

Chico Housing Element

2022 Update



What is the Housing Element?

Purpose

California requires that all local governments (cities and counties) adequately plan to meet the housing needs of everyone in the community. California's local governments meet this requirement by adopting Housing Elements as part of their General Plan.

General Plans serve as the local government's "blueprint" for how the city and/or county will grow and develop over a 15-20 year period, and include a minimum of seven mandatory elements: land use, transportation, conservation, noise, open space, safety, and housing. California's housing element law acknowledges that, in order for the private market to adequately address the housing needs and demand of Californians, local governments must adopt plans and regulatory systems that provide opportunities for and do not unduly constrain, housing development. As a result, housing policy in California rests largely on the effective implementation of local general plans and, in particular, local housing elements.

General Plans are updated approximately every 20 years, while Housing Elements are on "cycles" that are either 5 or 8 years apart, with Chico on an 8-year cycle. The current Chico Housing Element was adopted in 2014.

The philosophy behind the Housing Element law is that in order for the private market to adequately address the housing needs and demand of Californians, local governments must adopt plans and regulatory systems that provide opportunities for (and do not unduly constrain) housing development.

The local Housing Element is a key policy document that forms a foundation of support for housing production. It sets goals for the allocation of funding, program coordination and zoning of land. Goals are formulated by soliciting community participation, reviewing progress on the previous Housing Element, analyzing housing needs, documenting resources and assessing constraints.

A key part of the Housing Element lays out strategies to address the needs of community residents that are not typically met by the private market, such as low-income households, seniors, people with disabilities and people experiencing homelessness.

What is the Housing Element?

Planning

Since 1969, Housing Elements have been required aspects of local general plans in California because providing housing for all Californians is considered by the state legislature to be of statewide importance. A Housing Element provides an analysis of a community's housing needs for all income levels, along with strategies and action plans for responding to those housing needs.

The Housing Element is a critical part of the Chico's overall General Plan. California State Law establishes that each city accommodate its fair share of affordable housing as an approach to distributing housing needs throughout the state. State Housing Element law also recognizes that in order for the private sector to address housing needs and demand, local governments must adopt land-use plans and implementing regulations that provide opportunities for, and do not unduly constrain, housing development by the private sector.

Guidelines and requirements regarding Housing Elements can be found in the California Government Code Sections 65580-65589.

Housing issues affect the entire community – residents, employers, and the public and private sectors. State Housing Element law requires that local jurisdictions consult with the public, and include a cross section of constituents in the analysis of needs and development of goals to pursue. This ensures broad participation in defining the housing problem and in crafting solutions that work for everyone in the community.

The Housing Element also includes an analysis of quantitative data to:

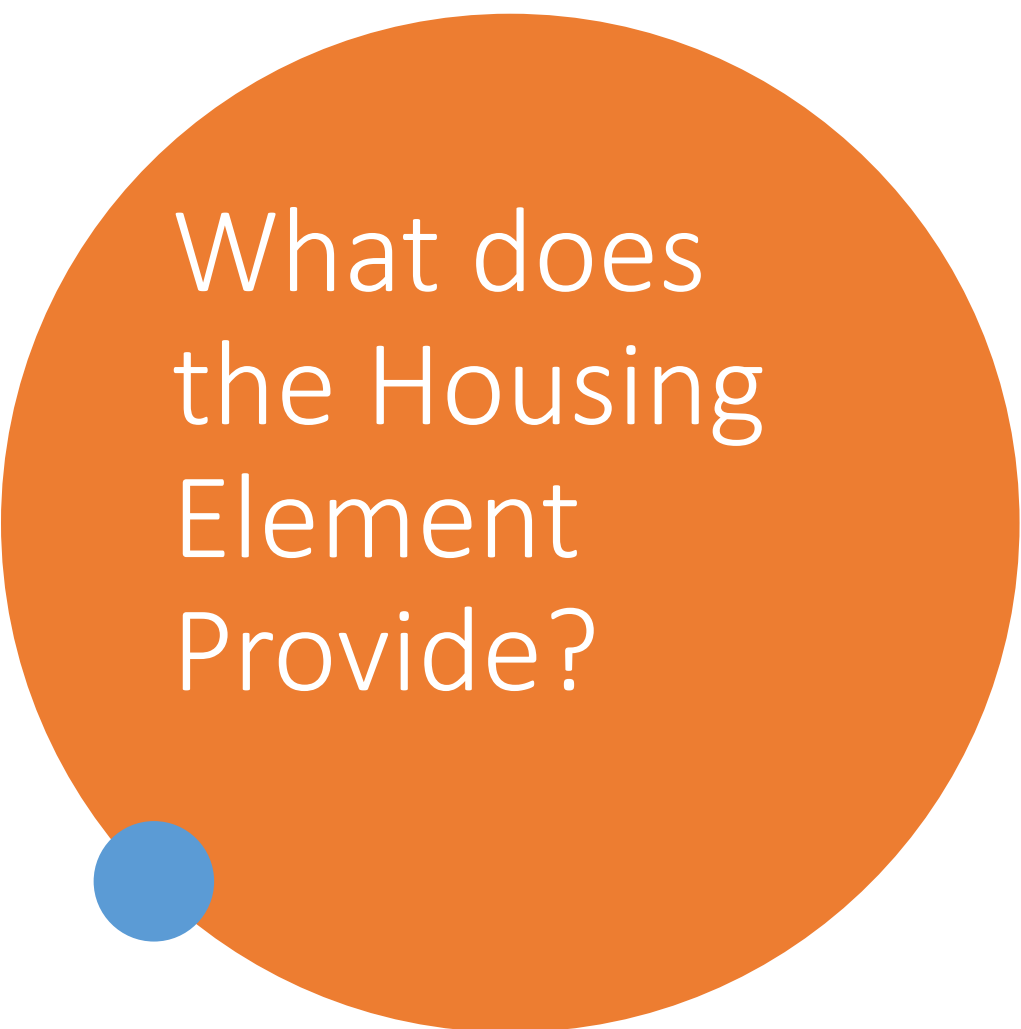

- Ascertain demographic and socioeconomic conditions
- Inventory local resources such as developable land, financial resources for housing development and energy conservation opportunities
- Analyze both governmental and non-governmental constraints to development
- Assess impediments to fair housing

What is the Housing Element?

Participation

There are a number of ways to stay informed and plug into opportunities to provide your input on Chico's Housing Element update:

- **Website:** Regular updates, informative written materials and videos, meeting notices and drafts of the Housing Element document will be posted on this website, which is the central hub for information sharing.
- **Social Media:** Follow the City on Facebook and Instagram to receive regular updates on progress and reminders about opportunities to participate, along with findings from research and public meetings.
- **Online Surveys:** The City will post links to online surveys designed to solicit input on housing needs and goals. Online surveys will take place in February and August/September 2021.
- **Virtual Community Workshops:** Due to the need to observe safe practices during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, community meetings will be held online using the Zoom webinar platform. Engagement of community members will be accomplished through the use of various Zoom features such as polls, interactive Question and Answer sessions, breakout rooms, as well as dynamic notetaking.



What does the Housing Element Provide?

The Housing Element will:

- Perform an analysis of housing needs in Chico, CA based on demographics and socioeconomic conditions
- Inventory the resources available to support housing development
- Shape goals, policies and actions that address housing needs based on these analyses and the collective vision of our community
- Establish a guiding framework for future legislation to follow

The Housing Element will shape the goals, policies and actions that address housing needs based on these analyses and the collective vision of our community.

What is Affordable Housing?

- In broad terms, affordability is simply the relationship between housing costs and income. The generally accepted measure for housing affordability is spending less than 30% of one's gross household income on housing costs (including utilities, rent or mortgage principal and interest). Often times, the term workforce housing is also used to describe affordable housing.
- In the context of Housing Elements, affordable housing generally focuses on housing for extremely low, very low, low and moderate income households, but may also address housing for above moderate income households.

Draft & Revisions

Initial Draft Housing Element “v1”:

For the Initial Draft “v1”, the City conducted a 83-day public comment period between May 12, 2022 and August 2, 2022 and spent 25 business days between August 3, 2022 and September 7, 2022 incorporating revisions based on feedback received. On September 7, 2022, the City of Chico submitted its Initial Draft Housing Element “v1” to the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for a 90-day review concluding on December 6, 2022 and received preliminary comments from HCD on November 10, 2022.

Revised Draft Housing Element “v2”:

In response to the preliminary comments from HCD, the City posted a Revised Draft Housing Element “v2” on the City’s Housing Element website on November 22, 2022 and sent an email to all Chico Housing Element subscribers to solicit comments between November 22, 2022 and November 30, 2022 (7 days). Edits to the initial draft “v1” are shown in track changes in “v2”. The Revised Draft Housing Element “v2” was not adopted by the Chico City Council. The purpose of this draft was to respond to HCD’s requests within the initial draft 90-day review period.

Revised Draft Housing Element “v3”:

After its review of “v2”, HCD sent a letter to the City on December 5, 2022, in which it requested further edits to the document. In response to these comments, the City posted a Revised Draft Housing Element “v3” on this website on April 6 2023 and sent an email to all Chico Housing Element subscribers to solicit comments between April 7, 2023 and April 13,2023 (7 days). The City received preliminary comments from HCD in May 2023. Revised Draft “v3” was updated in response to these comments. The City sent an email to all Chico Housing Element subscribers to solicit comments between June 15 and June 22, 2023. Edits to the revised draft “v2” are shown in track changes in “v3”. The Revised Draft Housing Element “v3” was not adopted by the Chico City Council. The purpose of this draft was to respond to HCD’s December 5, 2022 letter and subsequent HCD May 2023 comments.

Revised Draft Housing Element “v4”:

After its review of “v3”, HCD requested final minor edits to the document, with an indication that HCD would be ready to certify the document with these edits. In response, the City posted Revised Draft Housing Element “v4” on this website on August 15, 2023 and sent an email to all Chico Housing Element subscribers to solicit comments between August 16, 2023 and August 22, 2023 (7 days). In addition to the entire Housing Element document, a summary of the edits in “v4” are available to download at the links below. The City submitted “v4” to HCD on August 23, 2023.

Housing Element Adoption:

The City received a letter from HCD on August 24, 2023 indicating that the “v4” draft Housing Element is in compliance with State Housing Element law and is ready for adoption. The City has scheduled a public hearing to adopt this version of the Housing Element on September 19, 2023 at 6:00 pm. The hearing will take place at the City Council Chamber, 421 Main Street, Chico. The final Housing Element document proposed for adoption and HCD’s letter can be downloaded at the links below.

Resources and Documents

All items available by request –
please email cityhousing@chicoca.gov

Housing Element process:

Initial Draft “V1”

Revised Draft “V2”

Revised Draft “V3”

Revised Draft “V4”

Final Draft 9/19/23

Sites Inventory

Official Correspondence between City and HCD

Community Meeting #1

- On February 10, 2021, the City invited residents to participate in a live webinar and discussion on housing challenges and possibilities. Community input and feedback gathered during this event will help define the priorities for housing in our City and influence future housing policies. Access the materials from the webinar and breakout groups here.

BCAG Regional Housing Needs Plan

- This document describes the methodology for the Regional Housing Needs Allocation for the 2022-2030 Housing Element Update (6th Housing Element Cycle). A major goal of the RHNP is to ensure a fair distribution of housing among the cities and county, so that every community provides an opportunity for a variety of housing affordable to all economic segments.

Current 2014-2022 Housing Element

- The 2022 Housing Element Update planning process will perform an extensive update of the 2014 Housing Element’s policies to ensure that policies reflect current values, housing needs, and conditions. You can download the City’s Housing Element for the period 2014-2022 here.

Housing Accountability Act

- The Housing Accountability Act (HAA) establishes the state’s overarching policy that a local government may not deny, reduce the density of, or make infeasible housing development projects, emergency shelters, or farmworker housing that are consistent with objective local development standards.

Accessory Dwelling Units

- ADUs are a unique opportunity to address a variety of housing needs and provide affordable housing options for family members, friends, students, the elderly, in-home health care providers, people with disabilities, and others. The State has published an ADU Handbook to assist local governments in encouraging the development of ADUs that you can download below. The City of Chico has developed resources to aid in the development of ADUs that can be found on their website: www.chico.ca.us/adujadu-information

Understanding the Cost of Developing Affordable Housing

- This interactive tool from the Urban Institute puts you in the driver’s seat of an affordable housing development to explore the variables that affect its development, and better understand why government subsidies are needed to create, preserve and operate affordable housing.

Development Process Overview

- This document provides a brief overview of a Typical Financing Stack and a simple outline of a typical affordable rental housing development process for a new development (4% tax credit).

Community Meeting #2

- On August 11, 2021, the City invited residents to participate in a live webinar and discussion on housing goals and activities. Community input and feedback gathered during this event will help define the priorities for housing in our City and influence future housing policies. Access the materials from the webinar presentation and breakout groups here.

Definitions of Frequently Used Terms in the Housing Element

- This document provides a brief overview of terms which are found frequently in the Housing Element document and used during community discussions.

