



County of Santa Cruz
Community Development & Infrastructure (CDI) Department

Study Session on the Draft 2023 Housing Element

Board of Supervisors
September 12, 2023

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Background



2023
Housing Element



What is a Housing Element?

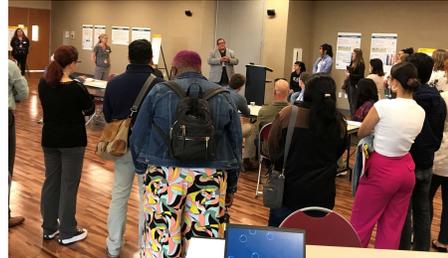
- One element (chapter) of the County's General Plan
- Required by state law
- Must be updated every 8 years
- Affirmatively Furthers Fair Housing (AFFH)
- Describes local housing needs, policies and programs
- Accommodate Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) in inventory of parcels where housing can be accommodated



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Community Engagement

1. Bilingual meeting facilitators
2. Project website
 - Public Comment Portal
 - Interactive Housing Plan Tool
3. Email blasts, social media, flyers and press releases
4. Focus Groups: Stakeholder Group and Community Panel with ~20 participants each
5. Three public community meetings
6. Presentations to commissions and community groups
7. Participation in Affordable Housing Month Events



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Needs & Solutions Identified through Engagement Process

- Prioritize units affordable to lower-income households
- Variety of housing options
- Higher densities
- Expedited permitting
- Teacher housing
- Smaller units & larger units for families
- Senior housing
- Supportive housing for special needs households/people with disabilities
- Continued funding and resources



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Housing Element Structure

Section 1 – Introduction
 Section 2 – Goals, Policies, and Implementation Programs
 Section 3 – Housing Needs and Constraints
 Section 4 – Vacant and Available Sites
 Section 5 – Energy Conservation

APPENDICES

- A. Fair Housing Report
- B. Review of Previous Housing Element Programs
- C. Public Engagement Results
- D. Housing Constraints
- E. Housing Sites Inventory
- F. Sites Inventory Maps

<https://www.sccoplanning.com/PlanningHome/Housing/2023HousingElement/ProjectDocuments.aspx>

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Housing Element Goals

- Goal 1: Facilitate Development of New Housing, Primarily in Infill Areas;
- Goal 2: Maintain and Enhance the Quality and Affordability of Existing Housing;
- Goal 3: Facilitate the Development of Affordable and Equal Opportunity Housing;
- Goal 4: Assist in Provision of Housing for Special Needs Households
- Goal 5: Promote Energy Conservation and Sustainable Design; and
- Goal 6: Collaborate Across Sectors and Publicize Housing Resources



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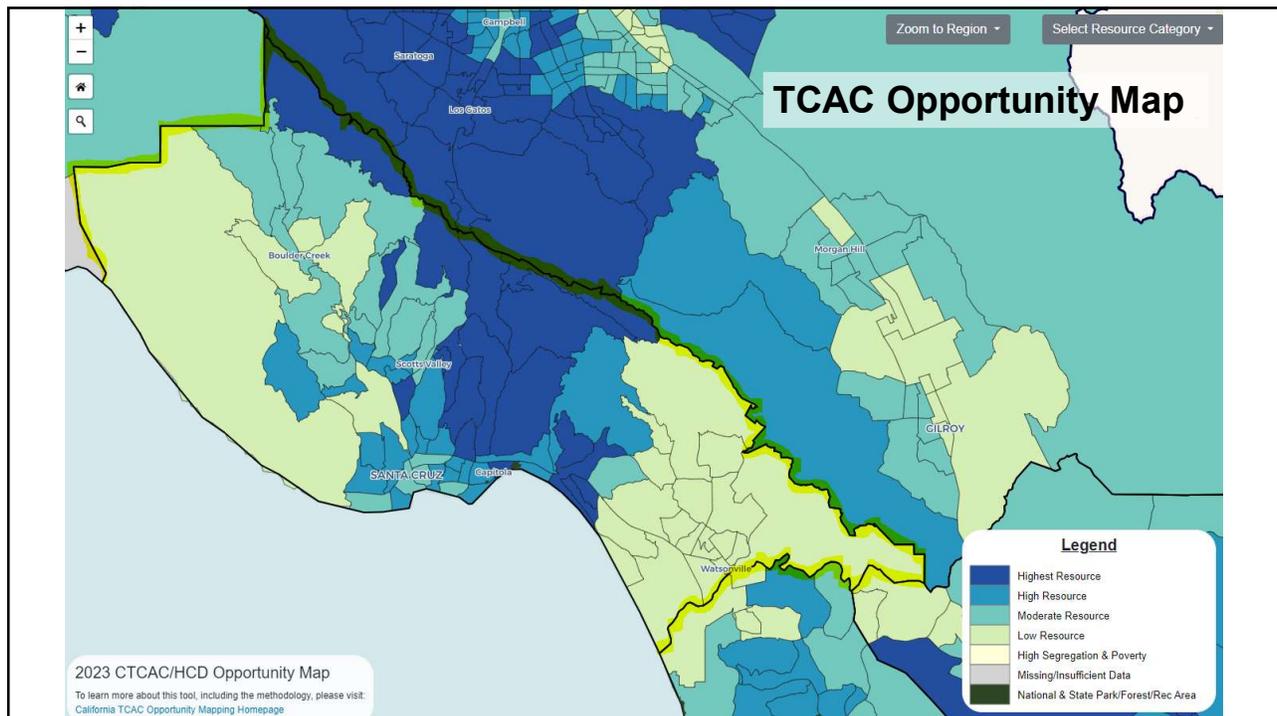
Fair Housing



New to the 6th Cycle: State law requires communities to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing or “AFFH” through their housing elements.

Definition: “Taking meaningful actions, in addition to combating discrimination, that overcome patterns of segregation and fosters inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to opportunity.”

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Proposed New Programs (Partial List)

- H-1C: By-right Overlay Zone (required by state law)
- H-1D: Site Consolidation Bonus
- H-1E: Rezone Opportunity Sites
- H-1F: Update Multi-family Development Standards
- H-2H: Proactive Code Enforcement for Vacation Rentals
- H-3D: Advocate for State Limits on Renter Application Fees
- H-3H: Nexus Study for inclusionary Housing Levels and Fees
- H-4D Explore options for increasing supply & awareness of affordable, accessible housing for people with disabilities
- H-5: Explore requiring all new housing built to be electric
- H-6E: Explore formation of a "CDBG Urban County" with local cities



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Sustainability Update and Climate Action and Adaption Plan

- ✓ All density ranges expanded/increased
- ✓ Residential Flex Zone: 22-45 units per acre
- ✓ Missing middle housing (2-4 homes in single family zones)
- ✓ Housing near transportation
- ✓ More housing in mixed-use (50% -> 80%)
- ✓ Infill development key to climate adaptation



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Income Level	Regional Housing Needs Allocation (Units)			
	RHNA Units Required	RHNA + 10% Buffer	Capacity in Existing Zoning	Unit Shortfall (Surplus)
Very Low	1,492	1,641	890	751
Low	976	1,074	888	186
Moderate	586	645	582	63
Above Mod	1,580	1,738	1,786	(48)
Total	4,634	5,098	4,146	952

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Site Selection Factors for Sites Inventory

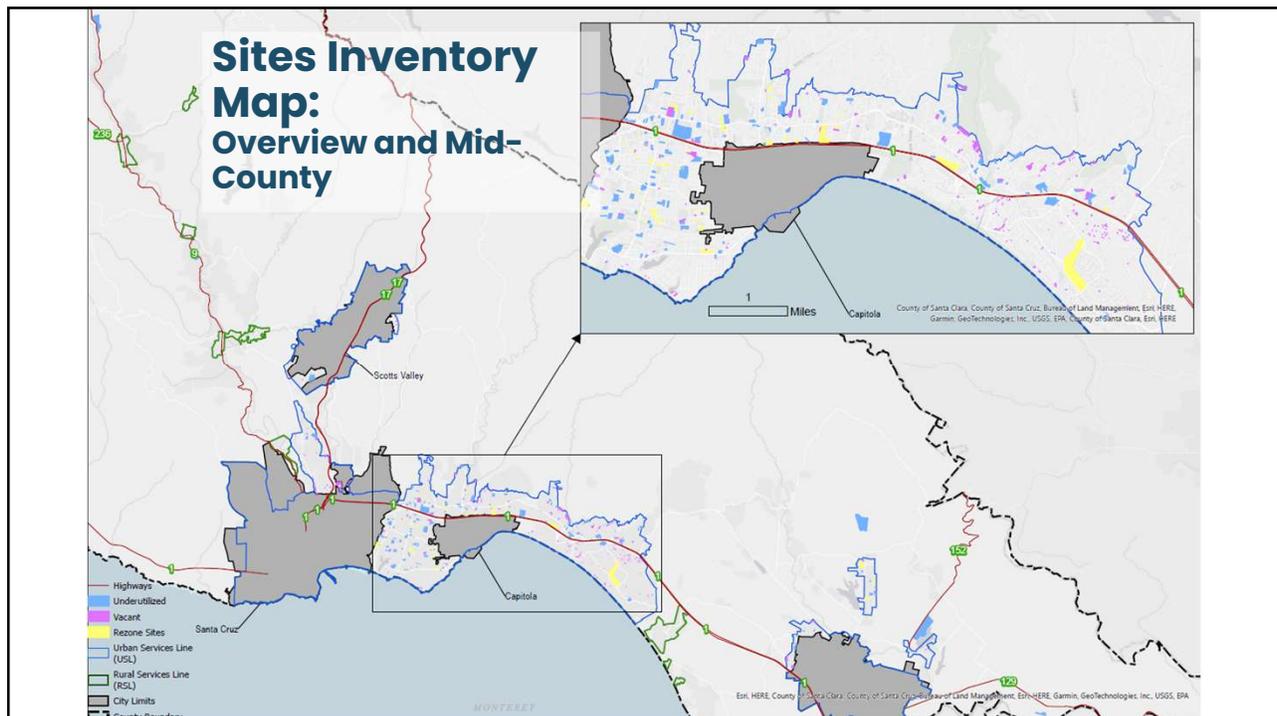
- ✓ State standards for availability and feasibility:
 - Vacant or Underutilized
 - Size
 - Few environmental hazards/constraints
 - Availability of utilities
 - 20+ units/acre for lower-income units
- ✓ State (TCAC) Opportunity Maps
- ✓ Fair Housing (AFFH)
- ✓ Community Engagement
- ✓ Pending Projects
- ✓ Property Owner Intent
- ✓ Zoning/General Plan Land Use Designations



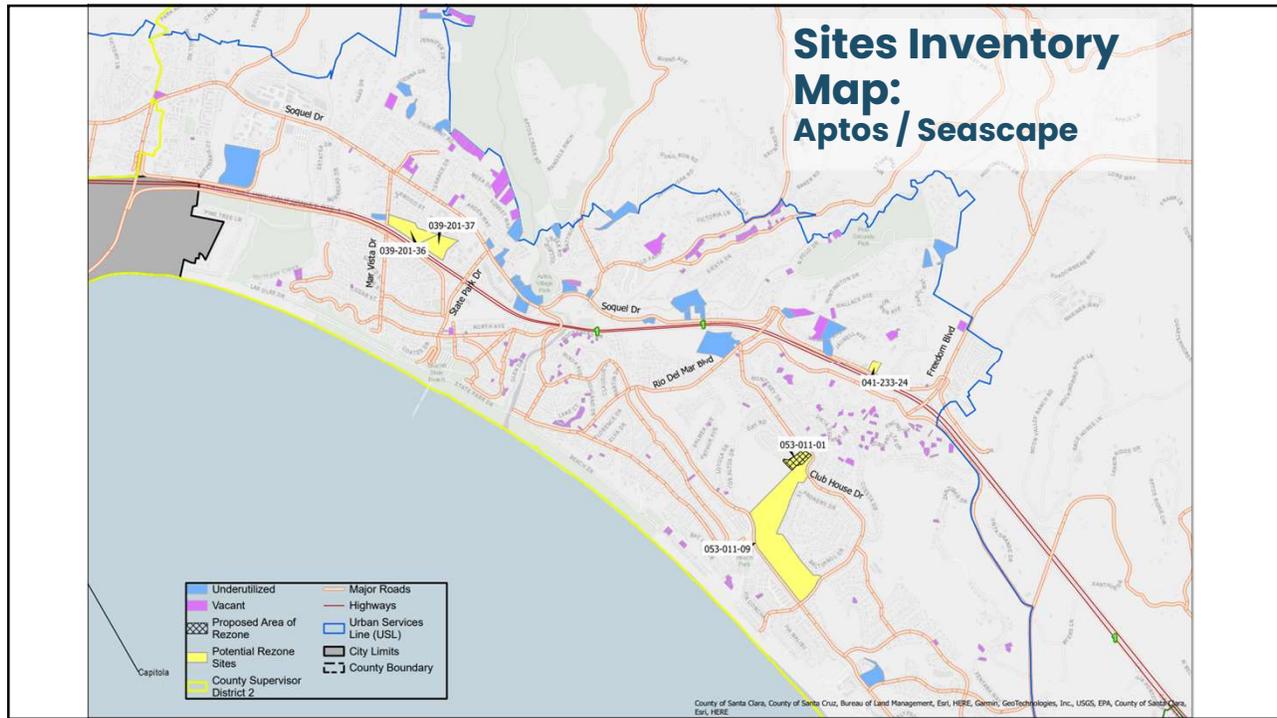
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Income Level	Sites Proposed for Rezoning to Meet RHNA			
	Shortfall (Units)	Units from Standard Rezoning	Units from SB 10 Rezoning	Total New Unit Capacity
Very Low	751	719	33	752
Low	186	602	66	668
Moderate	63	79	128	207
Above Mod	(48)	416	148	564
Total	952	1,816	375	2,191

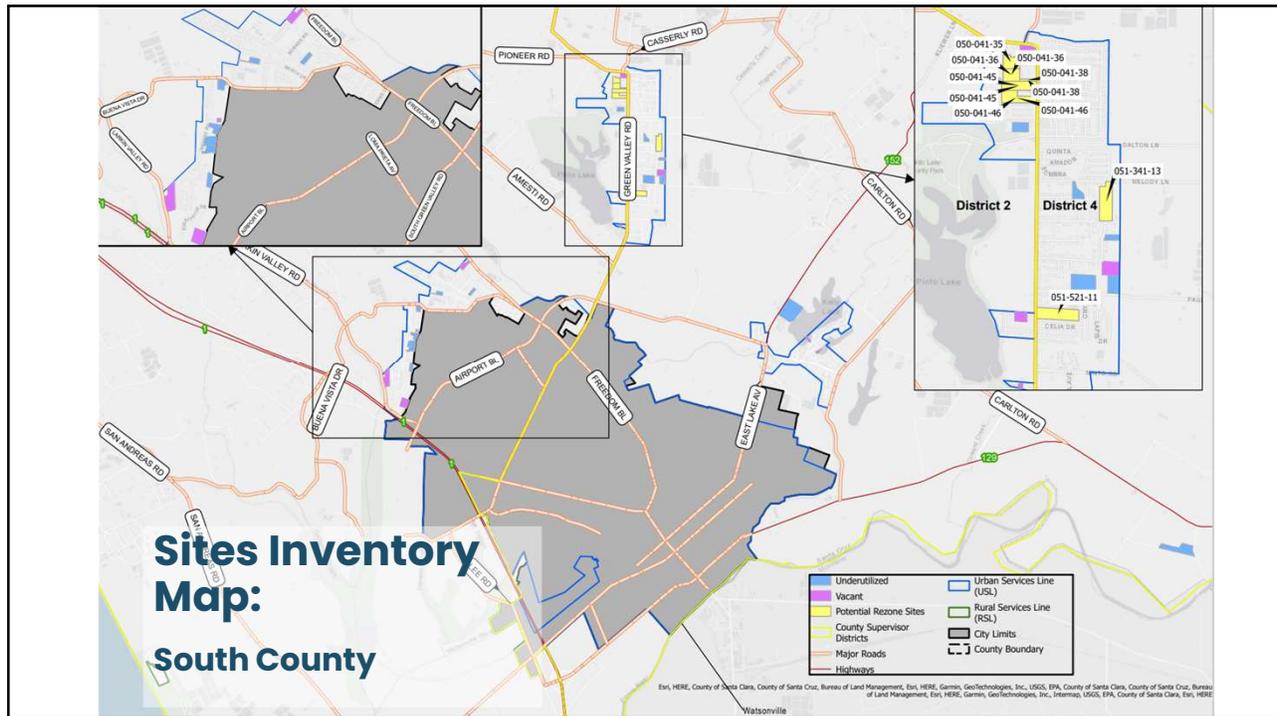
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Next Steps

Sept. 12	Board Study Session
Sept. 27	Planning Commission Study Session
October 23	End of 90-Day HCD Review
Oct. 25	Planning Commission Public Hearing
Nov. 1	HAC Public Hearing
Nov. 14	Board Hearing - Adoption
Nov. 15	Submit HE to HCD for 60-Day review
Jan. 15, 2024	Anticipated HCD Certification
2024-2026	Rezones

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Questions and Comments



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Agenda

- Background
- Community Engagement
- Housing Element Structure
- Fair Housing
- Policies and Programs
- Sites Inventory/Rezoning
- Next Steps
- Questions and Comments



The graphic features the County of Santa Cruz logo at the top left. The main text reads "2023 Housing Element" in large green font, followed by "6th Cycle Housing Element Update" in smaller black font. A prominent yellow button contains the text "Draft Housing Element Available!". At the bottom, a grey button with a left-pointing arrow says "Back to Planning website".

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Background: Housing Element Update Process

1. State Projects Housing Needs for Next Cycle
2. Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)
3. Regions Allocate Housing Needs to Cities and Counties
4. Each City and County updates their Housing Element



County of Santa Cruz Process

1. Board Direction
2. Data Gathering & Analysis
3. Community Engagement
4. Public Meetings
5. Draft Housing Element
6. Board & Commission Study Sessions
7. First HCD Review and Revisions
8. Commission Recommendation, Board Adoption
9. Second HCD Review & Certification

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Policies and Programs: Continuing

- **Policies:** Improve local codes to make it easier and less costly to build a wider variety of homes (“streamlining”)
- **Programs:** Help create and maintain affordable housing for lower-income renters and first-time buyers
- **Special Needs:** Improve housing accessibility for people with special needs
- **Partnerships:** Partner with utility providers and others to increase feasibility and community support for housing

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Summary of Proposed Rezoning, by Supervisorial District

Supervisor District	No. of Parcels	Percent of Parcels	No. of Acres	Percent of Acres
1	64	84%	68.1	60%
2	10	13%	36.1	32%
3*	0	0%	0.0	0%
4	2	3%	8.8	8%
5*	0	0%	0.0	0%
Total	76	100%	112.9	100%

* Districts 3 and 5 have no sites proposed for rezoning because these districts have very little land in the unincorporated areas within the Urban Services Line (USL), where utilities are available.



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Santa Cruz County RHNA Allocation

Income Level	5 th Cycle RHNA	6 th Cycle RHNA	Percent Increase
<i>Very Low</i>	317	1,492	471%
<i>Low</i>	207	976	471%
<i>Moderate</i>	240	586	244%
<i>Above Moderate</i>	550	1,580	287%
Total RHNA	1,314	4,634	353%

In the 5th Cycle the County has permitted 1043 units - 79% of goal

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Where Should New Housing Go?



- Near transportation corridors and other services
- In existing neighborhoods and business districts (Infill)
- Farmworker housing on ag land
- On land without environmental constraints
- Rural areas?

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