



# What is a Housing Element and Why is it Important?

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Ad Hoc Housing Committee

Town of Portola Valley



# Key Topics

What is a Housing Element?

Legal Framework

Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) Methodology

Local/Regional Context and Housing Strategic Plan



# What's a General Plan?

- Long-range, comprehensive, visioning document, organized into chapters/elements:
  1. Land Use
  2. Open Space
  3. Circulation
  4. Safety
  5. Conservation
  6. Noise
  7. Housing
- All land use approvals and decisions must be consistent with Plan



# What is a Housing Element?

- Goals, polices, and actions that help the Town plan for housing
- Embodiment of Town values
- Eight-year cycle 2023-2031
- Key Housing Element content:
  - Housing needs and trends
  - Constraints analysis
  - Evaluation of past performance
  - Policies and programs
  - Sites Inventory to ensure enough land zoned for housing to meet Reginal Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)



# Legal Framework

- Mandatory Element of General Plan per State law
- Prescribed and enforced by:  
California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)
- “Teeth” to Housing Element Law compliance



# Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)

- Key drivers of the Housing Element
- Prescribed number of housing units, at various economic levels, that a municipality must plan for
- Overall goal? All Bay Area jurisdictions take on its fair share of the state's housing needs for people of all income levels
- HCD determines overall units for nine-county Bay Area
- Responsibility: Association of Bay Area Governments-Metropolitan Transportation Commission (ABAG-MTC)



# RHNA Methodology



# Portola Valley's RHNA

Income Level	Number of Units
Very Low Income (<50% of Area Median Income)	73
Low Income (80% of Area Median Income)	42
Moderate Income (80-120% of Area Median Income)	39
Above Moderate Income (>120% of Area Median Income)	99
<b>Total</b>	<b>253</b>





# County Income Levels

## Income Levels

### Extremely Low Income:

- \$38,400 for a single person
- \$43,850 for a family of two
- \$54,800 for a family of four

### Very Low Income:

- \$63,950 for a single person
- \$73,100 for a family of two
- \$91,350 for a family of four

### Low Income:

- \$102,450 for a single person
- \$146,350 for a family of four
- \$117,100 for a family of two

### Moderate Income:

- \$125,650 for a single person
- \$139,200 to \$208,800 for a family of four
- \$111,360 to \$167,040 for a family of two

# Regional Context

- For every six low-wage jobs in San Mateo County – ~\$20/hr – there's only one affordable home (\$1500/month, 50% of the full-time wage of a low wage worker)

Occupation	Hourly Wage	Annual Income	Income Category (%)	% Income on Housing
Grocery Store Clerk or Barista	\$15	\$29,000	Extremely Low (<30%)	81%
Hair Stylist	\$22	\$42,000	Very Low Income (<50%)	62%
Preschool Teacher or Medical assistant	\$27	\$52,000	Very Low Income (<50%)	45%
School Admin or Social Worker	\$45	\$86,000	Low Income (<80%)	27%

# Housing in Portola Valley

- Priority for Town Council
- 2016 Housing Strategic Plan identifies negative impacts to the community caused by the high cost Bay Area housing and limited housing options in Portola Valley
- Three Underserved Populations:
  1. Seniors and “empty nesters”
  2. Young adults
  3. Employees of Town businesses
- Six key strategies
  1. ADUs
  2. Town-owned property
  3. Affiliated Housing
  4. Affordable Housing Funds
  5. Shared Housing
  6. Community Engagement

