



TOWN of PORTOLA VALLEY

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April 8, 2022

PORTOLA VALLEY HOUSING ELEMENT FEEDBACK REQUEST

1. Do you want to “opt-in” to have your property re-zoned?
2. Are you interested in building an accessory dwelling unit (ADU), modifying an existing space to convert to an ADU, or providing feedback on your experience building an ADU?

BACKGROUND

The Town of Portola Valley is in the middle of an 18-month process to update the Housing Element of the General Plan. The Housing Element identifies policies to meet the housing needs of the Town’s current and future residents, as well as specific sites where additional housing can be accommodated. The Town must plan for housing units that are affordable to lower income people, compared to San Mateo County median incomes. In the past, the Town has relied on Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) to meet State law requirements. Even with a liberal estimate of potential new ADUs, the Town cannot meet its affordable housing unit allocation. Therefore, the Town has to consider other alternatives, such as changing the zoning code to allow multifamily housing (often called “upzoning”).

THE PROCESS

The Town Council appointed a fifteen-person committee of residents called the Ad Hoc Housing Element Committee to lead the Town’s efforts. The Committee has been meeting at least monthly since August 2021. Recent meetings have been focused on which sites in Town should be considered for multifamily housing such as condos, apartments, townhouses, or cottage development and how to best accommodate affordable housing.

OPT-IN FOR REZONING

Based on community feedback and recommendations from the Committee, the Town is exploring an “opt-in” approach where property owners can volunteer to upzone their property to allow for additional housing. ***In the future, property owners that are approved for the opt-in can choose to build more housing on their property or sell their property to a developer to build additional housing.*** For example, property

owners could potentially elect to have their property zoned for 6 units per acre or up to 20 units per acre. Please note that each individual site will need to be analyzed for geologic safety and fire safety, considered by the Ad Hoc Housing Element Committee, and approved by the Town Council. Interest in upzoning does not guarantee that changes to the zoning code will occur.

Are you interested in the possibility of upzoning your property? If so, please join Ad Hoc Housing Element Committee members and staff representatives on Thursday, April 21st at 4:00 pm via Zoom to learn more.

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADU)

Another way to help accommodate additional housing units is through Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), also called second units. The Town is holding an **ADU focus group of people that either want to build an ADU or have recently built one** to discuss any obstacles and the ways the Town can help reduce barriers. We would like to hear from property owners, realtors, and design professionals about their experiences. The focus group will be held on Tuesday, April 19th at 4:00 pm via Zoom.

NEXT STEPS

If you are interested in either of these meetings, please email Town staff at housing@portolavalley.net to RSVP. Please let us know in your email if you are interested in either the upzoning meeting, ADU focus group, or both. Staff will respond with zoom information.

If you would like to learn more about the 2023-2031 Housing Element Update and sign up for Housing emails, please visit: www.portolavalley.net/housingelement

Thank you,



Laura C. Russell, AICP
Planning and Building Director