



CITY OF SAN JOSÉ
**DRAFT 2023–2031
HOUSING ELEMENT**

The housing strategy of the Envision San José 2040 General Plan

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This is a preliminary draft document that has not been adopted by the San José City Council. The purpose of this draft is to solicit public input prior to submission to the City Council and then to the State Department of Housing and Community Development.

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Chapter 1 Introduction to the Housing Element



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1.1 Purpose of the Housing Element

San José has changed dramatically over the last 60 years, growing from an agricultural community into a diverse and bustling city. Throughout its history, San José has been and continues to be a place of great opportunity, but it has also been shaped by a legacy of regional racial segregation, housing discrimination, and uneven investment in neighborhoods. This legacy combined with a long-term regional housing shortage and a booming economy has resulted in gentrification and harm for many low-income residents, many of whom are people of color, particularly Black, Latino/a/x, and Southeast Asian residents. Examples of this harm include out-of-reach home prices, evictions because rents outpace incomes, severe overcrowding, displacement, and homelessness.

This Housing Element is the City’s eight-year housing strategy and commitment for how it will meet the housing needs of everyone in the community. This housing strategy intends to address the housing crisis in San José through a number of goals, policies, and programs that focus on expanding the housing stock and offer a wider range of housing choices for everyone in the City. Equity, inclusion, and anti-displacement are themes that are woven throughout the document and reflected in a number of policies and programs. The City aims to ensure that San José is an equitable and inclusive city by protecting and providing opportunities to those residents who are most vulnerable and prioritizing community resources towards historically disadvantaged communities.

The purpose of this Housing Element is to:

- Identify the City’s housing needs;
- State the community’s goals and objectives with regard to housing production, rehabilitation, and conservation to meet those needs;
- Define the policies and programs that will be implemented to achieve goals and objectives.

Regional Housing Needs Allocation

This Housing Element covers the planning period of January 31, 2023 – January 31, 2031. It is closely aligned with the Regional Housing Needs Allocation projection period, which runs January 1, 2023 – October 31, 2031. The determination of regional housing need begins with the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and California Department of Finance (DOF), which first calculate statewide housing need based on population projections and regional population forecasts used in preparing regional transportation plans. The statewide need is then distributed to regional Council of Governments (COGs) throughout California, which works with cities and counties within their respective purview to assign each jurisdiction its share of the regional housing need, known as the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA).

The RHNA itself is divided into five income categories that encompass all levels of housing need. The City of San José is a member of the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), which stands as the Bay Area’s COG-and is comprised of nine counties and 101 cities. The total RHNA for Santa Clara County in the 2023-2031 cycle is 129,927 housing units, of which 62,200 units (approximately 48%) are assigned to San José, as shown in *Table 1-1*.

Table 1-1: Final RHNA Allocation for the Housing Element 6th Cycle

VERY LOW INCOME (<50% OF AREA MEDIAN INCOME)	LOW INCOME (50%- 80% OF AREA MEDIAN INCOME)	MODERATE INCOME (80%-120% OF AREA MEDIAN INCOME)	ABOVE MODERATE INCOME (120% OF AREA MEDIAN INCOME)	TOTAL
15,088	8,687	10,711	27,714	62,200

State Law Framework

State law recognizes the vital role local governments play in the supply and affordability of housing. Each local government in California is required to adopt a housing element, which is one of the eight mandated elements of the General Plan. Pursuant to state law, the Housing Element must include the following key components:

- **Housing Needs Assessment:** Examine demographic, employment and housing trends and conditions and identify existing and projected housing needs of the community, with attention paid to housing for special needs populations (e.g., large families, persons with disabilities) and to fair housing issues, including issues of segregation and access to opportunity.
- **Evaluation of Past Performance:** Review the prior Housing Element to measure progress in implementing policies and programs.
- **Housing Sites Inventory:** Identify locations of available sites for housing development or redevelopment to ensure there is enough land zoned for housing to meet the future need at all income levels.
- **Community Engagement:** Implement a robust community engagement program, reaching out to all economic segments of the community plus traditionally underrepresented groups.
- **Constraints Analysis:** Analyze and recommend remedies for existing and potential governmental and nongovernmental barriers to housing development.
- **Policies and Programs:** Establish policies and programs to be carried out during the 2023-2031 planning period to fulfill the identified housing needs.

State law (Government Code Section 65583) requires the City to adopt a Housing Element that addresses the needs of everyone in the community, at all income levels. Because housing needs are recognized as a matter of statewide concern, the state, through the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), must certify the compliance of every jurisdiction's Housing Element upon adoption. The legislature has adopted two bills that have implications for Housing Element compliance.

Assembly Bill 686 (2019) creates new requirements in Housing Element law: Housing elements must now include a program that promotes and affirmatively furthers fair housing opportunities throughout the community for all persons regardless of race, religion, sex, marital status, ancestry, national origin, color, familial status, or disability, and other characteristics protected by the California Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA), Government Code Section 65008, and any other state and federal fair housing and planning law. Additionally, all housing

State law requires the City to adopt a Housing Element that addresses the needs of everyone in the community, at all income levels.

elements due on or after January 1, 2021, must contain an Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) consistent with the core elements of the analysis required by the federal Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) Final Rule of July 16, 2015.

Pursuant to Assembly Bill 72 (2017), HCD also has new statutory authority to revoke Housing Element compliance if the local government's actions do not comply with state law. In addition, HCD may notify the California Office of the Attorney General that the local jurisdiction is in violation of state law for non-compliance with housing element law or other state housing laws.

1.2 Housing Element Organization

Document Structure

This Housing Element and associated appendices satisfy the requirements of state law (Government Code Section 65583(a)). The Housing Element is divided into the following chapters:

- **Chapter 1-Introduction to the Housing Element** - This provides an overview of the Housing Element, state requirements, and a summary of the public outreach and community engagement process.
- **Chapter 2-Summary of Housing Needs and Assessment of Fair Housing** - This provides an overview of the City's population, household, and housing stock characteristics, and an analysis of these factors through a fair housing lens in order to identify housing needs of the variety of household types and special needs across the City.
- **Chapter 3-Housing Goals, Objectives, Policies and Programs** - This contains the City's housing goals and policies that provide direction to help the City meet its housing goals. The Housing Element includes five goals that create the framework for how the City will address housing needs. The objectives, policies and implementation programs under each goal address how the City will meet housing needs across the City.
- **Chapter 4-Constraints on Housing** - This provides an analysis of the governmental and non-governmental regulations and framework that constitute constraints to housing production and preservation, such as zoning permitting process, land, construction and labor costs, and restricted financing availability.
- **Chapter 5-Adequate Sites for Housing** - This includes the inventory of sites that are suitable for residential development during the planning period.
- **Chapter 6-Energy Conservation** – This includes an analysis of opportunities for residential energy conservation.

Housing Element and General Plan Alignment

The Housing Element is a component of [San José's Envision 2040 General Plan](#) [Envision San José 2040 General Plan](#) and then add the link:

<https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/22359/637928744399330000>—
(www.Envision2040.org), a community-based plan that serves as the blueprint for the City's growth.

The Housing Element identifies the City's housing needs and opportunities and establishes clear goals and objectives to inform future housing decisions.

State law requires that local general plans be consistent with their housing elements. Because general plans are typically updated every 15-20 years and housing elements are updated more frequently (generally every eight years), the different update cycles create the potential for inconsistencies between the goals, policies, and programs contained in the two documents. Because a housing element affects the locality's policies for growth and residential land uses, a city should review the entire general plan, especially land use provisions, to ensure internal consistency is maintained upon any amendment to the housing element. The Housing Element also includes an implementation workplan that links each action for the 2023-31 RHNA cycle to a General Plan housing policy to ensure alignment and internal consistency between the two documents.

The Housing Element is consistent with the other elements of the General Plan and is guided in particular by these two strategies of the General Plan: Major Strategy #3 Focused Growth and Major Strategy #5 Urban Villages. Together, these two strategies focus new growth into areas of San José that will enable the achievement of City goals for economic growth, fiscal sustainability, environmental stewardship, and the development of new, attractive urban neighborhoods.

Consistent with Senate Bill 375 (2008), which requires that California's regions reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, the urban village strategy promotes a land use pattern that will help the City meet its GHG emissions reduction targets. These General Plan strategies and the Housing Element seek to: improve transportation and land use integration; achieve a jobs-housing balance; create more compact, walkable, and transit-oriented communities; provide more housing capacity for all income levels; and protect open space resources. The Housing Element provides the policy framework for future housing planning decisions and identifies a series of implementation steps to meet the goals, objectives, and policies herein.

The Housing Element has been prepared to maintain internal consistency with the current 2040 General Plan, as required by state law. Specifically, the sites inventory reflects the capacity under the 2040 General Plan land use designations. The Housing Element goals, policies, and programs were drafted with the goal of implementing the vision and guiding principles for the 2040 General Plan, including the vision that "San José's neighborhoods will be affordable and inclusive, and every resident will have the opportunity to thrive." Relevant guiding principles from the 2040 General Plan update are listed below. When the City prepares any future amendment to the 2040 General Plan it will review the Housing Element to ensure internal consistencies.

These General Plan strategies and the Housing Element seek to improve transportation and land use integration; achieve a jobs-housing balance; create more compact, walkable, and transit-oriented communities; provide more housing capacity for all income levels; and protect open space resources.

General Plan and Periodic Reviews

The General Plan of the City of San José is an integrated and internally consistent statement of the official land use policy of the City. The General Plan meets the requirements and intent of the California Government Code while accommodating local conditions and circumstances. It contains each of the elements mandated by Government Code Section 65302. Since they are intrinsically interrelated and overlapping, the elements have been combined into a consistent meaningful whole, and organized in a manner designed to meet the needs of public officials, developers, neighborhood organizations and members of the community who will use it most frequently. In order to facilitate identification of the aspects of each mandatory element, the appendices include a comprehensive list of references for each of the seven mandatory elements.

The Envision 2040 General Plan establishes an ongoing program for the City to monitor and evaluate its success in implementation, fundamental elements of which include both annual reviews and a recurring 4-year major review cycle. Through these review cycles, the General Plan maintains internal consistency among all its elements.

Consistency with Other Plans

The City of San José's Housing Element is intended to be consistent with other housing plans and policies, including the City's federal 2020-25 Consolidated Plan and its local 2015-20 Housing Investment Plan.

- 2020-25 Consolidated Plan:** The federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires jurisdictions that receive federal housing and community development funding to develop a five year Consolidated Plan and corresponding annual action plans that identify needs, goals, actions, and funding strategies. As part of any approved Consolidated Plan, all grantees must perform an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice or an Assessment of Fair Housing and must certify that they will affirmatively further fair housing. The report is called the Consolidated Plan because it includes a comprehensive strategy for multiple federal funding sources, including the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership (HOME), Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), and Housing Opportunities for Persons with Aids (HOPWA). While CDBG is a more flexible funding source that allows for investments in a variety of activities such as housing, economic development, and public service, other programs such as ESG and HOPWA are more targeted to specific housing and homelessness prevention activities.
- FY 2020/21 – FY 2022/23 Affordable Housing Investment Plan:** San José's Affordable Housing Investment Plan (AHIP) is a strategic document that prioritizes how the City will use its resources to implement its programs and policies in the current planning period to meet its housing objectives. The AHIP also contains information on key City policies related to residential developments. Some of the AHIP policies and priorities may overlap with those found in the state and federal plans; others may be unique to San José and are determined locally.

The City's Housing Element aligns with the goals contained in the General Plan, while also supporting the goals contained in the City's federal and local housing plans for a range of affordable housing

opportunities to low- and moderate-income workers, an effective response to homelessness, fair, equitable, and complete communities, and for sustainable, transit-oriented development.

1.3 Public Outreach and Engagement

1.3.1 Regulatory Context

State law (Section 65583[c][7]) of the California Government Code) requires cities and counties to make a diligent effort to achieve public participation that includes all economic segments of the community. Housing Elements must provide a summary of the public input received and a description of how it was considered and incorporated into the plan.

Assembly Bill 686, Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (2019) requires the Housing Element to include:

- a description of outreach activities intended to reach a broad audience;
- a list of organizations contacted and consulted in the process and for what purpose;
- a summary of comments and how the comments are considered and incorporated; and
- a summary of issues that contributed to lack of participation in the housing element process by all economic segments, particularly people with protected characteristics.

Key areas to seek input include:

- Review of Past Actions
- Assessment of Fair Housing
- Potential Constraints on Housing for Persons with Disabilities
- Policies and Actions

1.3.2 Overview of the Public Engagement Process

This Housing Element Update and associated Assessment of Fair Housing is based upon extensive community input. The City developed and implemented a robust public participation strategy to involve all segments of the population and gather a wide range of feedback on key components of the documents. The strategy involved using a variety of methods to involve the public and stakeholders, including:

1. Seven community meetings for the general public
2. Two online surveys
3. Twenty-one focus group meetings with residents of protected classes
4. Four working groups with leaders of local nonprofits
5. Six internal workshops with City staff from other departments
6. Forty-four roadshow presentations and discussions with stakeholder groups, such as business associations and community-based organizations
7. Five booths at community events

8. Four special community outreach events including a podcast and documentary movie screening
9. ~~Ten-Fourteen~~ public hearings of City Council, Council Committees, and City Commissions
10. Coordination with Santa Clara County's Let's Talk Housing (Planning Collaborative) and local partners (SV@Home and Law Foundation of Silicon Valley)

The approach to public engagement also involved broad and proactive outreach efforts to inform the public about opportunities to get involved, such as through email distribution lists, social media, and connections with a large network of community groups, who helped distribute information to their communities.

Since 2019, the City has conducted several phases of public outreach and engagement to share information and gather feedback to inform the Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) and the Housing Element. These phases are covered in the next section, along with descriptions of the specific outreach and engagement efforts, the input received, and examples of how the City considered and incorporated input into the plan. A list of all engagement activities and organizations consulted can be found in Appendix H.

Section 1.3.4 describes barriers to participation by protected classes and the inclusive methods that staff used to address the barriers and achieve more equitable outcomes in the process. For example, the process promoted language access by offering interpretation in Spanish and Vietnamese at community meetings, translating materials, and exploring specific methods to intentionally reach and involve limited English speaking community members. In addition, staff worked with the countywide equity collaborative partners SV@Home and the Law Foundation of Silicon Valley and consulted other local equity leaders throughout the process.

The City also considered and incorporated input received through several years of outreach and engagement on a range of housing and community development topics. Stakeholders have urged City staff to integrate public feedback from all recent housing-related outreach to help identify housing needs and potential strategies for the AFH and Housing Element. Accordingly, the project team involved staff from other departments and sought out relevant outreach findings. This approach was intended to recognize, value, and act on the contributions of the many community members who have shared their needs and ideas with the City, particularly protected classes who experience disproportionate barriers to civic engagement. The following section summarizes the City's specific outreach and engagement efforts, the input received, and examples of how the City considered and incorporated input into the plan. A list of all engagement activities and organizations consulted can be found in Appendix H.

1.3.3 Phases of Public Engagement and Input

The City strived to conduct a transparent and participatory process to involve all segments of the population and draw upon relevant outreach findings from other efforts. Input received during each major phase of the process informed the next. As a result, the document reflects the wide range of needs, perspectives, and ideas of the San José community.

Phase 1: Part 1 of the Assessment of Fair Housing

Time span: October 2019 to Spring 2020

The first phase of outreach focused on establishing existing conditions for the Assessment of Fair Housing. During this time, the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights (the City's consultant) and Housing

Department staff conducted a community engagement process through print and social media engagement, community meetings, focus groups, surveys, and the establishment of a countywide Santa Clara Assessment of Fair Housing Advisory Committee.

City staff and the Lawyers' Committee also conducted a second phase of community engagement (from April to May 2021) with government agency partners to share initial findings from the AFH analysis.

Public outreach during this phase included 48 meetings, including two public hearings, two advisory group meetings, 12 focus groups, 27 stakeholder meetings, and five intergovernmental agency meetings.

Key themes emerging from public input included:

- > The City is segregated. Discrimination in housing exists. It is important for the City to acknowledge these issues and start broader conversations with residents about history and legacy.
- > Displacement continues to happen and is causing harm to communities.
- > More needs to be done to protect residents from displacement and rent burden and provide affordable housing for all.

Input gathered during this phase formed the foundation for the Housing Element Update and the Assessment of Fair Housing. It spurred dialogue about fair housing in San José. Publicity of the public engagement and related conversations resulted in several news articles highlighting the City's history of racial segregation and its impacts. Examples of how staff adjusted course due to the input include:

- Held community conversations about the City's history of segregation, governmental racist practices in housing and how legacies of racial discrimination in housing manifest today during Phase 2. In the fall of 2021, the City presented at San José State's Racial Justice Symposium and held a documentary movie screening of "Reckoning in Boston" to spur these conversations.
- Held working groups in Phases 2 and 3 in the issue areas of top concern identified in Phase 1. These include: increasing homeownership opportunities for protected classes, increasing access to rental housing, increasing investment in under resourced neighborhoods, and increasing affordable housing in high resource neighborhoods. These working groups were designed to dive into issues areas to broaden understanding and explore solutions. Working groups members were selected for their related or lived experience and technical expertise.

Phase 2: Housing Element Kick-off and Part 2 of Assessment of Fair Housing

Time span: September 2021 to January 2022

Staff officially kicked off outreach on the Housing Element Update in September 2021, and proceeded to conduct joint AFH and Housing Element engagement activities since that time. The City began to work with several partners, including the Santa Clara County Collaborative (Let's Talk Housing) and the countywide equity collaborative partners SV@Home and the Law Foundation of Silicon Valley.

This phase focused on informing the public about the Housing Element Update process and fair housing concepts, given the new state requirements and the City Council's direction to engage the community on our history of segregation and need for fair housing. Another objective was to gather input on housing needs, issues, and goals. As part of this phase, staff sought input on the effectiveness of current and past housing policies, the findings of Part 1 of the AFH process, and potential constraints on securing and maintaining safe, affordable, and accessible housing.

Public outreach during this phase included:

- Two virtual community meetings.
- Four focus groups with members of protected classes, including disability, veterans, LGBTQ+ and African ancestry.
- One strategy working group meeting about access to rental housing.
- Eight stakeholder meetings, including South Bay Yes in My Backyard (YIMBY) and League of Women Voters.
- Tabling at five community events.
- A panel discussion on the history of segregation in San José at San José State University's Racial Justice Symposium.
- A special screening of the documentary A Reckoning in Boston followed by a discussion with the producers.
- A City sponsored podcast about housing elements and fair housing.
- An online survey (September 17, 2021, to January 12, 2022) asking about housing priorities; the survey was advertised at City events, on the City's website and social media platforms, including Facebook ads in Spanish and Vietnamese. It received 335 responses in English, 155 in Spanish, and 150 in Vietnamese (640 total).

Key themes emerging from public input included:

- > Homelessness is increasing and is a major issue.
- > Housing costs in San José are too high.
- > Homebuyer assistance that requires housing to remain affordable doesn't allow wealth building benefits to the homeowner.

This input informed the draft concepts presented in the focus groups with protected classes and stakeholders in Phase 3 and informed the Draft Goals presented in the April Online Survey. Specific examples of ways that staff adjusted course due to the input include:

- Consistent feedback from community about displacement and its impacts led the City to include several anti-displacement strategies (tenant preferences, Community Opportunity to Purchase, and expansion of tenant protections) already approved by City Council, more prominently in Housing Element strategies.
- Low responses received from people of color, especially for non-English proficient, in online formats (surveys and meetings) led to planning for at least one in-person community meeting.
- Feedback regarding a need for systems change to advance homeownership opportunities resulted in a shift in thinking. It led to more creativity about other types of wealth or asset building strategies and comprehensive reform of homeownership programming.

Phase 3: Draft Goals, Strategies, and Policies

Time span: January 2022 to June 2022

The primary objective during this phase was to get feedback on draft goals, strategies, policies, programs, and actions. It also involved ongoing education about fair housing concepts and associated input.

Public outreach during this phase included:

- Four focus groups with people of protected classes, including formerly homeless, LGBTQ+,

affordable housing residents and Indigenous Peoples.

- Ten working group meetings corresponding to four fair housing strategy areas
- Two virtual community meetings
- One in-person community meeting
- Four Commission meetings
- Four stakeholder meetings
- An online survey that ran the month of April 2022. It was advertised at City events and on the City's website, and social media platforms, including Facebook ads in Spanish and Vietnamese. It received 713 responses in English, 92 in Spanish, and 10 in Vietnamese (815 total).

Key themes emerging from public input included:

- > It takes too long to get anything built. The City needs to speed up processes for housing production.
- > Reparations are needed for redlined neighborhoods.
- > Instead of thinking about funding as dividing up a set amount, funding can be thought of more creatively and expansively.

The input from the focus groups, online survey, and community meetings shaped the draft strategies, programs, and policies included in the Housing Element Update. Specific examples of ways that staff adjusted course due to the input include:

- Staff incorporated the prioritization and ideas from the focus groups into the draft policies shared at the community meetings.
- Staff is proposing several policies to speed up the entitlement process including housing navigator, streamlined review, and a City-led environmental clearance for approved urban village plans.
- City adapted a working group process when participants of the high and low resource working groups found that they could not discuss one topic without the other. So, the issues were combined into one topic area and discussed together at subsequent community meetings.
- Comments about land use reparations for redlined neighborhoods and comprehensive investments in neighborhoods spurred discussions to have cross-departmental city-internal working group to better coordinate and prioritize investments and policies to address lower-income and racially segregated neighborhoods.

Phase 4: Public Review Draft of the Housing Element

Time span: July 2022 to August 2022

The primary objective during this phase was to collect comments on the Draft Housing Element Update. It focused on the draft site inventory, constraints analysis, and the full list of draft goals, strategies, and policies. It also involved ongoing dialogue about housing needs and fair housing concepts. The official comment period ran from July 22, 2022 to August 21, 2022.

Public outreach and engagement during this phase included:

- One virtual community meeting
- One in-person, open house style community meeting

- 5 stakeholder meetings (including Equity Advisory Group, Sacred Heart Action Committee Meeting, and California Apartment Association)
- One tabling event at Vietnamese American Organization's Community Day
- An online comment form

Staff received 17 comments letters and 17 online form submissions during the 30-day comment period. Approximately 40 people attended the virtual meeting and approximately 40 attended the in-person event. Staff advertised the comment period and associated engagement events through email lists, social media, and coordination with Council offices and CBOs.

Key themes emerging from public input included:

- > Strategies lack specific metrics to make them actionable.
- > Neighborhood opposition is a constraint to building housing.
- > Increase representation of people with lived experience in policy development as well as decision-making processes.
- > Increase tenant protections.
- > Avoid encampment sweeps.
- > Increase code enforcement capacity.
- > Allocate and increase funding for proposed programs.

The input shaped the strategies, programs, and policies included in the Housing Element Update. Specific examples of ways that staff adjusted course due to the input include:

- Staff examined neighborhood opposition and urban villages as constraints to building housing, and included analysis in the Housing Element Update.
- Staff expanded analysis to include demographics of who lives in single family homes and duplexes.
- Included data on families experiencing domestic violence to housing needs section.
- Added additional notes from past focus groups and stakeholder meetings to outreach appendix.
- Removed sites from site inventory based on public feedback

Future Public Hearing Phases

Time span: September 2022 to Present

The final phase of outreach occurs during the public hearing process, which will culminate with City Council consideration of the Housing Element Update. During this time, staff will take the Housing Element Update to various City and County commissions for recommendations. The public will have opportunity to submit comment letters and provide oral testimony at the hearings. For details, visit www.sanjoseca.gov/HousingElementUpdate.

~~Staff is planning to continue~~ has continued outreach during ~~the HCD review~~ this phase period, ~~focusing on target populations and~~ by following up with stakeholders and continuing to receive feedback. Staff ~~will then~~ continues to incorporate input and address HCD comments.

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~~Update to various City and County commissions for recommendations. The public will have opportunity to submit comment letters and provide oral testimony at the hearings. For details, visit www.sanjoseca.gov/HousingElementUpdate.~~

1.3.4 Inclusive Engagement

The City made diligent efforts to include all demographic segments of the community and/or their representatives in the development and update of the Draft Housing Element. In addition to meeting this baseline requirement, the goal is to achieve balanced representation in the planning process and meaningful participation among protected classes.

For planning and community development processes in San José, certain demographic groups are often underrepresented relative to their share of the city's population. Examples include: youth/young adults, people of color, people with limited English proficiency, lower income households, renters, and people experiencing housing insecurity. Examples of issues that contribute to under-representation in planning processes, including the Housing Element Update, include:

- **COVID-19 pandemic:** The pandemic has had a significant impact on staff's ability to conduct in-person engagement and on the capacity of community-based organizations to engage in the process. Staff has found that some harder-to-reach populations are less likely to participate in virtual meetings compared to in-person meetings. This is particularly true for Vietnamese speaking population, which tends to be older. Outreach tends to be most effective when it is integrated into regularly scheduled community events hosted or co-hosted by non-City groups – yet the pandemic has made this type of coordination extra challenging.
- **Language and communication:** Even with translation and interpretation in the City's most common languages built into the process, fully participating in the process as a non-English speaker is a challenge. There is the potential for the information to "get lost in translation" and many phrases related to housing, planning, and policy do not easily translate to other languages. Even for English-speakers, the terminology can be confusing and speaking up in a community to share your experiences and opinions can be intimidating.
- **Time and resources:** Staff has found that lower-income community members face extra logistical barriers to participation compared to higher-income community members. For example, needing to work multiple jobs and/or working in the evening and weekends conflicts with most of the engagement events. Securing affordable childcare, internet, and/or transportation can be a challenge. Furthermore, lower-income community members are more likely to face urgent concerns on a daily basis, such as keeping housed and bills paid, and participating in long-term planning processes is an added burden and lower priority.
- **Trust:** Among many community members, there is a general mistrust in government due to patterns of discrimination, decision-making that has marginalized many communities, and inequitable outcomes – as well as macro issues that go beyond the control of local government. Community members that do participate in planning processes often get burnt out by answering the same questions for different projects, and when little action or no notable change results from their feedback, it further undermines trust.

Applying an Equity Lens

With these considerations in mind, City staff applied an equity lens when designing the approach to public outreach. This means paying special attention to underrepresented populations while offering

meaningful opportunities, in a variety of venues, for all interested individuals and organizations to get involved. Specific practices included:

- For each round, staff offered a mix of methods and opportunities for community members to learn about and provide feedback on the planning process – recognizing there is no one-size-fits-all method. For example, as pandemic-related constraints eased up, staff reintroduced in-person meetings to draw in people that, for many reasons, were not participating in the virtual methods. Staff also tabled at five community events, in order to meet people where they are, not just invite them to attend City-hosted meetings.
- Special attention was paid to language access for Spanish and Vietnamese speakers (the second and third most spoken languages in San José, after English). Staff offered interpretation at the community meetings, translated the online surveys and the outreach materials advertising the meetings and surveys and ran Facebook ads. These efforts were particularly successful for the Fall 2021 online survey, which received 155 responses in Spanish and 150 in Vietnamese (out of 640 total)
- Staff scheduled the community meetings aimed at the general public in the evenings (and one on the weekend) and offered alternative meeting times and methods to increase opportunities to provide input. Staff also offered refreshments and activities for children at the in-person meetings.
- For the community meetings and surveys, staff paid special attention to using clear language with minimal jargon. The messages used in outreach materials were intended to make the process welcoming, relevant, and interesting. In seeking feedback, staff strove to break down the material in manageable ways and make it easy for people to comment only on what interested them most. For example, staff adjusted the April 2022 survey in response to feedback from the community about its user friendliness.
- Staff paid attention to accessibility for persons with disabilities by consulting with the Housing Department’s accessibility specialist, reviewing communications against accessibility standards and making revisions accordingly, providing extensive remote participation opportunities, offering reasonable accommodations, and hosting a focus group for people with disabilities.
- Staff also partnered with several local organizations to encourage direct participation in the process among underrepresented populations and communities with protected characteristics, as well as to indirectly represent these populations through their relationship to these communities. By partnering with local organizations, opportunities for connections and trust with underrepresented populations can be built. Staff met regularly with SV@Home and Law Foundation of Silicon Valley as the countywide equity collaborative partners, and met early on with the Race Equity Action Leadership (REAL) Coalition, comprised of local non-profit organizations, service providers, and advocacy organizations. Staff also involved sending email updates to a list of approximately 100 community leaders and preparing outreach materials that could be easily distributed. As an example of the impact of these efforts, SOMOS Mayfair helped bring about 15 people to the June 4, 2022 in-person meeting, bringing new voices and the perspectives of Latino/a/x , immigrant, and limited English-speaking residents.¹

¹ SOMOS Mayfair is a community-based organization that supports East San Jose residents and promotes

- Focus groups were a key method for reaching underrepresented populations. Staff hosted 21 focus groups of people from protected classes, such as unhoused people, LGBTQ+, veterans, survivors of gender violence, and people of Black/African ancestry. Another important method was the working groups with leaders of local nonprofits, many of which directly or indirectly represent the interests of lower income populations.
- Staff has found that attending meetings hosted by community groups is one of the most effective ways at reaching a broad range of community members and at engaging in meaningful dialogue. Therefore, a significant amount of staff's outreach efforts was dedicated to roadshow meetings and presentations (a total of 44). Examples of community groups reached through this method include: Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits, Destination Home, League of Women Voters, Chamber of Commerce Public Policy Committee (Housing and Land Use), and the San Francisco Bay Area Planning and Urban Research Association (SPUR). Refer to Appendix H for the complete list.
- Lastly, the project team brought in community input from other City projects (separate from the Housing Element Update), particularly from protected classes and/or low resource areas. The team has mainly done this through interdepartmental workshops and requests for information. The intent was to honor the time and insights from community members, regardless of the context in which they provided input to the City, which helps to avoid community burnout and increases the impact of the feedback. See the following section for additional details.

The overall mix of engagement activities and use of best practices has helped reach a wide variety of perspectives and ensure at least some representation across key demographic indicators. Staff is consistently evaluating the process and making adjustments to get more inclusive outcomes. For example, the project team is pursuing specific methods to more effectively reach and involve the Vietnamese community, such as attending events at the Vietnamese American Community Center.

equitable community development in Mayfair, a “working poor and immigrant neighborhood” that has predominantly has many first- and second-generation Mexican-origin families. Source: <https://www.somosmayfair.org/about>.

1.3.5 Other Community Engagement Efforts

The City of San José has conducted a variety of outreach and engagement efforts in recent years that relate to housing, neighborhoods, and community development. Outlined below are eight such efforts that engaged the community and solicited feedback directly related to housing issues during the same period during which City staff was conducting the Housing Element/Assessment of Fair Housing process.

The City coordinated these efforts whenever possible. For example, separate community engagement activities for the Assessment of Fair Housing and the Consolidated Plan focused on those topics but input from both outreach processes was intended to inform both plans.

Community Opportunity to Purchase Program (COPA)

A COPA program would give a qualified nonprofit buyer the right to make a first offer on a residential property covered by the program that is up for sale. The purpose of COPA is to enable more properties to become restricted affordable, to the extent that City subsidies were available, and be owned by mission-oriented nonprofit organizations that would cooperate with the City to keep them affordable. Outreach on a potential COPA program in San Jose consisted of 2 phases:

- Phase 1, between April 1, 2021 to November 30, 2021, included a series of working group meetings made up of two groups, a technical advisory committee and a stakeholder advisory committee. A total of 227 people participated in the meetings and engaged and offered input on COPA. The Working Group included community members and leaders from all council districts across the city and included voices of those who will be directly impacted by the policy: apartment owners, tenants, housing providers, developers, realtors, and housing advocates. Attendees were approximately evenly split between owners and renters and evenly distributed in age ranges.
- Phase 2 commenced December 1, 2021 and ran through February 9, 2022. Almost 200 people attended one of the 7 online public meetings and 274 questions or comments were received, either at the public meeting or via email.

Project Homekey

Project HomeKey is an opportunity for the City to develop a broad range of housing types and convert commercial properties and buildings to permanent or interim housing. The City of San José has hosted a series of community meetings to share information about the State-funded program and gather feedback from residents. A total of 5 meetings were held between October 2021 to February 2022. Each meeting focused on specific sites.

Diridon Station Area Affordable Housing Implementation Plan

Between 2018-2021, the City conducted a [comprehensive community engagement process on the Diridon Station Area](#), including a proposed mixed-use development by Google. The process was designed to involve underrepresented populations through partnerships with community-based organizations and other inclusive methods. Concerns about displacement and calls for abundant affordable housing and social equity were key themes of the process.

During this time, the City prepared the Diridon Affordable Housing Implementation Plan (“Diridon Housing Plan”) to address housing-related concerns and goals. The Diridon Housing Plan includes strategies and policies, taking a “3Ps” approach: production of new affordable housing units,

preservation of affordable homes for lower-income residents, and protection of vulnerable residents from displacement. The production strategy focuses on the Diridon Station Area Plan (DSAP), while the preservation and protection strategies focus on the and surrounding half-mile (referred to as the Neighborhood Stabilization Area).

The City Council adopted the Diridon Housing Plan in May 2021. Achievement of the plan's goals will require a joint effort between the City, the community, and external funders in the private and philanthropic sectors. One source of funding will be from the community benefit contributions made by Google under the [Downtown West Development Agreement](#).

Affordable Housing Siting Policy

The Affordable Housing Siting Policy is intended to help the City affirmatively further fair housing by increasing affordable housing in higher opportunity neighborhoods of choice and also mitigating displacement. The Housing Department and consultant team hosted eleven listening sessions with more than 250 residents, advocates, developers, and affordable housing residents across the City between February and May 2021 to solicit input on the Siting Policy.

2020-2025 Consolidated Plan

Outreach for the Consolidated Plan included additional activities, including three public hearings, 21 stakeholder interviews, a paper and online survey, and two pop-up tabling events. From fall 2019 to mid-2021, the AFH and Consolidated Plan public outreach process together engaged a total of 476 people in-person through public community meetings events and collected 648 written and online surveys. The surveys were available in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Chinese.

General Plan Four-Year Review Task Force

The General Plan establishes a four-year review cycle, providing an opportunity to evaluate the City's achievement of key goals and mid-course adjustments to the General Plan. As part of this review staff evaluated and the Taskforce provided feedback on the following housing-related topics: Urban Village Implementation and Affordable Housing Goals, Opportunity Housing, Residential Uses in Underutilized Business Corridors and Commercial Space Requirements for Affordable Developments,

This work was done through open, public meetings of the Envision San José 2040 Task Force and City Council from Fall of 2019 to Spring of 2021. City staff hosted a total of 10 community meetings following each of the public Task Force meetings on various General Plan Four-Year Review Topics. The public was also invited to attend each of the Task Force meetings. More than 1,000 people attended across the meetings. Public comments were taken at each meeting, each commission and council meeting, and also received in written format.

Citywide Residential Anti-Displacement Strategy

City staff engaged an estimated 800 to 1,000 community members and stakeholders through a variety of events and activities over close to two years of work on developing the Citywide Residential Anti-Displacement Strategy.

- Early 2018 to early 2019 - Outreach included a series of interviews and focus groups to learn directly from residents who lived in neighborhoods that were experiencing ongoing displacement and from those who had been displaced in the past.

- Summer 2019 to winter 2020 - Staff gathered feedback on potential anti-displacement solutions and received new ideas from a broad base of stakeholders at both public and one-on-one meetings.
- Early 2020 - Staff conducted outreach to real estate professionals and other stakeholders in early 2020 to get their perspectives.

This input helped to generate the list of recommendations included in the anti-displacement strategy.

Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing

Organizations, agencies, and persons were directly engaged via outreach efforts and asked to share materials with their beneficiaries, partners, and contacts between 2014 and 2016. These stakeholders were also encouraged to promote attendance at the public forums and to solicit responses to the Regional Needs Survey. Stakeholder engagement included phone calls, targeted emails, newsletter announcements, social media posts, and personalized requests from jurisdiction staff. Through these communications, stakeholders were invited to participate in one of the forums planned throughout the County and to submit survey responses. A total of 1,472 responses were collected. Approximately 1,225 printed flyers noticing the regional forums were distributed throughout the County, including at libraries, recreation centers, community meetings, and organizations benefiting LMI residents and areas. These flyers were available online and in print in English and Spanish. Multilingual print advertisements in local newspapers were posted in the Gilroy Dispatch (English), Mountain View Voice (English), El Observador (Spanish), La Oferta (Spanish), Thoi Bao (Vietnamese), Philippine News (Tagalog), World Journal (Chinese) and San José Mercury News (English). In addition, an online display ad was placed in the San José Mercury News to reach readers electronically. Each segment of the community outreach and planning process was transparent to ensure the public was aware its input was being collected, reviewed, and considered.