

HOUSING ELEMENT 101 FACT SHEET

What is a Housing Element?

The Housing Element is how the County of Monterey plans to meet existing and future housing needs of its residents for all income levels. It includes goals, policies, programs, and strategies to accommodate the County's expected population growth, provide opportunities for new housing, and preserve the existing housing stock. As a core element of the County's General Plan, the Housing Element must be consistent with the other elements of the General Plan and include:

- A community demographic profile and analysis of population growth and trends;
- A list of available land suitable for housing development;
- An evaluation of local constraints or barriers to housing development as well as opportunities to develop housing; and
- Housing goals, programs, policies, and resources for improving and creating housing within the County.

Why update the Housing Element?

The update to the Housing Element covers the eight-year planning period from 2023-2031 (6th Cycle) and is an opportunity to evaluate the previous element to determine which parts have been effective and which should be improved. It also provides an opportunity for residents to get involved and help determine housing priorities, thereby helping to ensure that the County is responding to residents' changing needs.

California State law requires that local jurisdictions update the Housing Element every eight years. The updated Housing Element must be adopted by the County of Monterey Board of Supervisors and submitted to the State Department of Housing and Community Development Department no later than December 31, 2023. If this deadline is missed, the County could lose eligibility for significant sources of funding currently provided by the State, including critical infrastructure and transportation funds, and the county's local land use decision-making authority could be limited.

How is the Housing Element implemented?

The Housing Element sets goals, objectives, policies, and programs that direct decision-making around housing. When a new housing program, project, or idea is considered, the Housing Element provides guidance for decision makers to evaluate the proposal.

How much housing is needed?

Every eight years, each region in California receives a target number of homes to plan for from the State. This is called the Regional Housing Needs Allocation or RHNA. Monterey County is in the region administered by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG). AMBAG, with input from jurisdictions in its three-county area (Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San

Benito County), takes the number of housing units it receives from the State and divides it among those jurisdictions, including the unincorporated area of Monterey County.

For the 6th Cycle Housing Element, the unincorporated County's share of the RHNA is 3,326 units, split among different income levels (based on Area Median Income, or AMI) as shown in the table below.

**County of Monterey
Regional Housing Needs Assessment 2023-2031 Assigned by AMBAG**

Income Group	County Unincorporated Units	All Monterey County Jurisdiction Units	Unincorporated County %
Very Low Income (<50% AMI ¹)	1,070	4,412	24.2%
Low Income (50%-80%AMI)	700	2,883	24.2%
Moderate Income (80%-120% AMI)	420	4,028	10.4%
Above Moderate Income (>120% AMI)	1,136	8,972	12.6%
Total	3,326	20,295	16.3%

For more information about RHNA, please visit the AMBAG website at <https://www.ambag.org/plans/regional-housing-planning>

Is the County required to build housing?

The County must show through its Housing Element that it has the land use regulations and policies to accommodate its housing needs, but State law does not require jurisdictions to build or finance new housing. Development of housing is primarily done by the private market.

The Housing Element is required to demonstrate potential sites where the County's RHNA share can be accommodated. Identification that a site has capacity for housing, however, does not guarantee that construction will occur on that site, and development of any site occurs only at the will of the property owner. If there are insufficient sites and capacity to meet the RHNA allocation, then the Housing Element is required to identify a rezoning program to create the required capacity.

Stay Up to Date on the Process!

Visit www.co.monterey.ca.us/GeneralPlanUpdates for progress updates and engagement opportunities.

For more information on the Housing Element Update or to be added to the public distribution email list to receive updates, contact County Housing and Community Development Department by email at GeneralPlanUpdates@co.monterey.ca.us or phone Jaime Scott Guthrie at (831) 796-6414 (English) or Edgar Sanchez at (831) 783-7058 (Spanish).

¹ "AMI" means "Area Median Income" as defined by the California State Department of Housing and Community Development for County of Monterey.

How Can I Get Involved?

Thank you for wanting to get involved and have your voice heard! As the Housing Element is developed, the County will offer multiple engagement activities for your participation. There will be opportunities to complete a community feedback survey, comment on draft documents and attend public meetings. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, these engagement activities will be mostly online and through Zoom meetings.

Sign Up Now!

Join the email list to be notified of involvement opportunities and updates to the Housing Element! Please email GeneralPlanUpdates@co.monterey.ca.us to be added to our interest list.