

2023-2031 Housing Element Update

Fact Sheet and Frequently Asked Questions

The City of Santa Cruz is updating the 2015-2023 Housing Element for the 2023-2031 Planning Period (6th cycle). This Fact Sheet answers commonly asked questions and provides information about the update process.

WHAT IS A HOUSING ELEMENT?

The Housing Element is one of the required elements of the City of Santa Cruz's General Plan. The Housing Element provides policies, programs, and actions that support and encourage housing growth at all income levels.

HOUSING ELEMENT FEATURES:

- Population and housing analysis for Santa Cruz
- Evaluation of constraints to housing, identification of potential resources for housing development, and analysis of fair housing practices and trends
- Assessment of 2015-2023 Housing Element programs and policies for effectiveness and State Law updates
- Analysis of potential housing sites that can accommodate Santa Cruz's existing and anticipated housing needs
- Policies, programs, and quantified objectives for the 2023-2031 planning period



WHAT IS THE REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ALLOCATION (RHNA)?

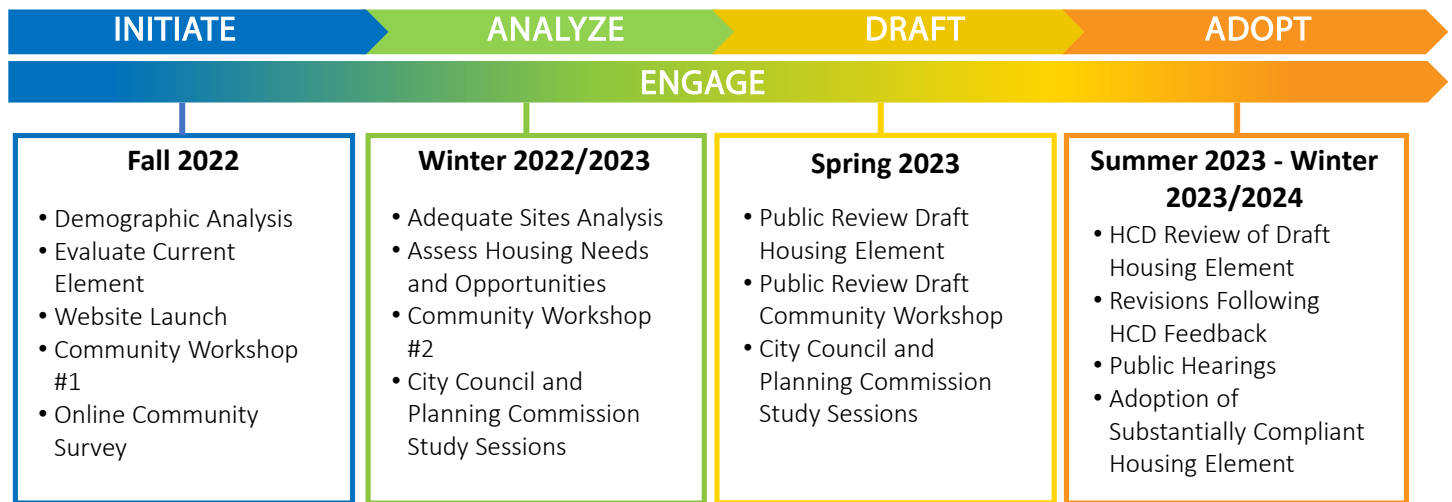
RHNA identifies the number of housing units at all income categories that Santa Cruz must plan for to accommodate a portion of the region's existing and projected housing need over the next 8 years. The RHNA is determined by the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and distributed by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) to each jurisdiction in Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties. For the 2023-2031 Planning Period, the City of Santa Cruz is allocated 3,736 housing units. The RHNA is divided into various income categories and the Housing Element must identify sites that could accommodate this growth.

CITY OF SANTA CRUZ 6TH CYCLE RHNA (2023-2031)				
Income Category	% of Area Median Income (AMI)	Income Range*		RHNA Allocation (Housing Units)
		Min.	Max.	
Very Low Income	0-50%	--	\$77,750	859 units
Low Income	51-80%	\$77,751	\$124,750	562 units
Moderate Income	81-120%	\$124,751	\$143,150	709 units
Above Moderate Income	>120%	\$143,151	--	1,606 units
Total				3,736 units

*Income range is based on the 2022 HUD Area Median Income (AMI) for Santa Cruz County for a family of 4.



HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE TIMELINE



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: WILL THERE BE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTICIPATION?

A: Yes! Community members and stakeholders will have the opportunity to make comments and ask questions at workshops and public hearings, submit survey responses, review drafts and provide feedback, and contact the Housing Element Update team. The City will release information on engagement opportunities on the project website as they become available. All public comments will be included in the Housing Element.

Q: HOW WILL THE CITY ACCOMMODATE THE RHNA ALLOCATION?

A: The City plans to take a holistic and comprehensive analysis approach to accommodating the RHNA. This includes, but is not limited to, analyzing vacant parcels, opportunities for redevelopment, projects currently in the development pipeline, and projected Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) production. The adequate sites strategy is guided by Government Code Section 65583.2, and the City will pair the analysis with appropriate programs and policies.

Q: HAS THE CITY ALREADY IDENTIFIED AREAS TO ACCOMMODATE THE RHNA?

A: The City is in the process of collecting data and analyzing potential sites. No determinations have been made as the City will continue to facilitate discussion and gather feedback from the community. It is important to note that the sites analysis process identifies potential sites for housing and provides channels for the market to build it.

Q: WHAT HAPPENS IF A CITY DOES NOT MEET ITS RHNA?

A: If a City is not meeting its RHNA it becomes subject to Senate Bill 35 (SB 35), which requires streamlined housing approval for specific projects that meet particular requirements. Each year, jurisdictions report their building permit data to the State through the Annual Progress Report (APR). Currently, the City of Santa Cruz is subject to SB 35 streamlining for proposed developments with $\geq 50\%$ affordability. Almost all California jurisdictions are currently subject to SB 35.

For continuously updated information, please visit:

<https://tinyurl.com/santacruzhousingelement>

For questions or comments, please contact:

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