

Housing Element Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

COMMENT AND RESPONSE	
<b>1. How do you access a recording of this meeting?</b>	<p><i>The presentation and a recording of the meeting can be found on the Placer County website here <a href="https://www.placer.ca.gov/6632/Public-Meetings">https://www.placer.ca.gov/6632/Public-Meetings</a></i></p>
<b>2. Can sites on the last element be used again?</b>	<p><i>With the passage of Assembly Bill 1397, some of the criteria for determining if a site should be included in the County’s land inventory have changed.</i></p> <p><i>Land inventory sites must be “available” and may only include non-vacant sites with realistic development potential. In general, development potential must consider:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>• The extent to which existing uses are an impediment</i></li><li><i>• Development trends</i></li><li><i>• Regulatory incentives</i></li><li><i>• Prior experience converting to higher-density residential uses</i></li><li><i>• Market demand</i></li><li><i>• Leases and existing contracts for current uses.</i></li></ul> <p><i>In addition, if more than 50% of lower-income sites are non-vacant, existing uses are presumed to impede development absent findings.</i></p> <p><i>Sites being counted from prior elements must allow for 20% lower-income by-right development.</i></p> <p><i>Lastly, there are stricter requirements for sites smaller than a half-acre or greater than 10 acres.</i></p>
<b>3. How much have you included potential projects taking advantage of nonconforming use and the use of variances into the plan? For example, Sacramento County allowed housing near railroad tracks where typical contractors would not build.</b>	<p><i>The County allows for new residential development on sites zoned for residential use and many sites zoned for commercial use. Sites zoned to allow for a residential use but that are currently developed otherwise can convert the existing use to a residential use through a project review process. Flexible design standards to address site constraints are available.</i></p>
<b>4. Do all low-income housing developments need to be high-density?</b>	<p><i>Housing for lower-income households can be achieved through a variety of housing types, including, but not limited to, small duplex or triplex units, accessory dwelling units, or small lot/small home subdivisions as well as in higher-density multifamily complexes.</i></p>

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- 5. Do we have information that 30 units per acre supports affordability in Placer County? My experience (not recent) is that 30 units/acre is more expensive to build than 20 or 25. If 30 units/acre makes development of affordable housing LESS feasible, it is probably worth addressing the issue.**

*There are limited examples in the County where recently developed residential projects include densities at or near thirty units to the acre. An increase in density may increase cost of construction in some instances, particularly as needed to meet state structural safety requirements. The County is continually seeking ways to reduce the cost of construction where possible to assist in achieving housing affordable to moderate- and below-income households.*

- 6. Is ADU same as tiny house?**

*An accessory dwelling unit (ADU) is a separate dwelling that is located on the same parcel of land as a primary dwelling unit. ADUs are limited to 1,200 square feet if detached or up to 50% of the living area of the primary dwelling unit if attached. A "tiny home" is generally defined as a home on wheels that is less than 400 square feet.*

- 7. Current housing element requires 10% affordable units to be built on site B13-14 why have some project been relieved of constructing affordable units, and allowed to meet the obligation with payment of an in- lieu fees (e.g., Bickford Ranch)**

*General Plan Housing Element policies may require certain projects requesting a General Plan amendment to include an affordable housing component. Approval of the project by the appropriate decision-making body would include these requirements. This may vary from project to project depending on several factors that must take into consideration the opportunities and constraints of the project and site.*

- 8. How does development planning affect safety - for example, we build numerous senior only communities, and yet this is the most vulnerable population in the pandemic?**

*All new development will have to comply with applicable policies in the Health and Safety Element, the County zoning code, and other regulations that reduce potential health-related or other safety concerns. Additional health and safety measures may be required by the state as part of facility licensing requirements.*

- 9. Health and Safety question: Do we intend to work with CalFire in order to assure we have firehouses within reasonable distance and access to any new housing being built as part of the larger plan? We've had a really difficult time funding local fire houses in Nevada County that are not part of the larger CalFire organization. Maybe I should read the Community Wildfire Protection Plan.**

*The Health and Safety Element generally requires that the County have appropriate fire service. Any specific needs can be identified in the updated element and implemented through the permitting process for any new housing development projects.*

- 10. Does this planning include pandemics/pub health issues, too?**

*This update for the Health and Safety Element will focus on updates that are currently required by state law. Future updates to the General Plan will be able to address this topic more comprehensively and with greater experience from pandemic issues.*

- 11. How do we become a stakeholder that provides input on singles not being able to afford a home and the need for smaller homes**

*Please contact Shawna Purvines at [spurvines@placer.ca.gov](mailto:spurvines@placer.ca.gov) if interested in participating in stakeholder meetings.*

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**12. Does the County have the right to direct utilities to not require separate hook ups/accounts for ADUs? Those costs make it much less attractive. I'd love to add a permanent rental unit above a garage or storage unit but the "add on" costs made it cost-prohibitive**

*The County and public utilities are required to implement state law. The County does not have authority over a special district such as a utility district. The state continues to make revisions and updates to the ADU laws. For additional information on what is allowed, please visit the California State Housing and Community Development ADU website at: <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/policy-research/accessorydwellingunits.shtml>*

**13. Will the County hold another workshop before September to discuss proposed policy issues? It seems like if a public meeting is not held until September, there is too much pressure to make the Oct PC hearing that a lot of information discussed at the public meeting is rarely considered for the document as it is typically too late to be included**

*Additional outreach meetings and opportunities to discuss proposed amendments to the Housing Element will be held throughout the process. Please sign up for notifications on the Housing Element Update webpage at: <https://www.placer.ca.gov/6624/2021-Housing-Element-Update>*

**14. How actively are you pursuing infill projects? Please comment on the County's willingness to allow for low square footage developments, i.e., 200 or smaller square foot infill apartments**

*The County completed the Housing Strategy and Development Plan in 2019. This is used as a guide to accelerate the development of housing, especially housing affordable to moderate income and below households. Infill housing is a primary focus of this effort. Over the next year, the County will be developing an infill development program that helps to incentivize smaller residential and mixed-use projects in areas already served by infrastructure and public services.*

**15. Will there be any new homes built this year for the very low-income families?**

*Two projects began construction this year that will include units affordable to very low-income households. One is in the Auburn area and the other in the North Tahoe area.*

**16. How do you plan on assisting single disabled people with no dependence with affordable housing?**

*The County as well as cities within the County have resources to assist with a range of housing for occupants with special needs. Information on the services provided by the County will be included in the Background Report for the Housing Element Update. Additional information can be found at: <https://www.placer.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/7210/Housing-Resource-Guide-PDF>.*

**17. How will solar power requirements for all new homes built in California negatively affect affordable housing build out? Any ideas how to mitigate the negative impact?**

*Increase in required standards and design may increase the cost of housing as it is built today. There are options for reducing the cost of housing through alternative building materials and methods. The County continues to review and approve these options in support of reducing the cost of the construction of housing.*

**18. Does the Housing Element work just cover New Development?**

*The Housing Element includes data, analysis, programs, and policies for existing housing needs as well as projected housing needs for the next eight-year period.*

**19. Is there any attempt to account for the fact that Eastern Placer County (Tahoe Basin) is largely a second home community and therefore the prices for homes do not represent what may be**

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	<p><b>considered “normal” homes? That is, why should multi-million-dollar luxury vacation homes be included in the calculation of the median sales price?</b></p> <p><i>This is taken into consideration in the median sales prices data collected in the Housing Needs Assessment.</i></p>
<b>20.</b>	<p><b>How does something like by-right development fit with other competing considerations such as TRPA limits in the Tahoe Basin?</b></p> <p><i>The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) is a bi-state agency established by federal law that regulates uses allowed in the Tahoe basin area. The County partners with TRPA to meet community and environmental goals contained in the governing documents for the area, which includes meeting housing needs.</i></p>
<b>21.</b>	<p><b>With the real threat of pandemic issues, is there any consideration to the minimal area required per person. We know that this is a major problem today with COVID where lower income families are crowded into small spaces. For example, Tiny Houses would pose challenges for family sizes greater than 2.</b></p> <p><i>Concerns related to overcrowding are considered and addressed in the data analysis of the Housing Element Update. The Housing Element is one of at least eight elements of a jurisdiction’s General Plan and must work cooperatively with the other required elements to guide land development as well as the public health and safety for the unincorporated area of the County.</i></p>
<b>22.</b>	<p><b>Has the county reviewed lowering permitting costs for a home being built will exceed the counties fire restrictions? One example would be container homes, tiny homes etc.</b></p> <p><i>The County is currently reviewing its fee structure to consider opportunities to reduce the cost of the construction of new housing. Considering reductions in fees for structures that exceed safety standards is a good suggestion.</i></p>
<b>23.</b>	<p><b>On a higher level, what does the County plan to do about lowering permitting costs?</b></p> <p><i>The County is currently reviewing its fee structure to consider opportunities to reduce the cost of the construction of new housing. This would include looking at fees proportionate to the size of the unit as well as its proximity to services and infrastructure.</i></p>