030 to address mobile home park conversions and condominium conversions, respectively

In 2024, review rent stabilization and just cause eviction policies including reasonable protections for small-time, good-behavior landlords

In 2025, adopt tenant protection requirements

PROGRAM 12: PRESERVATION OF ASSISTED RENTAL HOUSING

As of 2022, Sonoma has a total of 146 assisted multifamily rent-restricted units in four developments (see Table 39 of the Background Report), with an additional 293 affordable inclusionary and density bonus rental units integrated within 40 market rate and ownership projects. While all of the affordable multifamily properties are not at risk of converting to market rate for at least ten years (assisted multifamily projects within Sonoma are not anticipated to be eligible to convert to market rate until after 2050), the City has identified 104 of its inclusionary units, including 73 rental and 30 ownership, that are at-risk of converting during the planning period.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Facilitate long-term preservation of Sonoma's rent-restricted housing through the following actions:

Rental Units – preserve 100% of at-risk rental units

- **Monitor At-Risk Units:** Contact property owners at least 18 months and again within one year prior to the affordability expiration date to discuss City's desire to preserve as affordable housing.
- **Work with Potential Priority Purchasers:** Solicit participation of agencies interested in purchasing and/or managing units at risk. Provide funding assistance, which can be leveraged with outside funding sources from nonprofits to either transfer ownership or provide rent subsidies to maintain affordability.
- **Tenant Education:** Based on State law, property owners are required to give a nine month notice of their intent to opt out of low-income use restrictions. The City will work with tenants, and as necessary contract with specialists like the California Housing Partnership and other nonprofits, to provide education regarding tenant rights and conversion procedures.

Ownership Units – preserve all at-risk ownership units where the City has an option to purchase

- **Monitor At-Risk Units:** Contact property owners at least 18 months and again within one year prior to the affordability expiration date to discuss City's desire to preserve as affordable housing.
- **Exercise Option Agreement:** Where the City has the option to purchase the agreement, the City either exercise the option agreement or partner with agencies or organizations interested in purchasing and/or managing units at risk in order to maintain the affordability of the unit.

Timeframe: Ongoing implementation.

PROGRAM 13: HOUSING ELEMENT MONITORING/ANNUAL REPORTING

Sonoma's Planning Department is responsible for the regular monitoring of the Housing Element to ensure that the City continues to assess its affordable housing programs, progress towards the RHNA, including maintenance of adequate sites, and the preservation of affordable housing units. The Planning Department will prepare the Annual Progress Report for review by the public, City decision-makers, and submittal to the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). Completion of the Annual Progress Report is required for the City to maintain access to State housing funds.

The Annual Progress Report will document:

- Sonoma's annual residential building activity, including identification of any deed-restricted affordable units and assignment of market rate units to an appropriate affordability category;
- Progress towards the Regional Housing Needs Allocation since the start of the planning period; and
- Implementation status of the Housing Element programs.

As part of Housing Element implementation monitoring, the City will monitor individual projects and its inventory of sites suitable for residential development and ensure no net loss of housing sites pursuant to Government Code Section 65863.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Review the Housing Element annually and provide opportunities for public participation, in conjunction with the submission of the City’s Annual Progress Report to the State Department of Housing and Community Development by April 1st of each year.

By 2025, develop a registry of rental units, accessory dwelling units, and SB 9 units to monitor the affordability of such units, to collect data to inform decisions, and to assist the City in monitoring the efficacy of its programs directed at tenant protections, promoting housing opportunities through ADUs and SB 9 units, and addressing the maintenance and preservation of housing.

Timeframe: Ongoing implementation and annual reporting throughout the planning period.

Registry of rental units, ADUs, and SB 9 units by 2025.

Ongoing monitoring of inventory of residential sites, with replacement sites identified within 6 months of any shortfall.

PROGRAM 14: DESIGN GUIDELINES AND DESIGN REVIEW

Sonoma uses design review to ensure development embodies excellence in architectural design and complements the scale, character, and rich history of the community. The Development Code establishes design guidelines for each of the City’s planning areas, addressing site plan elements, building types, and materials, and provides the foundation for all design reviews in Sonoma. The design guidelines work in concert with the Code’s development standards, although unlike development standards, which are mandatory, design guidelines are applied with flexibility to foster creativity and strict adherence is not required for project approval. Sonoma’s Design Review and Historic Preservation Commission (DRHPC) reviews all residential projects, except for single-family homes and duplexes located outside the Historic zone. Typically, only one to two meetings are necessary to receive approval.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Update the City’s Development Code and design guidelines to expand the City’s objective multifamily design standards to also address mixed use and multi-unit (two or more units on a single parcel) projects and to provide a streamlined ministerial review process consistent with relevant provisions of State law as discussed under Program 15.

Continue to implement design review in accordance with State law, focusing on increasing housing opportunities in the City while ensuring maintenance of Sonoma’s architectural character and quality of the built environment as the City continues to grow.

Timeframe: Update the City’s zoning and design requirements to provide objective design and development standards consistent with State requirements, including SB 330 and SB 9, by December 2023; ongoing implementation.

4. REMOVING GOVERNMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

Minimizing governmental constraints under the City's control while facilitating the provision of housing and encouraging innovation in design, ownership, and living arrangements.

PROGRAM 15: DEVELOPMENT CODE AMENDMENTS – HOUSING CONSTRAINTS

Amendments to the Development Code are needed to address various recent changes to State law and create consistency with the Housing Element. The amendments shall address the following:

- A. **Low Barrier Navigation Centers:** The Development Code will be updated to define and permit low barrier navigation centers consistent with the requirements of Government Code Sections 65660 through 65668, including treating low barrier navigation centers as a by-right use in areas zoned for mixed-use and nonresidential zones permitting multifamily uses.
- B. **Transitional and Supportive Housing:** The Development Code will be revised to ensure that transitional and supportive housing are allowed in residential and mixed-use zones subject to the same standards as a residence of the same type in the same zone consistent with Government Code Section 65583(c)(3), and to allow eligible supportive housing as a by-right use in zones where multifamily and mixed uses are permitted pursuant to Government Code Sections 65650 through 65656.
- C. **Residential Care Facilities:** The Development Code will be amended to fully address small and large residential care facilities consistent with State law. Specifically, the City will amend the Development Code (1) to allow residential care facilities for six or fewer persons to be allowed in the same manner as a residential use of the same type in all residential zoning districts, and (2) to allow residential care facilities that serve seven or more people in all zones that allow residential uses, in the same manner as a residential use of the same type, and to ensure all conditions of approval are objective and do not create barriers for housing for seniors, persons with disabilities, or other special needs populations, and to clarify that this type of facility is intended to serve as a residence for individuals in need of assistance with daily living activities.
- D. **Streamlined and Ministerial Review for Eligible Affordable Housing Projects:** The Development Code will be updated to ensure that eligible multifamily, mixed use, and multi unit projects are provided streamlined ministerial (by-right) review and are only subject to objective design and development standards consistent with relevant provisions of State law, including SB 330 and SB 9, as provided by applicable sections of the Government Code, including but not limited to Sections 65905.5, 65913.4, 65940, 65941.1, 65950, and 66300. State law defines objective design standards as those that “involve no personal or subjective judgement by a public official and are uniformly verifiable by reference to an external and uniform benchmark or criterion available and knowable by both the development applicant and public official prior to submittal.”
- E. **Employee Housing:** The Development Code will be amended to define “employee housing” and to clarify that employee housing serving six or fewer employees shall be deemed a single-family structure and shall be subject to the same standards for a single-family residence in the same zone.
- F. **Single-Room Occupancy (SRO):** The Development Code will be updated to define single-room occupancy units and to establish objective standards for SROs.
- G. **Emergency Shelter Parking:** The Development Code will be updated to require sufficient parking to accommodate all staff working in an emergency shelter, provided that the standards will not require more parking for emergency shelters than other residential or commercial uses within the same zone, in compliance with AB 139.

- H. **Design Standards:** The City will review and modify the Design Review criteria to address potentially subjective terminology in order to provide objectivity in the design review process.
- I. **Affordability in Perpetuity:** The City will review its conversion provisions for market-rate to affordable housing and for non-residential uses to affordable housing to ensure that affordable units that are required by the City are provided in perpetuity.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Ensure that the City's Development Code is consistent with State law and update the Development Code as needed to comply with future changes. Review development standards in all residential districts every three years to identify if standards have constrained potential development and revise standards when necessary to remove constraints to multifamily residential developments, including mixed use development.

Timeframe: Identified Development Code Amendments adopted by December 2023. Periodic review of development standards every three years.

PROGRAM 16: MONITOR CHANGES IN FEDERAL AND STATE HOUSING, PLANNING, AND ZONING LAWS

The City will continue to monitor federal and state legislation that could impact housing and comment on, support, or oppose proposed changes or additions to existing legislation, as well as support new legislation when appropriate. Furthermore, while Program 15 addresses specific constraints identified in this Housing Element, the City will continue to, at least annually, monitor its development processes and zoning regulations to identify and remove any housing constraints and endeavor to minimize governmental constraints to the development, improvement, and maintenance of housing.

Recent laws that may require Municipal Code revisions to implement include Assembly Bill (AB) 2011 and Senate Bill (SB) 6. AB 2011 creates a CEQA-exempt, ministerial approval process for eligible housing developments, including 100% affordable projects and mixed-income projects located on “commercial corridors”, on sites where office, retail, or parking are the principally permitted use. SB 6 allows eligible residential and mixed use projects in zones where office, retail, or parking are the principally permitted use to invoke SB 35 and the Housing Accountability Act approval processes.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Monitor federal and state legislation as well as City development processes and zoning regulations to identify and remove constraints to housing.

Timeframe: By December 2023, update the Municipal Code and the City's project application documents to incorporate the requirements of AB 2011 and SB 6.

Annual monitoring of relevant legislation and ongoing implementation to address any revisions needed to the Municipal Code or other City standards based on annual monitoring of relevant legislation.

PROGRAM 17: GROWTH MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE

Sonoma's Growth Management Ordinance (GMO) was adopted by City Council in 1980 to manage increases in service and infrastructure demand from development consistent with available water supplies and sewer treatment capacities. The GMO currently limits development within the City to an average of 65 units per year, a level determined after extensive study of infrastructure capacities. City staff is not implementing the GMO due to the potential for it to conflict with the California's Housing Crisis Act. Furthermore, should the GMO begin to be implemented, the 65-unit per year GMO limit is sufficient to accommodate Sonoma's regional housing needs, defined as 311 units for the 2023-2031 planning period, or an average of 39 units per year.

The GMO exempts the following types of development from the allocation process in that a qualifying development may apply for a building permit or planning approval, as applicable, at any time:

- Small projects, although the number of small projects approved in any one development year are deducted from the 65-unit allocation of the following year;
- Condominium conversions where no additional dwelling units are created;
- Accessory dwelling units and junior accessory dwelling units;
- Density bonus units;
- Inclusionary units provided at the low-income level (except within projects located in the Sonoma residential zone) or at the very low-income level;
- Inclusionary units provided in numbers in excess of the normal requirement; and
- As determined by the City Council on a case-by-case basis, applications in which at least 60 percent of the proposed units qualify as affordable housing, and which involve City participation in planning, financing, or development.

The GMO is adopted by ordinance and thus the City Council is not subject to the limitations of a voter approved initiative in making appropriate changes to the ordinance.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Should the GMO be reinstated or reactivated, annually review the Growth Management Ordinance in conjunction with the monitoring of affordable housing produced (refer to Program 13), and modify as necessary to ensure adequate incentives are provided for the development of affordable housing and fulfillment of regional housing needs in the current and future housing element cycles. Any modifications shall occur within 1 year of identification of constraints associated with accommodating the 6th Cycle RHNA under the GMO. Continue to track and reallocate unused and forfeited allocations.

Timeframe: Ongoing implementation.

PROGRAM 18: PARKING INCENTIVES AND MODIFIED STANDARDS

Residential parking requirements play a significant role in project design and achievable densities, and can greatly impact the cost of development. Sonoma offers reductions in its residential parking standards as a means of facilitating the development of affordable and special needs housing, as well as mixed-use, live-work, and pedestrian-oriented housing. The City has established reduced parking standards for senior housing and live-work developments, and allows reduced parking for mixed-use developments based on a determination by the Planning Commission. Parking reductions are also offered as an incentive for developments to provide increased pedestrian-oriented open space. Furthermore, the Planning Commission is permitted to grant exceptions to parking standards of up to 30 percent in response to environmental features and site conditions, to historic development patterns, and to promote creativity in site planning and development. Affordable housing projects are eligible for reduced parking under the City's density bonus ordinance.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Continue to provide options for reduced parking as an incentive for development of affordable, special needs, mixed-use, live-work, and pedestrian-oriented housing.

Timeframe: Ongoing implementation.

PROGRAM 19: AFFORDABLE HOUSING/ ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES DENSITY BONUS AND INCENTIVES

Pursuant to current State density bonus law (Government Code § 65915), applicants of residential projects of five or more units may apply for a density bonus and additional incentives if the project provides for one of the following:

- Ten percent of the total units of a housing development for rental or sale to lower income households; or
- Five percent of the total units of a housing development for rental or sale to very low income households; or
- A senior citizen housing development or a mobile home park that limits residency based on age requirements for housing for older persons; or
- Ten percent of the total dwelling units of a housing development are sold to persons and families of moderate income.; or
- Ten percent of the total units of a housing development for transitional foster youth, disabled veterans, or homeless persons; or
- Twenty percent of the total units for lower income students in a student housing development.

The amount of density bonus varies according to the amount by which the percentage of affordable housing units exceeds the established minimum percentage, but generally ranges from 20-50 percent above the specified General Plan density. In addition to the density bonus, eligible projects may receive 1-4 additional development incentives, depending on the proportion of affordable units and level of income targeting. The following development incentives may be requested:

- Reduced site development standards or design requirements.
- Approval of mixed-use zoning in conjunction with the housing project.
- Other regulatory incentives or concessions proposed by the applicant or the City that would result in identifiable cost reductions.

Applicants are also eligible to utilize the State's alternative parking ratio (inclusive of handicapped and guest spaces) of one space for 0-1 bedroom units, 2 spaces for 2-3 bedroom units, and 2.5 spaces for 4+ bedrooms.

Sonoma has approved density bonuses for several affordable housing projects in the past, including Firehouse Village and Maysonnave Apartments. The City will review and update its Development Code to reflect current State density bonus provisions.

In addition to the density bonus and incentives for qualified projects, the City can encourage affordable and special needs housing, including housing for seniors, persons with a disability, large families, farmworkers, single female heads of household, by offering incentives for special needs housing that is affordable to very low, low, and/or moderate income households but does not qualify for a density bonus.

This approach can also be used to incentivize housing that improves Sonoma’s opportunity scores. Recognizing that most of the City has low or moderate opportunity scores, affordable and workforce projects that improve educational, economic, and environmental conditions shall be prioritized and incentivized. Incentives for such projects shall include priority for commitment of the City’s financial resources for affordable housing, streamlined processing, and a density bonus or incentives for projects that are not otherwise eligible for a density bonus or incentives under State density bonus law.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Continue to implement and grant density bonuses for projects meeting density bonus criteria, consistent with State law.

Update Chapter 19.44 to reflect the density bonus provisions of State law and to allow up to two additional incentives for special needs housing that is affordable to very low, low, and/or moderate income households in perpetuity and to establish density bonuses and incentives for housing projects that improve economic, educational, and environmental opportunities. Promote the use of density bonus incentives and provide technical assistance to developers in utilizing the density bonus to maximize feasibility and meet local housing needs.

Consider applying an Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) to sites, including but not limited to Sites 1 and 28, identified for very low and low income development in the Background Report. The AHO would allow development of the sites at 25 units per acre for projects that provide a minimum of 40% of units affordable to very low and low income households. This shall include consideration of whether the City has received development applications for projects that would assist in meeting the RHNA and whether an AHO is necessary to further incentivize development of sites to meet the 6th Cycle RHNA.

Timeframe: Update Chapter 19.44 by December 2023.

By June 2025, hold a workshop with the Planning Commission and/or City Council to discuss applying an Affordable Housing Overlay to the City’s sites that accommodate the very low and low income RHNA. If the AHO is warranted, implement by February 2026.

5. EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

Ensuring residents can reside in the housing of their choice, including Sonoma’s special needs populations.

PROGRAM 20: FAIR HOUSING SERVICES

Fair Housing Advocates of Northern California (FHANC) is the designated provider of fair housing and tenant-landlord information throughout the County. FHANC provides fair housing investigation and coordinates referral services to assist individuals who may have been the victims of discrimination. They maintain a fair housing hotline and provide bilingual in-person counseling. Fair housing education and outreach includes publication and distribution of *A Handbook for Landlords & Tenants*, and presentations to community groups and housing providers on fair housing issues.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department, FHANC

Funding Sources: General Fund, CDBG funds

2023-2031 Objectives: Continue to provide comprehensive fair housing services, including promoting fair housing practices, review and enforcement assistance with fair housing complaints, and education to housing providers, through FHANC. As a means of furthering fair housing education and outreach in the community, the City will advertise the fair housing program through placement of fair housing services brochures at the public counter, the Sonoma Community Center, and on the City's website.

Timeframe: Ongoing implementation of fair housing services through FHANC, including semi-annual outreach events to the community to promote fair housing practices.

Increase access to fair housing information on the City's website and at locations in throughout the City by December 2023

PROGRAM 21: AFFIRMATIVELY FURTHER FAIR HOUSING

Facilitate equal and fair housing opportunities by taking meaningful actions to affirmatively further fair housing and address impediments identified in the AFFH analysis located in the Background Report. In summary, the City offers higher opportunity areas but faces challenges in promoting and providing a range of housing types and prices suitable for lower income households. Providing a range of affordable housing can help foster more inclusive communities and increase access to opportunities for persons of color, persons with disabilities, and other protected classes. Table 1 summarizes fair housing issues, contributing factors, and implementing actions.

The actions listed below, along with the other programs identified in this Housing Plan, were developed to cumulatively address the AFFH goals to counteract the disparities and issues that were identified in the AFFH analysis located in the Background Report. The timeframes and priority levels are added to ensure the implementation of these actions in a timely manner. The priority levels for these actions are defined as follows:

- High Priority contributing factors are those that have a direct and substantial impact on fair housing, and are core municipal functions that the City can control;
- Medium Priority factors are those that have a direct and substantial impact on fair housing, but the City has limited capacity to control their implementation;
- Low Priority factors may have a direct and substantial impact on fair housing choice, but the City lacks capacity to address it, or the factor may have only a slight or indirect impact on fair housing choice.

As shown in Table 1, the City intends to complete the necessary actions to meet the State AFFH requirements. These actions are integrated into the Housing Plan for the overall 6th Cycle Housing Element with the specialized timeframes for expedited implementation. The rationale for identifying these actions is to ensure they are implemented in a timely manner to better serve the Sonoma community. These actions are intended to alleviate the main issues identified in the Assessment of Fair Housing and

the City intends to implement these and all the programs outlined in this Housing Plan during the 2023-2031 planning period. In addition, the City intends to monitor the AFFH actions on an annual basis in conjunction with the preparation of the Annual Progress Report (APR) to ensure the goals are being met. If any action items are not being achieved, the City will adjust its metrics, timeframes, and commitments as necessary to ensure it meets its AFFH goals.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department, Fair Housing of Sonoma County

Funding Sources: General Fund, CDBG, grant funding

2023-2031 Objectives: Implement measures to affirmatively further fair housing.

Timeframe: Ongoing implementation for the 2023-2031 planning period, and as further outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Program 22 Fair Housing Program Action Items

| Program/Action Area ¹ | Specific Commitment | Timeframe | Geographic Targeting | Metrics |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| Fair Housing Outreach and Enforcement | | | | |
| <p>20. Fair housing services Ensure that educational and enforcement assistance is provided to renters, homebuyers, homeowners, and housing providers</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide comprehensive fair housing services through FHANC, including education, enforcement assistance, and outreach • Make fair housing information readily available to the community through providing information on the City's website and at the Sonoma Community Center and the public counter | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High priority/ within 9 months of Housing Element adoption | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citywide | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on the City's website, Sonoma Community Center, and Public Counter (2023) • Semi-annual outreach events (twice per year beginning in 2023) |
| Housing Mobility Enhancement | | | | |
| <p>5. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (JADUs) Encourage the development of ADUs and JADUs throughout the City to expand housing opportunities for all income levels and special needs groups.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the ADU/JADU requirements; • Pursue funding and provide financial assistance to lower- and moderate-income homeowners in the construction of ADUs; • Prepare an ADU factsheet; • Conduct outreach and education on ADUs; • Conduct a mid-cycle review of ADU assumptions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High priority/ within 18 months of Housing Element adoption | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citywide; target marketing in higher opportunity areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update ADU requirements (2023); • Pursue funding for financial assistance (2025) • Prepare ADU factsheet (2024); • Conduct outreach and education (2025); • Conduct mid-cycle review (2027) • Annually monitor ADUs permitted at the time of the Annual Progress |

¹ Program numbers reference the corresponding program in the Housing Plan. Program 22 is the AFFH program and all associated actions, objectives, and timing are implemented solely as part of Program 22.

HOUSING PLAN

Report (APR);
 • Target 20% of ADUs in higher opportunity areas.

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| <p>9. Rental Assistance/Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program Promote the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program, with a special emphasis on promoting the program to the City’s special needs populations.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make information regarding the HCV program available on the City website and in an annual direct mailing to all residents and property owners; • Provide annual outreach to property owners citywide encouraging owners of rental property to register with the Sonoma County Housing Authority; • Work with the City’s fair housing services provider to encourage property owners to participate in the Housing Choice Voucher Program | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium priority/ within 24 months of Housing Element adoption | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of voucher assistance recipients in higher opportunity areas; • Target education and marketing efforts throughout the community with an emphasis on higher opportunity areas. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of low-income recipients in receiving voucher assistance in higher opportunity areas by 5% by FY 26/27. |
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New Housing Choices and Affordability in Moderate and High Opportunity Areas/Improve Opportunity Scores

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|---|--|---|--|---|
| <p>1. Inclusionary Housing Provide Housing Opportunities in Sonoma’s Higher (Moderate and High) Opportunity Areas for all Members of the Community</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reevaluate the City’s inclusionary housing provisions to ensure that they remain appropriate and do not impede the development of housing and are effective in providing an affordable component to new development. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium priority/ within 24 months of Housing Element adoption | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target higher opportunity areas and areas of concentrated poverty. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review requirements and amend the Development Code, if necessary, by 2026. • Ongoing implementation. |
| <p>2. Partnerships with Affordable Housing Developers Provide Housing Opportunities in Sonoma’s Higher (Moderate and High) Opportunity Areas for all Members of the Community/</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host an annual meeting with affordable housing developers and nonprofits to identify housing opportunities; • Support affordable housing developers through provision | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium priority/ within 24 months of Housing Element adoption | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target affordable housing throughout the City with an emphasis on higher | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual outreach to the development community. |

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| | of land write-downs, regulatory incentives, and/or direct assistance. | | opportunity areas and areas of concentrated poverty. | |
| 22. Improve the City's Opportunity Scores Affordable Housing/Access to Opportunities Density Bonus and Incentives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incentivize and prioritize housing that improves educational, economic, and environmental opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High priority/identify projects within 18 months of Housing Element adoption and implement projects over 48 months | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citywide | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize at least two projects that include components that improve educational, economic, and/or environmental opportunities and conditions |

Place-Based Strategies for Community Preservation and Revitalization

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| 10. Housing Rehabilitation Program Public Investment in Specific Neighborhoods, Including Services and Amenities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the availability of the County Housing Rehabilitation Program on the City's website, through social media, and by way of handouts available at the City Hall; Continue to work with the SCCDC to ensure that funding remains available for housing rehabilitation activities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium priority/ within 24 months of Housing Element adoption | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citywide with focus on census tracts with highest concentrations of LMI households. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist a total of 20 lower income households during the planning period. |
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| 20. Fair Housing Services Provide education and outreach to reduce fair housing discrimination by landlords resulting from a lack of local fair housing education and outreach, resources for fair housing agencies and organizations, and state or local fair housing laws to support strong enforcement. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocate funding to creating locally hosted educational workshops on fair housing to reduce the amount of discrimination; Provide social media and factsheets regarding fair housing/equal housing opportunity requirements with links to the City website; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium priority/ within 24 months of Housing Element adoption | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citywide | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocate funding for an annual educational workshop and provide social media and factsheets on fair housing beginning in FY 23/24. |
|---|--|---|--|--|

- Collaborate with HRC for continued tracking of fair housing enforcement for discrimination cases.

Displacement Protection

11. Tenant and Resident Protections

Reduce displacement of lower income households, multifamily apartment residents, and mobile home park residents through prohibiting unjust evictions and excessive rent increases and requiring projects that would convert multifamily housing or mobile home parks to provide protections for residents, including adequate notice and relocation assistance.

- Implementation strategies to strengthen protection for tenants. Strategies may include a Tenants Bill of Rights that serves to establish that all Sausalito residents have the right to clean, safe and secure housing, an eviction protection ordinance to ensure there are not evictions without just cause, a rent stabilization ordinance, recognizing the need to address displacement.
- As new affordable and market rate rental units are developed, ensure any displaced lower and moderate income residents receive priority for housing
- Medium priority/ within 24 months of Housing Element adoption
- Citywide with a focus on inventory sites where development is anticipated to occur
- Promote the preservation of affordable units throughout the City
- Develop a draft eviction protection ordinance and rent stabilization ordinance by July 2025 and consider ordinances for adoption by December 2025.
- Ongoing implementation and annual monitoring and reporting throughout the planning period

21. Rental Registry

Identify and track rental units to increase Section 8 participation and to assist in implementing Program 11.

- Institute a rental registry program to identify and track rental units, including units that accept Section 8 vouchers, and affordability levels and ensure all rental properties in the Housing Inventory are in the registry
- Medium priority/ within 24 months of Housing Element adoption
- Citywide
- Institute registry program in 2024 and ensure all owners of housing inventory sites have been contacted to register in 2025.
- Ongoing implementation and annual monitoring and reporting throughout the planning period

22. Displacement Risk of Lower Income Residents Due to Economic Pressures

- Conduct an analysis to
- Medium
- Focus analysis
- Conduct analysis by

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Displacement Risk Analysis • Preservation of Assisted Rental Housing | <p>determine if lower income individuals and families may be displaced as a result of new residential development in the City's mixed-use, Housing Opportunity, and high density residential areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor at-risk units, work with potential priority purchasers, provide tenant education | <p>priority/ within 24 months of Housing Element adoption</p> | <p>where development is anticipated to occur.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the preservation of affordable units throughout the City. | <p>December 31, 2023 and establish resulting programs (if any) by December 31, 2024. Annually monitor program effectiveness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing implementation and annual monitoring and reporting throughout the planning period. |
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PROGRAM 22: UNIVERSAL DESIGN AND ACCESSIBILITY

The goal of universal design is to accommodate a wide range of abilities including children, aging populations, and persons with disabilities, including developmental disabilities, by providing features in residential construction that enhance accessibility. Examples of universal design features include:

- Entrances without steps that make it easier for persons of all ages to enter the home.
- Wider doorways that enhance interior circulation and accommodate strollers and wheelchairs.
- Lever door handles that are easier to use, especially by parents with an infant or a person with arthritis.
- Light switches and electrical outlets that are located at a height more convenient and accessible to the elderly.

Housing that is “visitable” is accessible at a basic level, enabling persons with disabilities to visit the homes of their friends, relatives, and neighbors. Visitability can be achieved in new construction by utilizing two simple design standards: (1) providing a 32-inch clear opening in all interior and bathroom doorways; and (2) providing at least one accessible means of ingress and egress for each unit.

Sonoma’s Building Department has prepared a series of handouts on accessibility and visitability principles.

Ensuring that developments are designed to provide an accessible circulation system further ensures that housing and development accommodate persons with disabilities.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Continue to provide information on universal design and visitability principles to residential development applicants.

By December 2024, update the Municipal Code to include visitability requirements for new residential construction (single family and multifamily) and multifamily remodels

By December 2025, update the Circulation Element of the General Plan to ensure that the City’s circulation system, including sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and transit stops, are designed to promote accessibility for all persons, including persons with a disability

Timeframe: Ongoing implementation.

PROGRAM 23: REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION PROCEDURES

The City of Sonoma has developed an ordinance through which the City can grant reasonable modifications to the requirements of the Development Code to ensure persons with disabilities, including developmental disabilities, are afforded equal opportunity for the use and enjoyment of their dwelling. The ordinance establishes a ministerial process for requesting and granting reasonable modifications to zoning and development regulations, building codes, and land use. The City imposes no fees for a reasonable accommodation application.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Facilitate equal access to housing for persons with disabilities, including developmental disabilities, through implementation of the City's reasonable accommodation procedures.

Timeframe: Ongoing implementation.

PROGRAM 24: HOMELESS SERVICES AND SHELTER

In cooperation with community groups, the City constructed an emergency shelter in 2008 on the Police Station property. The Haven shelter accommodates eight individual and two family beds at maximum capacity, and is managed by the nonprofit Sonoma Overnight Support.

The City participates in the County's Continuum of Care operated by the Sonoma County Community Development Commission (SCCDC) as a means of coordinating a regional approach to issues of homelessness. The City also provides referrals, and as available, funding support to area homeless service providers. The City is in the process of creating a Homelessness Task Force comprised of City Staff, Council Members, local stakeholders, and County representatives and is working to hire a Sonoma Valley Social Safety Net specialist to oversee homeless services, facilitate coordination between agencies, non-profits and service providers, secure resources, and represent the Valley's interests.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Continue to support operation of The Haven and Safe Ground parking in the City, ensuring that overnight sleeping areas within the City are managed in a manner that respects those experiencing homelessness, are safe, clean, and sanitary, and include positive engagement of nearby businesses and neighbors to enhance community connections and partnerships.

Continue to address homelessness at the regional level, including participation in and support of the SCCDC and area homeless service providers in addressing homelessness, through ensuring adequate shelter space is available to accommodate the unmet need in the County and to ensure services are coordinated to provide unhoused persons with social, health, financial, and other supportive services necessary for persons to become and remain house and live in a safe, dignified manner.

Continue to address homelessness at the local level through creating a Homelessness Task Force and coordinating with other agencies and organizations to hire a Sonoma Valley Social Safety Net specialist to oversee homeless services, including identification of service gaps and methods to increase access to services

Timeframe: Ongoing implementation, participate in SCCDC meetings at least semi-annually (twice a year), and annual reporting throughout the planning period.

Establish the Sonoma Valley Homelessness Task Force by December 2023 and the Sonoma Valley Social Safety Net specialist position by December 2024.

Provide information on the City website and at locations in the City convenient to the unhoused population by July 2023 that identifies local and regional shelter locations

and provides contact information for supportive services and review and update information annually

PROGRAM 25: MOBILE HOME PARK SENIOR-ONLY OCCUPANCY RESTRICTIONS

By way of background, each of Sonoma’s three mobile home parks were originally developed as senior-only facilities at the choice of their respective developers. More recently, the Moon Valley Mobile Home Park converted to an all-age facility, with the Pueblo Serena and Rancho de Sonoma parks remaining restricted to seniors. In some jurisdictions, restrictions have been adopted, including zoning overlays that regulate or prohibit the conversion of senior-only parks to all-age facilities as a means of preserving senior housing.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Evaluate regulatory mechanisms, such as a senior-only zoning overlay, to accommodate mobile home parks wishing to maintain senior-only occupancy restrictions. Conduct outreach to the City’s senior mobilehome parks to identify if there is interest in permanently setting the parks aside for senior housing and implement appropriate regulatory mechanisms to ensure that the senior housing will be maintained for any senior parks with resident interest and support.

Timeframe: Complete evaluation of regulatory mechanisms in 2023, conduct community and mobile home park outreach in 2024, and adopt an ordinance or other regulatory mechanism, if necessary, by 2026.

PROGRAM 26: AFFORDABLE HOUSING RESOURCES FOR RENTERS AND OWNERS

Sonoma has provided comprehensive rental and ownership opportunities to serve a variety of income levels and a range of household types. During the 6th Cycle, the City anticipates continuing to increase rental and ownership opportunities for all income levels. To ensure that housing opportunities are accessible to the City’s existing residents that may be at-risk of displacement, to increase access to resources, and to affirmatively further fair housing access and opportunities, the City will develop a program that connects targeted extremely low, very low, and low income residents and employees in the City access to new housing opportunities. The program will also identify available local and regional resources for homeownership and housing rehabilitation opportunities to ensure the community is aware of these resources.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Develop an outreach program to connect lower income residents and the lower income workforce in the City with new rental and ownership opportunities, access to resources for home ownership, including counseling for new buyers and existing homeowners, and housing rehabilitation programs as those become available, and access to housing assistance providers, including Disability Services & Legal Center, Fair Housing of Northern California, F.I.S.H. Sonoma Valley, Legal Aid of Sonoma County, Napa Sonoma ADU, RISE Housing, Sonoma County Community Development Commission, Sonoma Housing Authority, Sonoma Overnight Support, Sonoma Tenants, Sonoma Valley Collaborative, promoting fair housing choice and access to safe and decent housing within the community.

Timeframe: Establish outreach program by June 2024 and conduct outreach annually, or more frequently, as housing opportunities become available.

PROGRAM 27: MONITOR RESIDENTIAL CAPACITY (NO NET LOSS)

Sonoma will monitor the consumption of residential acreage (i.e., land identified with residential development potential), and review proposed General Plan amendments, Zoning Ordinance amendments, and development projects to ensure an adequate inventory is available to meet the City’s 2023-2031 RHNA obligations.

To make certain sufficient residential development capacity is maintained, Sonoma will develop and implement a formal ongoing (project-by-project) evaluation procedure pursuant to Government Code Section 65863 and will make the findings required by that code section if a site is proposed for development with fewer units or at a different income level(s) than shown in the residential sites inventory. Should an approval of development result in a reduction of capacity below that needed to accommodate the remaining RHNA for lower income, moderate-income, or above moderate-income households, the City, and potentially the applicant (in accordance with State law), will identify and, if necessary, rezone sufficient sites within 180 days to accommodate the shortfall and ensure “no net loss” in capacity to accommodate the RHNA allocation, consistent with State law. Any rezoned site(s) will satisfy the adequate sites requirements of Government Code Section 65583.2 and will be consistent with the City’s obligation to affirmatively further fair housing.

Responsible Agencies: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Maintain adequate capacity to accommodate the City’s RHNA obligations at all income levels throughout the planning period. Report as required through the HCD annual report process.

Timeframe: Ongoing implementation, at time of approval of a project on a site listed in the Housing Element, and annual reporting throughout the planning period.

PROGRAM 28: REPLACEMENT OF UNITS ON SITES

Government Code Section 65583.2(g)(3) requires the replacement of units affordable to the same or lower income level as a condition of any development on a nonvacant site identified in the Housing Element consistent with those requirements set forth in Government Code Section 65915(c)(3). Replacement requirements shall be applied for sites identified in the residential sites inventory (Appendix A) that currently have residential uses, or within the previous five years have had residential uses that have been vacated or demolished, and:

- Were subject to a recorded covenant, ordinance, or law that restricts rents to levels affordable to persons and families of low or very low-income; or
- Subject to any other form of rent or price control through a public entity’s valid exercise of its police power; or
- Occupied by low or very low-income households.

For the purpose of this program, “previous five years” is based on the date the application for development was submitted.

Pursuant to Government Code Section 66300(d) (Chapter 654, Statutes of 2019 (SB 330)), Sonoma shall not approve a housing development project that will require the demolition of residential dwelling units regardless of whether the parcel was listed in the

inventory unless: a) the project will create at least as many residential dwelling units as will be demolished, and b) certain affordability criteria are met.

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| Responsible Agencies: | Planning Department |
| Funding Sources: | General Fund; replacement costs to be borne by developer of any such site |
| 2023-2031 Objectives: | For all project applications, identify need for replacement of housing units and ensure replacement, if required, occurs. |
| Timeframe: | Ongoing |

6. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Ensuring Sonoma grows in a responsible manner, in line with resource limitations such as water availability.

PROGRAM 29: GREEN BUILDING PROGRAM

“Green buildings” are structures that are designed, renovated, re-used, or operated in a manner that enhances resource efficiency and sustainability. These structures reduce water consumption, improve energy efficiency, and lessen a building’s overall environmental impact. Sonoma has taken a number of significant actions towards becoming a green and sustainable city, including:

- Adoption of an Urban Growth Boundary to prevent urban sprawl;
- Establishment of a Climate Action Commission;
- Adoption of a local Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2008);
- Participation in the Sonoma County Energy Independent Loan Program, providing funds to property owners to install energy efficiency and water conservation improvements (2009);
- Adoption of a Green Building Ordinance (2009).

Beginning January 1, 2014, the 2013 California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen) became effective for new buildings and certain addition or alteration projects throughout California. The City of Sonoma has adopted and amended the current CALGreen to require CALGreen+Tier 1 level of compliance for all new buildings (except Tier 1 Energy Efficiency measures need not be met, as amended within SMC14.10.050). The City of Sonoma requires project applicants to hire a third-party green building special inspector to verify compliance with CALGreen requirements as amended by the City. Customized green building checklists and informational brochures are provided by the City to facilitate compliance with requirements.

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|--------------------------------|---|
| Responsible Department/Agency: | Planning Department |
| Funding Sources: | General Fund |
| 2023-2031 Objectives: | Continue to provide outreach and education to developers, architects, and residents to provide information on how to incorporate sustainability in project design, as well as in existing structures. |
| Timeframe: | Ongoing implementation. |

PROGRAM 30: ENERGY CONSERVATION INITIATIVES

Information regarding the City’s energy-efficiency standards and available programs to assist homeowners and property owners with energy-efficient improvements and with reducing energy-related costs, including those identified in the Housing Element

Background Report, will be made available on the City's website and at the Planning Department counter. In addition to promoting the programs citywide, the City will target special advertisements and education to the City's lower income census tracts to explain available programs and potential long-term utility cost savings.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Continue to advertise available programs to address energy-efficient improvements to single and multi-family units and to assist households with reducing energy-related costs on the City's website and at the Planning Counter

Timeframe: Ongoing implementation.

PROGRAM 31: SONOMA WATER ACTION PLAN AND CONSERVATION INCENTIVES

In response to the challenges associated with meeting projected water demand, the City has developed a broad strategy for meeting projected water needs through development of an updated Urban Water Management Plan (2020). A series of Demand Management Measures (DMMs) with timeframes for completion are set forth to move the City forward in meeting projected water demand. The City Council continues to review and update Sonoma's water supply and conservation strategies to reflect existing conditions and best practices.

Responsible Department/Agency: Planning Department

Funding Sources: General Fund

2023-2031 Objectives: Implement the Demand Management Measures called for in the Urban Water Management Plan (2020). Conduct periodic updates of the Plan and modify as necessary to ensure adequate water supply to meet Sonoma's regional housing needs (RHNA). Advertise available water conservation programs and incentives.

Timeframe: Ongoing implementation.

D. QUANTIFIED OBJECTIVES

State law requires the Housing Element to include quantified objectives for the maximum number of units that can be constructed, rehabilitated, or conserved. Policies and programs in the Housing Element establish the strategies to achieve these objectives. The City's quantified objectives are described under each program, and represent the City's best effort in implementing each of the programs. Assumptions are based on past program performance and funding availability, construction trends, land availability, and future programs that will enhance program effectiveness and achieve full implementation of the City's housing goals.

The new construction objectives shown in Table 2 are based on the City's RHNA for the 2023-2031 planning period for lower income, moderate-income, and above moderate-income housing, historic trends, and expectations for new ADUs. Rehabilitation and conservation objectives are based on specific program targets, including such programs as use of the Preservation of Assisted Rental Housing Program and Housing Choice Voucher Program.

Table 2 below summarizes the City’s quantified objectives for housing during the 2023-2031 planning period.

| Table 2. 2023–2031 Quantified Objectives | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Income Group | New Construction Objectives | Rehabilitation Objectives | Conservation Objectives |
| Extremely Low: <30% AMI | 41 | 15 | 15 |
| Very Low: 30-50% AMI | 42 | 30 | 64 |
| Low: 50-80% AMI | 48 | 30 | 92 |
| Moderate: 80-120% AMI | 50 | - | 168 |
| Above Moderate: 120% + AMI | 130 | - | - |
| Total | 311 | | |

AMI – Area Median Income
 New Construction Objectives: Reflects City’s 2023-2031 RHNA.
 Rehabilitation Objectives: Reflects loans/grants anticipated through Sonoma County CDC CDBG-funded Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program.
 Conservation Objectives: Reflects conservation of existing affordable housing, including all projects identified in Table 39 of the Background Report, all inclusionary units, and assisted ownership projects that have units committed to lower and moderate income households.