7th Cycle Housing Element Resource Guide

October 2026

SANDAG

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Purpose

This guide provides information to assist local agencies in navigating the 7th cycle housing element process. It provides an overview of housing element basics, the Regional Housing Needs Assessment process, resources for preparing key components of the housing element, as well as an overview of new laws and requirements. It includes links to practical tools, references, and data sources to help navigate the 7th cycle housing element process.

Disclaimer

This guide is informational and is not legal advice. Staff should consult local regulations and the most up-to-date State law. The information and data sources in this guide are current as of publication (October 2026) but may change over time. The latest resources and guidance from the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) should also be consulted.

Housing Element Basics

The Housing Element is a City/County's plan for accommodating the "fair share" of the regional housing need. State law requires the Housing Element as part of a City/County's General Plan and requires an update to the Housing Element every eight years within the SANDAG region. In addition, the Housing Element must be reviewed and certified by HCD.

The Housing Element includes an analysis of a jurisdiction's demographic, economic, and housing conditions and needs; a sites inventory to demonstrate that there are enough sites within the jurisdiction to accommodate the number of housing units assigned in the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA); an identification of constraints and barriers to housing development; and goals, policies, and implementation programs to address housing needs.

Housing Element Components

A Housing Element includes the following major components:

- **Housing Needs Assessment:** examines the demographic, employment, and housing trends to determine existing, special, and projected housing needs.
- **Sites Inventory:** identifies adequate sites zoned to accommodate the RHNA.
- **Constraints Analysis:** evaluates potential barriers to housing development.
- **Fair Housing Analysis:** analyzes fair housing issues and disparities in housing opportunities.
- **Evaluation of Previous Housing Element:** assesses the effectiveness of the previous housing element in achieving its goals, the progress in implementation, and a description of how past programs were effective in addressing housing needs of special populations.
- **Goals, Policies, and Implementation:** identifies strategies related to the maintenance, preservation, improvement, and development of housing.

Housing Element Update Process

Housing elements for the SANDAG region are due 18 months after SANDAG adopts its 2029 Regional Plan, pursuant to Government Code Section 65588(e)(2)(B)(ii)(III), currently estimated as June 15, 2031. The Housing Element update process and important project milestones are shown in Figure 1. This process can take up to 2 years to complete, so it is best practice to get started early, or at least 2 to 3 years prior to the adoption deadline.

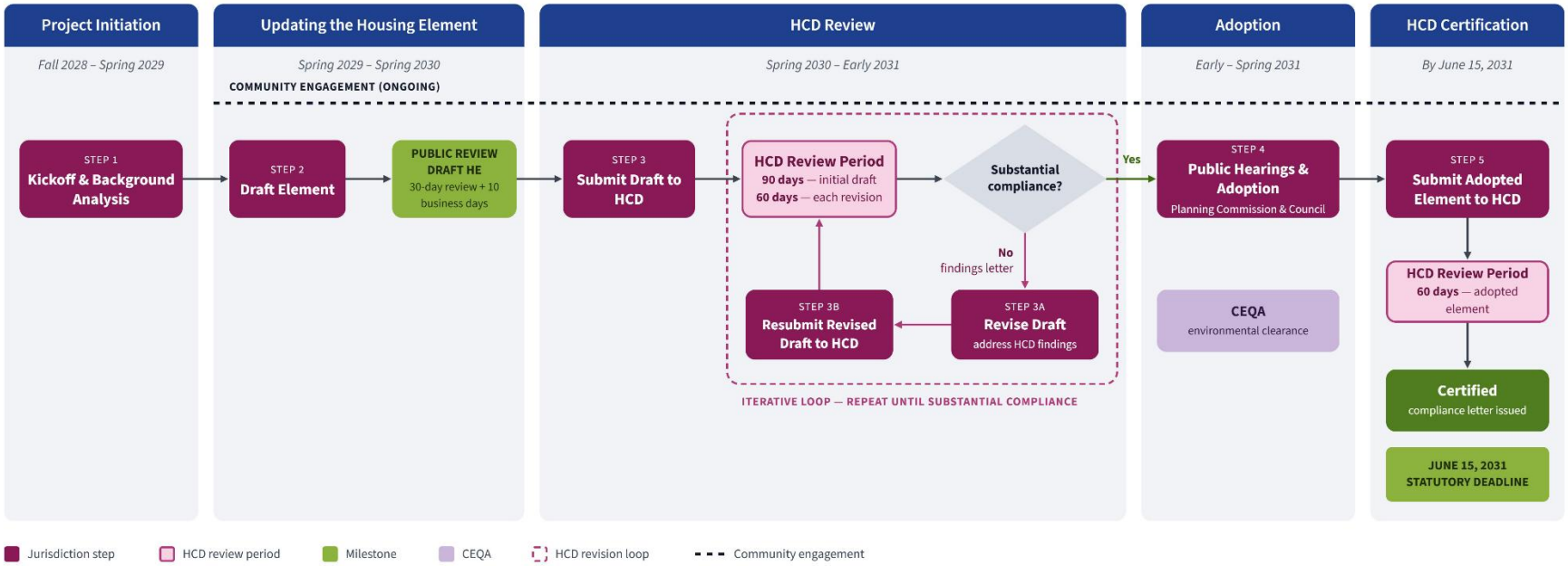
Statutory Deadline

Housing elements for the SANDAG region are due 18 months after SANDAG adopts its 2029 Regional Plan pursuant to Government Code Section 65588(e)(2)(B)(ii)(III), currently estimated as June 15, 2031.

Housing Element Process (HCD 2026)

An overview prepared by HCD that details the steps involved in the housing element process.

Figure 1 – Housing Element Update Process and Schedule



HCD review periods per Gov. Code §65585(b) and (h): 90 days for the initial draft; 60 days for each subsequent draft revision and for the adopted element. Public review draft is posted for at least 30 days, with 10 business days to consider comments before submittal to HCD (§65585(b)(1)). SANDAG 7th Cycle due date and planning period (June 15, 2031 – June 15, 2039) per HCD's Housing Element and RHNA Schedule; marked "Estimated" until the RTP adoption date is known. Phase timing is approximate.

Regional Housing Needs Assessment

One of the primary purposes of the Housing Element is to demonstrate that a jurisdiction can accommodate its fair share of the regional housing need. The Regional Housing Needs Assessment is a State mandated planning process that quantifies existing and future housing needs by income level and determines how much new housing each jurisdiction must plan for.

The Regional Housing Needs Assessment process includes both a determination and an allocation phase. During the determination phase, HCD first provides each region with a Regional Housing Needs Determination (RHND), which is the number of units across all income groups that a region must plan. During the allocation phase, SANDAG (the council of governments for the San Diego region) then develops a methodology through a collaborative process to allocate that total among all the region's 19 jurisdictions, and every jurisdiction is assigned a RHNA. HCD then reviews the RHNA to ensure it furthers the statutory objectives of RHNA. Each jurisdiction in the region must then update its Housing Element to demonstrate how it will accommodate its RHNA The estimated timeline for SANDAG's 7th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Assessment is presented in Figure 2 with HCD approval of the final RHNA plan anticipated in Fall 2029.

HCD Housing Planning Process

Explains the regional housing need determination and allocation processes, including the respective roles of HCD, councils of governments, and local jurisdictions.

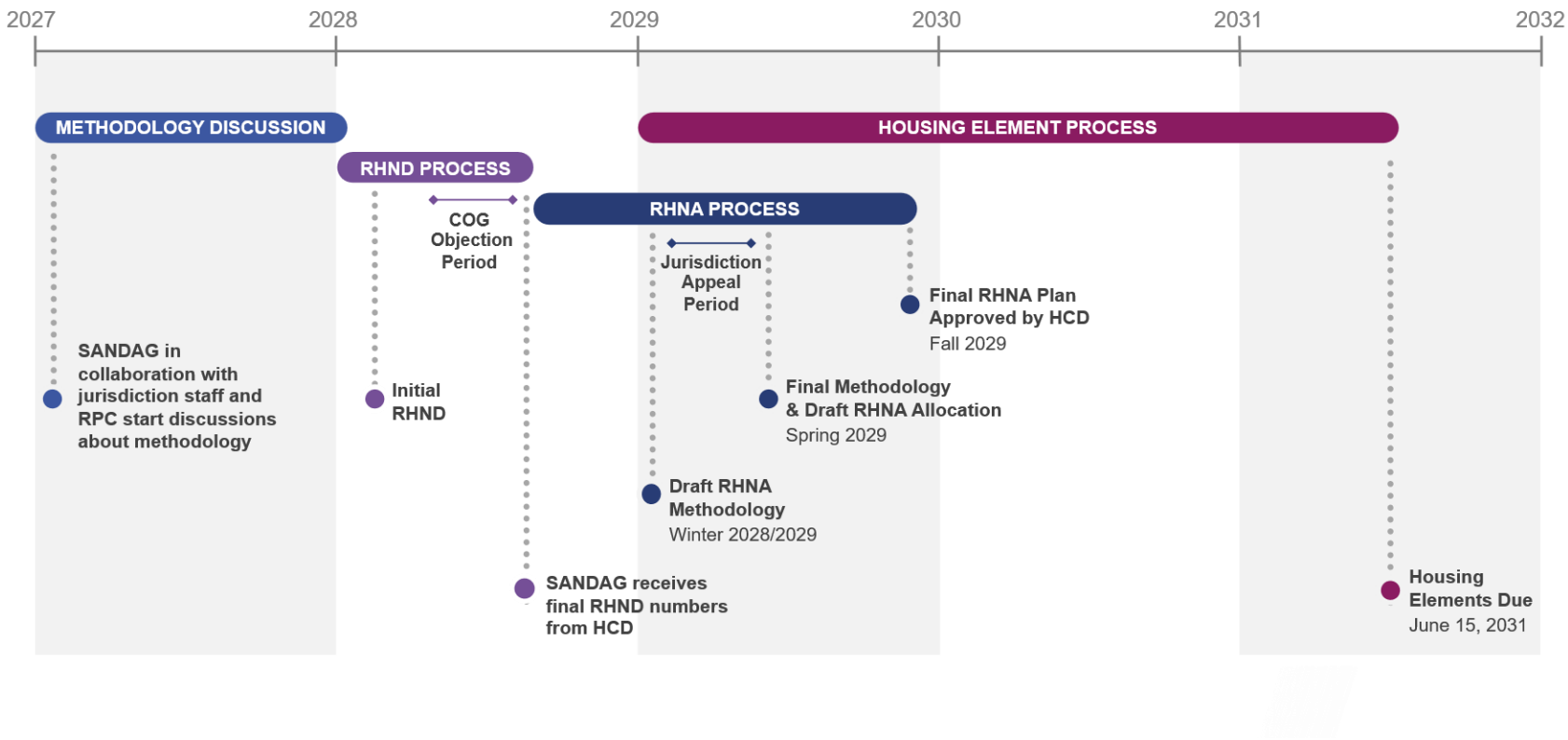
California's Housing Future 2040: The Next Regional Housing Needs Allocation (April 2024)

This report identifies a mix of recommendations to modify the RHNA process to better account for the housing needs of existing and future residents, promote housing development, affirmatively further fair housing, advance state climate goals, and address the state's housing shortage.

SANDAG Regional Housing Needs Assessment

Provides an overview of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment process for the San Diego region and links to regional plans, allocations, and related resources.

Figure 2 – Anticipated Regional Housing Needs Assessment Timeline in the SANDAG Region



Housing Element Resources

This section provides an overview of the housing element components required by State law and links to relevant resources.

- General Housing Element Resources
- Housing Needs Assessment
- Sites Inventory
- Constraints Analysis
- Fair Housing Analysis
- Evaluation of Previous Housing Element
- Goals, Policies, and Implementation
- Deadlines and Non-Compliance Risks

HCD Building Blocks

HCD has prepared the **Building Blocks Guide** to assist jurisdictions in creating comprehensive and effective housing elements. The Building Blocks Guide has a dedicated page for each required component of the Housing Element that includes an overview of the applicable section of the Government Code, relevant data sources, sample tables and analyses, and additional resources.

General Housing Element Resources

Housing Element Overview (CALCOG, 2025)

An overview of state housing element requirements, prepared by the California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG).

Housing Element Implementation and APR Data Dashboard (HCD, 2026)

A dashboard that provides charts, filters, and downloadable Annual Progress Report (APR) data related to housing production, permitting activity, RHNA progress, and housing element implementation.

Housing Element and RHNA Determination Schedule (HCD, 2026)

A tracker created by HCD to identify when local governments are required to have an adopted HCD-certified housing element to maintain compliance with Housing Element Law.

Housing Element Completeness Checklist (HCD, January 2021)

The checklist provides a quick reference to statutory housing element requirements and can help jurisdictions confirm that required components are addressed before submitting an element to HCD. The checklist was last updated in January 2021 and should be used with HCD's Building Blocks Guide and current statutory requirements.

How to Submit the Housing Element to HCD (2026)

An HCD webpage describing public review requirements, submission options, required supporting materials, and procedures for submitting draft, revised, and adopted housing elements.

Housing Needs Assessment

Government Code Section 65583(a) requires every housing element to include an assessment of housing needs and an inventory of resources and constraints relevant to meeting those needs. The needs assessment portion has several statutory components. Section 65583(a)(1) requires an analysis of population and employment trends and a quantification of existing and projected housing needs for all income levels, including extremely low-income households and the jurisdiction's share of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation. Section 65583(a)(2) requires analysis of household and housing characteristics, including overpayment, overcrowding, and housing condition. Section 65583(a)(7) requires analysis of special housing needs, such as those of seniors, persons with disabilities (including developmental disabilities), large families, farmworkers, female-headed households, and persons in need of emergency shelter. Many housing elements also address assisted housing at risk of conversion to market rate (Section 65583(a)(9)) in this section.

U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

The U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) is a standard source for the population, employment, and household data HCD expects.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Consolidated Planning and Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Data

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)'s Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data are custom tabulations of American Community Survey data that report housing problems, such as cost burden and overcrowding, by household income level. They are a primary source for the overpayment, overcrowding, and extremely low-income analyses. HUD's query tool produces summary tables for individual jurisdictions.

State of California Department of Finance

The California Department of Finance (DOF) provides demographic data to be included in Housing Elements, including population and housing estimates and population forecasts.

- **Population and Housing Estimates**: Provides current and historical population and housing estimates for cities, counties, and the state.
- **Population Projections**: Provides state and county population projections with specific datasets for population projections by age, sex and age group, and race/ethnicity.

State of California Employment Development Department Labor Market Information

The California Employment Development Department (EDD) provides workforce and labor market information for the state. Data related to labor force, industries, occupations, employment projections, wages, and other pertinent economic data is available on this webpage. Labor market information can be sorted by customer, subject, and geography.

HCD List of Qualified Entities

HCD maintains a list of qualified entities (i.e., local, regional, and national non-profit organizations and public agencies or profit-motivated housing organizations or individuals) that have been deemed certified to own and operate assisted housing developments by HCD across the state.

California Housing Partnership Data Tools

The California Housing Partnership aims to assist nonprofits and public agencies in creating and preserving affordable housing throughout the state through research, technical assistance, and training. California Housing Partnership maintains several datasets that are useful when drafting the housing element including the following:

- **Affordable Housing Maps and Benefit Calculator** is an interactive web-based map that maps existing federal- and state-subsidized affordable housing and leverages literature to estimate the benefits of affordable homes to local jurisdictions. This tool leverages the California Housing Partnership Preservation Database.
- **Housing Needs Dashboard** is an interactive tool that includes data on affordable housing need in every county across the state, market trends, funding, and housing production and preservation trends.
- **Preservation Database** is an inventory of federally- and state-subsidized affordable rental properties. This webpage details the specific policies related to accessing California Housing Partnership datasets, including the preservation database.

ABAG Farmworker Housing Toolkit (June 2022)

ABAG's toolkit helps local agencies analyze and address farmworker housing needs, with data, sample analyses, and program ideas. It was prepared for Bay Area 6th-cycle elements and uses data from the 2017 Census of Agriculture or earlier, so 7th cycle housing elements should use the most recent Census of Agriculture. Use it alongside HCD's Farmworkers Building Block.

New for the 7th Cycle

Acutely Low- and Extremely Low- Income Households

AB 3093 (Ward, 2024)

Beginning with the 7th cycle, regional allocations will include separate acutely low-income (ALI) and extremely low-income (ELI) shares. Housing elements must analyze ALI and ELI households as a special housing needs group and include programs to address their needs. HCD is required to publish advisory guidance, including sample analyses and programs, by December 31, 2026. Check HCD's webpage for current guidance before beginning the needs assessment.

Sites Inventory

Government Code Section 65583(a)(3) requires an inventory of land suitable and available for residential development during the planning period, including vacant sites and sites with potential for redevelopment. Section 65583.2 sets the rules for that inventory and its analysis, including realistic capacity, nonvacant sites, and density standards for lower-income sites. Section 65583(c)(1) requires programs that make sites available for a variety of housing types, including multifamily rental housing, factory-built housing, mobilehomes, agricultural employee housing, supportive housing, single-room occupancy units, emergency shelters, and transitional housing.

HCD Inventory of Suitable Land Requisite Analysis

This component of the HCD Building Blocks outlines the statutory requirements and factors for the site inventory and analysis and provides examples and suggestions to demonstrate how requirements could be meant.

HCD Housing Element Site Inventory Guidebook (June 2020)

An HCD guide developed to assist jurisdictions with the development of the site inventory analysis.

HCD Electronic Housing Element Sites Inventory Form and Instructions (September 2022)

HCD provides a standardized electronic form for jurisdictions to submit their housing element sites inventory, as required by Government Code Section 65583.3. Use the form and instructions alongside the Housing Element Sites Inventory Guidebook

- **Electronic Housing Element Sites Inventory Form (XLS)**: HCD's standardized workbook for submitting parcel-level inventory information.
- **Instructions for the Sites Inventory Form (PDF)**: Instructions for completing the form's tables, including information on sites available to accommodate the RHNA and sites identified for rezoning.
- **HCD Connect**: HCD's online portal for submitting housing elements, sites inventories, and Annual Progress Reports.

HCD Default Density Standard Option (March 2022)

Government Code Section 65583.2(c)(3)(B) sets "default" densities that are deemed appropriate to accommodate housing for lower-income households, based on whether a jurisdiction is metropolitan, suburban, or nonmetropolitan. Zoning sites at or above the default density lets a jurisdiction meet the lower-income density requirement without additional analysis. This memo identifies which default density applies to each jurisdiction in the state. Check HCD's website for the current version.

ABAG Getting Rezoning Right: Guiding Principles and Related Resources (June 2024)

This webpage identifies key tips to ensure an effective rezoning process that aligns zoning regulations with adopted policies and achieves local housing goals. The webpage also includes links to additional rezoning resources. However, please note that some references may no longer be relevant.

HCD Memo Regarding AB 2339 – Legislation Effective January 1, 2023: Housing Element: Emergency Shelters (December 2022)

This memo summarizes AB 2339's changes to emergency shelter planning under Government Code Section 65583(a)(4), including expanded shelter types, by-right zoning and site-capacity requirements, and analysis of objective shelter standards as potential governmental constraints.

HCD Memo Regarding No Net Loss Law – Government Code Section 65863 (October 2019)

This memo explains jurisdictions' obligation to maintain adequate sites for remaining RHNA by income category, including required findings and replacement-site deadlines when capacity is reduced. It includes a tracking worksheet, decision flowchart, and sample housing element program.

SANDAG No Net Loss Calculator (May 2024)

SANDAG's Excel workbook helps jurisdictions track development on housing element sites and determine whether the remaining inventory can still accommodate the unmet RHNA by income category.

- **Instructions for No Net Loss Calculator:** Step-by-step instructions for setting up and maintaining the calculator as projects are approved and permitted.
- **Example of Required No Net Loss Findings:** Sample findings for actions subject to Government Code Section 65863, such as downzoning an inventory site or approving development with fewer units than the housing element assumed.

New for the 7th Cycle

Formulas for Calculating Realistic Capacity
SB 457 (Becker, 2026)
Requires HCD, by July 1, 2028, to develop or approve optional formulas for estimating the realistic development capacity of Housing Element sites, rezoning or constraint removal programs, and accessory dwelling units.

SB 79 Capacity in the Housing Element Sites Inventory
SB 79 (Wiener, 2025)
Estimated capacity on sites eligible for SB 79 may be counted as part of a jurisdiction's Housing Element sites inventory to help meet the RHNA. Jurisdictions must still provide evidence to support assumptions and demonstrate realistic capacity as part of the sites inventory. https://www.hcd.ca.gov/planning-and-research/sb79-tod/housing-element-sites

CEQA Exemptions for Housing Element Rezoning Actions
SB 131 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, 2025)
Introduced a CEQA reform that exempts a rezoning action that implements the schedule of actions contained in an approved housing element, with certain exceptions. HCD released the following technical memo intended to guide local jurisdictions in understanding and utilizing SB 131. https://www.hcd.ca.gov/sites/default/files/docs/planning-and-community/memos/ceqa-rezone-exemption-memo-051926.pdf

Constraints Analysis

Government Code Section 65583(a)(5) requires an analysis of potential and actual governmental constraints upon the maintenance, improvement, or development of housing for all income levels, including land use controls, building codes, fees and exactions, permit procedures, site improvement requirements, and constraints on housing for persons with disabilities. Section 65583(a)(6) requires a similar analysis of nongovernmental constraints, such as land and construction costs, financing availability, and the time between project approval and building permit application. Section 65583(c)(3) requires a program to address and, where appropriate and legally possible, remove governmental constraints.

Constraints Program Requirements

This webpage is part of the HCD Building Blocks and identifies policy and program options jurisdictions have implemented to address regulatory constraints.

HCD Group Home Technical Advisory (December 2022)

This advisory explains state law requirements that local governments remove constraints on group homes and affirmatively support them. It also describes land use policies and practices that may unlawfully discriminate against group home owners, operators, and residents.

HCD Terner Center Impact Fee Nexus Studies Templates and Residential Feasibility Calculation Templates (December 2023)

This document provides an eight-step template for preparing impact fee nexus studies that meet Mitigation Fee Act requirements. It also presents two methods for evaluating how fee levels affect residential feasibility: a development return analysis and a residual land value analysis. Jurisdictions can use the feasibility methods to support the fees and exactions portion of the governmental constraints analysis.

New for the 7th Cycle

Analysis of Historic designations
AB 3093 (Ward, 2024)
The governmental constraints analysis must now address historic preservation practices and policies, including how existing and proposed historic designations affect the jurisdiction's ability to accommodate its share of the regional housing need.

Governmental Constraints Disclosure Statement
AB 610 (Alvarez, 2025)
Housing elements must include a disclosure statement identifying any new, amended, or more stringent governmental constraints adopted after the previous housing element's due date and before the current draft is submitted to HCD, and any such constraints the governing body can anticipate adopting during the first three years after the element is found in substantial compliance.

Fair Housing Analysis

Government Code Section 65008 prohibits discrimination in housing based on occupation, age, or protected characteristic; method of financing; or the intended occupancy by lower- or moderate-income people. AB 686 (Santiago, 2018) created a state mandate requiring public agencies to go beyond combating discrimination to affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH). The goal of affirmatively furthering fair housing is to combat housing discrimination, eliminate racial bias, undo historic patterns of segregation, and lift barriers to housing to foster inclusive communities and achieve racial equity and fair housing choice.

HCD Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Guidance Memo (April 2021)

This memo provides an overview of AFFH, relevant changes to housing law, and provides useful resources.

HCD Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing: A Guide for Incorporating Local Data and Knowledge (May 2024)

This document includes guidance and prompts on incorporating local data and knowledge in the AFFH section, and is included in Appendix A of this resource guide.

HCD AFFH 3.0 Data Viewer

The HCD AFFH Data Viewer allows users to explore AFFH datasets and export maps. HCD has created detailed how-to guides for users to explore the data viewer, download datasets, and add data. **How-to guides** for the AFFH data view are also available.

ABAG AFFH Policies and Programs Toolkit (September 2022)

ABAG created this toolkit to assist local jurisdictions in completing the AFFH section in the Housing Element. Please note that many strategies provided in this toolkit are designed specifically for the Bay Area region.

ABAG AFFH Data Guidance Checklist

ABAG and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) synthesized the Assessment of Fair Housing portion of the HCD AFFH Guidance Memo into a checklist. This tool identifies required components, relevant data sources, and notes on additional factors to consider. Please note that the data provided in this sheet are specific to the ABAG/MTC region.

CALCOG Fairness and Equity Resources

CALCOG has compiled a list of general resources pertaining to fairness and equity and a detailed list of resources pertaining to AFFH.

SANDAG Anti-Displacement Strategy

The SANDAG Anti-Displacement Strategy includes an existing conditions assessment report, a best practices research report, and an anti-displacement toolkit aimed at addressing residential displacement from a regional perspective. This webpage also includes a map of displacement risk throughout the region.

Evaluation of Previous Housing Element

Government Code Section 65588(a) and (b) requires each jurisdiction to review its previous housing element and evaluate the appropriateness of its goals, objectives, and policies; the effectiveness of the element in achieving those goals and objectives; and the jurisdiction's progress in implementing its programs.

HCD Building Blocks: Review and Revise

This Building Blocks page explains the statutory requirements for reviewing the previous housing element and provides guidance on evaluating the appropriateness, effectiveness, and progress of past programs, including their effectiveness in meeting special housing needs.

HCD Annual Progress Reports – Data Dashboard and Downloads

HCD's dashboard summarizes APR data reported by jurisdictions statewide, including housing applications, entitlements, building permits, and certificates of occupancy by income level. Users can view and download data for individual jurisdictions to track RHNA progress over the planning period.

CA OpenData – Housing Element Annual Progress Report (APR) Data

Raw data from 2018 onwards available for download from the California Open Data Portal with APR information that jurisdictions have reported to HCD in their annual progress reports, organized by APR table (such as housing applications, building activity, and program implementation).

Goals, Policies, and Implementation

Pursuant to Government Code Section 65583(b), the Housing Element must contain goals, quantified objectives, and policies related to the maintenance, preservation, improvement, and development of housing. Section 65583(c) requires a schedule of actions, or programs, to implement these goals and objectives.

HCD Program Overview and Quantified Objectives

This portion of the HCD Building Blocks provides useful information on developing effective programs to achieve the goals and objectives included in the Housing Element.

Deadlines and Non-Compliance Risks

Jurisdictions that do not adopt a housing element that complies with state law by the statutory deadline may face legal challenges, builder's remedy applications, loss of certain state funding, and reduced local control over land use decisions.

CALCOG Enforcement of California Housing Laws Guide (February 2025)

This guide identifies the legal consequences for noncompliance and provides an overview on enforcement actions.

Public Engagement

Government Code 65583(c)(9) requires that the local government make "a diligent effort … to achieve public participation of all economic segments of the community in the development of the housing element."

Examples of Engagement

The techniques below are examples jurisdictions may use to engage the community. Select and adapt approaches based on local needs, audiences, resources, and the stage of the Housing Element process.

- **Workshops** are public forums where participants work in small groups on defined tasks. These are interactive events that engage the public and staff in collaborative activities that serve as effective tools for collecting input and providing more information on a specific topic. Workshops can be held virtually, in-person, or in a hybrid format.
- **Community meetings** are interactive public sessions during which local jurisdictions share project information, collect stakeholder feedback and input, and facilitate discussion. These meetings can be held in-person, virtually, or in a hybrid format.
- **Study Sessions with the Planning Commission and/or City Council** are noticed public meetings of the Planning Commission and/or City Council held as a non-voting item on the agenda to review or discuss a topic in-depth and help shape a project. Study sessions may be held by either body separately or as a joint session and are important for the Planning Commission and/or City Council to understand the process, requirements, and what they will be voting on to adopt. At least one study session is recommended before the release of the public draft housing element.
- **Community surveys** are a data collection tool used to gather opinions, preferences, or lived experiences from a sample of people that can offer insights into a larger population.
- **Stakeholder discussions** are facilitated conversations with organizations, groups, or individuals who have direct knowledge of or experience with local housing needs, conditions, and programs.
- **Interviews and focus groups** are smaller conversations used to explore specific housing issues or lived experiences in greater depth. They may be organized around a particular population, topic, or stakeholder group.
- **Pop-up outreach and community events** bring project information and opportunities to comment to places where people already gather, such as community events, libraries, schools, service locations, or neighborhood centers.
- **Online engagement tools** may include project webpages, interactive maps, comment forms, virtual open houses, or other digital tools that allow community members to review information and provide input on their own schedules.

Engagement Best Practices for Housing Element Updates

Plan

- Before starting the Housing Element Update, remember that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to community outreach and engagement.
- Compile an outreach list with contact info if one has not yet been prepared. If there is an existing outreach list, reexamine it and evaluate who is not currently included that should be. If applicable, connect with community leaders and organizations about how best to obtain input from hard-to-reach groups.
- Take note of special needs groups in the community (e.g., college or university students, seniors, specific workforce type) and identify any changes (e.g., new senior service center) since the previous housing cycle. Think about community leaders, community organizations, and/or service provider groups that are established and active in the community.
- Consider developing a public engagement plan at the project outset to guide outreach and communication efforts. This plan typically outlines project milestones, communication tools, outreach event types and schedules, and provides a framework for outreach deliverables mentioned in the scope of work. It also serves as a reference point throughout the project.

Solicit Feedback

- Reach out to individuals and community groups to coordinate in-person or virtual interviews, workshops, or discussions, or disseminate surveys or questionnaires to staff and service providers.
- Go where the people are. If there is an upcoming community event, consider hosting a popup to share more information about the project. If an organization hosts a regular community meeting, inquire about being a guest presenter to ensure you reach a diverse audience.

Document and Incorporate Feedback

- HCD requires that jurisdictions describe public engagement efforts, including documenting: the types of outreach methods conducted, who was invited to participate, which individuals and/or groups participated, the feedback received, and how such feedback was incorporated into the housing element.
- Summarize key themes from feedback received during the process and explain how it was incorporated into the plan. For example, if residents identified that individuals experiencing homelessness are living in vehicles and struggling to organize a safe parking site, include a policy or program demonstrating how the jurisdiction will explore implementing and managing one.

Be Flexible

- Community outreach and engagement require a flexible, and context-specific approach; strategies that succeed in one community may not be applicable to another.

- Gathering meaningful input relies on understanding a community's unique needs and designing inclusive and comprehensive engagement strategies.

Public Participation Resources

HCD Public Participation Requisite Analysis

This HCD webpage details the requirements and provides suggested approaches to public participation as it pertains to the housing element.

HCD Public Participation Helpful Hints

This HCD web page identifies strategies to consider prior to conducting any public outreach and community engagement.

HCD Public Engagement & Education

This webpage provides examples of public engagement strategies used by jurisdictions throughout the state. It also provides specific resources for public engagement in hard-to-reach communities and a public participation checklist.

Institute for Local Government Housing and Public Engagement Toolkit

The Institute for Local Government created the Housing and Public Engagement Toolkit to help local jurisdictions develop a thoughtful and comprehensive approach to public engagement that aligns with the goals, timeline, and resources of the proposed housing element.

ABAG Multilingual Public Outreach Guidance (July 2026)

ABAG has assembled several resources for planners and other public staff to conduct effective community outreach and engagement to non-English speaking stakeholders including a glossary of housing and planning terms, a workbook on leading effective multilingual meetings, and a guide to multilingual public outreach.

ABAG Communications Guide for Local Government (June 2022)

ABAG created this guide to help local staff hold productive conversations with residents about housing. Although the guide is geared towards policymakers and staff working in the Bay Area region, much of the guidance is applicable to staff working in other jurisdictions.

ABAG How to Engage Farmworkers in the Housing Element Process Guide (January 2023)

This guide provides advice to local jurisdictions for conducting outreach and engagement with farmworkers, even if there are not farms or farmworkers in the community.

Housing Element Data Needs List

Below is a list of the initial information needed to begin working on an update to a housing element. Additional data needs will be completed using data from the ACS, Department of Finance, State Employment Development Department, and other local and regional sources as appropriate.

- **Documents.**
  - 6th cycle Housing Element.
  - General Plan EIR (Draft and Final) and Findings of Fact used to adopt the EIR. If no EIR was used, then whatever environmental document was.
- **Annual Progress Reports.** Copies of annual progress reports completed since **2021** which are available on the HCD APR Data Dashboard (see General Housing Element Resources Section)**.**
- **GIS Data.** The following GIS layers will be used in updating the sites inventory:
  - Parcel Data, including ownership information.
  - Zoning
  - General Plan/Land Use Map
  - Existing Housing Element Sites Inventory (6th Cycle)
  - Specific Plan Boundaries and land uses/zoning
  - Vacant Land – if available
  - Planning and building permits – if available
  - Slopes
  - Floodplains
  - Any other environmental constraints layers available
- **Planned and Approved Projects.** List of residential projects in the pipeline (recently approved or under review) and identify APNs, address, acreage, number of units by income category, and status (approval date, anticipated construction date, etc.). You will be able to can count any units that are approved/pending but have not yet been issued building permits.
- **Building Permits Issued.** List of building permits issued for new residential development since2021 with APNs (so sites inventory that are no longer vacant can be removed from the inventory). This information is available on the HCD APR Data Dashboard.
- **Accessory Dwelling Units.** List of building permits issued for accessory dwelling units, with APNs and permit issue date. (This will be used to project development of accessory dwelling unit development for the 7th cycle planning period.) This information is available on the HCD APR Data Dashboard.
- **Typical Built Densities and Permit Processing.** What are the typical densities built for projects in the City/County in the different zones that allow residential? Note affordable housing vs. market rate developments and site size (acres), zoning, number of units approved, buildout density. Also, you will need to track any projects that received a State density bonus, as well as the following:

    - What is the typical process for approving residential development that is consistent with existing zoning, who approves? What kind of findings?
    - What is the typical amount of time between planning approval/entitlement and when an application for a building permit is received?
    - Has the City/County received recent requests to build a residential project(s) at a density lower than intended in a particular zone or general plan area? If so, how did the City/County respond?

- **Fees.** Have a complete list of fees (planning and development impact fees) that would be charged on a typical single-family unit, multi-family development, and ADU to describe the typical per-unit fees for all housing types.
- **Local Ordinances.** Has the City/County adopted any local ordinances that may impact supply of housing such as an Inclusionary housing ordinance, historic preservation policies, moratorium on building or short-term rental ordinance?
- **SB 35 and 330.** Does the City have an established process for implementing SB 35 and 330?
- **Building Code.** Which version of the California State Building Code does the City/County use? Have any local amendments been made? If so, please list the local amendments.
- **On- and Off-Site Improvements.** What are the City/County's current on- and off-site improvement requirements for residential projects? Does the City/County have any new or different requirements than what was described in the previous housing element. These include typical off-site improvements for a residential subdivision in the city/county, including typical street widths, curb and gutter, sidewalks, etc.
- **Price of Land.** Does the City/County have any data on cost of vacant land?
- **Housing Construction Costs.** Does the City/County have any data on the cost to construct multifamily and/or single-family homes in the City/County or nearby? If not, you will need to contact local developers for this information.
- **Sewer/Water Capacity.** Please provide the following information regarding water and sewer infrastructure.
    - Who provides domestic water service in the City/County?
    - Who provides wastewater collection and treatment in the City/County?
    - Does the City/County have a policy or practice of prioritizing water and sewer hook ups for affordable projects?
- **Dry Utilities**. Who provides the following services for the City/County? Are there any areas of the town without access to electricity or internet service?
    - Electricity:
    - Telephone:
    - Internet:
- **Housing Conditions.** Estimate of the percentage/number of housing units in need of rehabilitation in the jurisdiction.

- **Housing Resources**.
    - List of funding programs (CDBG, HOME, etc.) and amounts.
    - List of current affordable housing units in City. Include affordability expiration date, if available.
    - Information on number of housing choice vouchers available in the jurisdiction? Is there a waitlist and is it open?
- **Homeless Services.** Current list of homeless services providers and status of homeless population services.
- **Homeless Point-In-Time Count.** Number of sheltered and unsheltered individuals in the city identified during the most recent point-in-time count.
- **Emergency Shelter Beds.** Inventory of current emergency shelter beds (both year-round and seasonal) in City.
- **Energy Conservation.** What does the City/County do to help promote or facilitate energy conservation opportunities in residential development (e.g. solar or wind incentive programs; Title 24 enhancements energy audit programs; etc.)?
- **Fair Housing Enforcement**.
    - Has the City/County done a comprehensive review of its Zoning Code to ensure compliance with fair housing law? If so, when?
    - Are materials on fair housing laws or resources available on the City/County's website or in public buildings? Are public meetings and materials offered in multiple languages?
    - How does the City/County handle fair housing complaints or questions received? Were any complaints received in the previous planning period?
- **Stakeholders.** List of stakeholders that should be contacted during the update process, including developers, property owners, homeless service providers, housing advocates, etc.

Appendix A: Guide for Incorporating Local Data and Knowledge

May 2024

Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

A Guide for Incorporating Local Data and Knowledge

May 2024

Segregation and Integration

Race

- Any areas or neighborhoods considered to be concentrated minority communities??
- Are any areas known to have particularly low concentrations of minority residents?
- Are there any known historic factors that have led to these patterns? Are there current factors that reinforce these patterns? Are there any factors that are changing these patterns over time?

Disability

- Any areas or neighborhoods with concentrations of persons with disabilities?
- Any concentrations of group homes or residential care facilities?
- Have there been any permits issued for construction of ramp or other accessibility modifications to homes in the area?
- Have any requests for reasonable accommodation been made during the last planning period?
- Any locational differences in terms of disabilities? Recent accessibility improvements? Areas in need of improvements?

Familial Status

- Any areas or neighborhoods with concentrations of families? Non-families or smaller homes?
- Any child care facilities? Any locational differences?

Income

- Any areas of the community that are considered to be lower-income, high-poverty areas?
- Any areas of the community that are considered to be higher-income areas?
- Are there any known areas where a lot of HCV/Section 8 renters live?
- Any housing assisted by public financing in the city? If so, any areas of the city with a concentration of housing assisted by public financing?

Disparities in Access to Opportunity

Education

- Discuss local schools and geographic availability
- Discuss local school performance compared to the region
- Discuss local performance and any differences in access to education opportunities from neighborhood to neighborhood
- Discuss any upper education opportunities, including vocational opportunities
- Discuss any trends and past and current local efforts to improve access to education opportunities
- Do community members have the opportunity to select the schools that their students attend, or are schools assigned by geography? Are there private or charter options in the community? If families have the ability to select schools, are there higher-demand schools in the community?
- Are there any known factors that influence the current rates of high school graduation or college attendance?
- Are there any organizations that provide services like tutoring that could help to improve educational outcomes? Any differences between neighborhoods in terms of access?
- Any new subdivisions? New master planned areas? Differences in schools?

Economic

- What are the major employers in the area, or major industries? Where are they located?
    - Are there major industries that are not nearby that many residents work in?
    - How has this changed recently? Are there new areas of the county that have developed commercial or industrial uses? Or are there areas that were previously job centers that are no longer in as high of use?
- Is high-speed internet readily available in the area? Do any areas have known challenges with cell signal access?
- Are there any known economic development programs or initiatives planned or in place that might influence the jobs landscape in the next ten years?

Transportation

- Discuss countywide transportation system, including different modes
- Discuss local access to the countywide transportation system, such as routes and locations
- Discuss any local efforts to assist access to different transportation modes, including public transit, walking and biking.

- How do residents without access to a car travel to work or to access resources like medical care? Is this different depending on the industry that residents work in?
- Any engineering reports or assessments of capital improvements? Any differences between neighborhoods?
- What are the physical conditions of local roads like? Are there street lights, traffic lights, or bike infrastructure in any parts of the community?
- Are there known high-collision corridors or areas of high traffic on a regular basis?
- Any Safe Routes to Schools plans or programs in place? Where in the community are sidewalks available or not available? Any differences between neighborhoods?
- Any major community facilities and any differences in access between neighborhoods?
- Any differences between neighborhoods in terms of access to transportation options? Biking? Walking?
- Have there been any major infrastructure investments in the recent past? This can include, but is not limited to, roads, bridges, or water/sewer infrastructure. Are there any major infrastructure projects planned for the next ten years?

Environment

- Any public safety reports (e.g., water quality, sewer, circulation)? Any differences between neighborhoods?
- Are there known major sources of pollution in the area? Where are they located, if so?
    - This could include things like industrial sources, groundwater contamination from agriculture, or lead paint exposure in older homes.
    - Are there places where residential development should be avoided due to environmental conditions, or where existing environmental conditions are negatively effecting residents?
- Do any neighborhoods lack access to parks or other outdoor spaces? Are there other notable community amenities, and where are they? Any differences between neighborhoods in terms of access?
- Are there any new subdivisions or new master planned areas? Any differences in parks, other amenities between neighborhoods?
- Are there any differences between neighborhoods with respect to access to shopping? Healthy foods?

Disproportionate Housing Needs, including Displacement

Overpayment

- Any recent increases in rents or sales prices? Any differences between neighborhoods? How does that compare to incomes in the area?
- Any patterns of evictions or foreclosures between neighborhoods?

Overcrowding

- Are there any areas that are known to have higher rates of household overcrowding, such as "doubling-up" families in one house? Any information from code enforcement officers?

Housing Conditions

- Any areas of the City with more or less units in need of rehabilitation and replacement
- Any differences in housing conditions based on unit types (single family, multifamily, mobilehome) and locations
- Are there any known areas where the physical conditions of housing suggest a high need for rehabilitation for safety or accessibility reasons?
- Have there been any subdivisions developed in the past ten years? If so, how large were the lots in these developments? Are there differences between new subdivisions and older areas? any new master planned areas that have different infrastructure? Differences in rents and prices and locational differences?
- Are there any types of housing that are known to be not widely available? If so, which neighborhoods?
- Are there any areas where there have been a high rate of code enforcement complaints? What were the issues that drove the complaint?

Persons Experiencing Homelessness

- Are there any areas where homeless community members tend to congregate? This could either be encampment areas, parking areas where people who live in vehicles park, or areas where people congregate during the day, such as libraries, parks, or community centers. If so, is there access to transportation, services and programs?
    - Any programs to provide emergency rental assistance? If so, how is that assistance available? Any differences between neighborhoods?

Displacement

- Any areas or neighborhoods that have experienced significant increases in rents and sales prices? Are people moving or evicted as a result?
- Any local events that led to displacement?
- Do any areas have a higher percentage of housing with higher susceptibility to environmental damage due to building age or design?
- Are defensible space inspections performed? Any other similar environmental hazard prevention programming?
- Are there any areas that might not be in a FEMA zone but which might have a tendency to experience flash floods during storms due to a lack of stormwater infrastructure or ground absorption/permeability?

Other Relevant Factors

- Describe any historical events, past populations, waves of immigration and development, redlining, financial investments, conditions, covenants and restrictions that influenced socio-economic patterns
- Describe any past zoning or land use decisions that influenced socio-economic patterns
- Describe any settlement trends, major developments or population trends that influenced socio-economic patterns
- Does the city have any defining features to the land use pattern? Topography, Railroads? Highways? Major roadways? Does that influence socio-economic patterns?
- Any recent engineering reports, assessments of infrastructure supply or quality, public safety reports, capital improvement program? Does this information describe or show any differences?