



What is a Housing Element?

A Housing Element is a community's roadmap to meeting its future housing needs. State law requires each city to produce and periodically update its Housing Element, which must "make adequate provision for the housing needs of all economic segments of the community," including many low-income people who struggle to afford today's housing costs, which are skyrocketing in many parts of California.

Why is it important?

As a city's blueprint for housing growth, the Housing Element must remove development barriers and identify suitable sites for affordable housing. Because of this, the Housing Element is one of the main tools we can use to make sure California's cities provide housing for its low-income residents, including youth, seniors, working families, veterans, and people with disabilities.

However, there's no guarantee that each city's Housing Element will contain strong policies that will protect and expand affordable housing in our neighborhoods and communities. And in cities with weak Housing Elements, it's possible that little or no affordable housing will be preserved or created at all. That's why we need you to ...

Get involved!

Now is the time to weigh in! In 2014 and 2015, each of California's cities is required to update their Housing Elements for the 2015-2022 cycle. Go to a hearing, workshop, or study session on your city's Housing Element, and let people know that affordable housing is a key part of every vibrant, inclusive, and successful community. When you speak out, remember that...

EBHO recommends three primary goals for the Housing Element:

1. Ensure that Priority Development Areas (PDAs) remain accessible and affordable to a full range of incomes, by adopting specific policies and programs for PDAs that ensure the inclusion of housing for lower income households.
2. Prevent the displacement of lower income households, whether directly by specific development projects, or indirectly as new development causes market rents to rise beyond a level that is affordable.

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3. Identify sites for very low and low income housing that are not only "suitable", but are financially feasible because they are competitive for scarce funding resources such as Low Income Housing Tax Credits.

Contact your city or county housing department for more information on your local Housing Element update process, or visit one of the websites below:

(All links can be found on ebho.org/our-work/local-and-regional-policy)

Alameda: <http://alamedaca.gov/community-development/housing-element-2015-2023>

Concord: <http://www.ci.concord.ca.us/citygov/dept/planning/housingelement.asp>

Emeryville: <http://www.ci.emeryville.ca.us/index.aspx?NID=709>

Fremont: <http://www.fremont.gov/index.aspx?NID=1823>

Lafayette: <http://lovelafayette.org/index.aspx?page=486>

Oakland:

<http://www2.oaklandnet.com/Government/o/PBN/OurOrganization/PlanningZoning/OAK045364>

Pleasanton:

<http://www.cityofpleasantonca.gov/business/planning/HousingElement/housingelementupdate.html>

Walnut Creek:

http://www.walnut-creek.org/citygov/depts/cd/housing/housing_element_.asp