



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Inclusionary Housing Ordinance (IHO) Analysis and Update

Questions and Answers

Date Released: October 22, 2025

1. Does the City have a proposed budget for this project?

On October 21, 2025, City Council appropriated up to \$75,000 to retain an independent third-party consultant to lead the update of the City's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance (IHO). The City Manager is authorized to negotiate and execute a contract with the selected consultant within this budget framework. Staff anticipate competitive proposals to be submitted well below this budget.

2. How long will contracts be for?

Contracts will be for two years, with one optional one-year extension with City Manager approval if there are any delays in delivery of the Grand Nexus Study.

3. What is the anticipated timeline for this work? The RFP specifies that this is not an inclusionary housing feasibility study and indicates that consultants should rely on data from the Grand Nexus Study, which is expected to be completed in late 2026. Does this imply that tasks 3 through 6 of the project will occur between late 2026 and 2027?

By way of this RFP, the City is seeking staff augmentation and a third-party's expert knowledge and experience with inclusionary housing to help process an Inclusionary Housing Ordinance update within a quick turnaround time. City Council would like to see the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance update in 2026, or as soon as possible. However, the Grand Nexus Study timeline, as summarized below, may provide certain limitations.

For this reason, the contract for this project is expected to begin in early 2026, near the beginning of the Grand Nexus Study, and run parallel to the Grand Nexus Study. The contractor may join initial input meetings with 21 Elements and Strategic Economics on the inclusionary housing feasibility study, to provide third-party guiding questions and understand preliminary results that may influence IHO improvements. The consultant may also begin preparatory work earlier, such as document review, stakeholder engagement, etc.

The Grand Nexus Study is expected to be completed by November 2026. Public hearings to provide updates on the status of the Nexus Study will begin in December 2026 and continue through April 2027. Staff anticipate that changes to the IHO may be adopted within six months of the completion of the Grand Nexus Study or sooner, as proposed in Program 9.6 of the Housing Element and Affordable Housing Strategy.

Therefore, it is reasonable to infer that the substantive policy analysis, recommendations, and ordinance drafting tasks (Tasks 3 through 6 in the RFP's scope of work) will begin in the middle of the Grand Nexus Study and ramp up

soon after the Grand Nexus Study results are available—i.e., between late 2026 and potentially into 2027.

4. How will this project differ from the Grand Nexus Study scope of work?

The East Palo Alto City Council would like to assess the impact of the City's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance on East Palo Alto housing production and determine potential modifications to the IHO that support housing production at all income levels while also promoting affordable housing. The City is seeking, by way of this RFP, a consultant to provide project oversight and analysis of the Grand Nexus Study, and review, evaluate, and recommend improvements to the City's IHO and program guidelines. The selected consultant will be expected to provide actionable recommendations based on best practices, analysis of feasibility results from the Grand Nexus Study, and robust community and stakeholder engagement.

For example, while the Grand Nexus Study will benchmark against best practices and peer jurisdictions, during the Document Review & Policy Analysis phase of this project, the consultant is expected to be familiar with Inclusionary programs and policies and follow the recent changes in the region.

While the Grand Nexus Study will provide some data analysis on inclusionary housing production, occupancy, turnover, and compliance, the consultant is expected to familiarize themselves with this data and provide summaries and recommendations to City staff and potentially join staff in presentations to the City Council. In addition, the consultant may anticipate additional data questions from City Council that need further analysis and response. Strategic Economics will only be available to attend one public hearing to answer data questions, and staff anticipate the need for additional public hearings where the consultant will be expected to continue that role.

While the Grand Nexus study will develop in-lieu fee calculations and recommendations, the consultant is expected to look at the City's policies and procedures to provide further recommendations for ordinance updates. The consultant is to work in tandem with Strategic Economics and again complement the team with their experience and expertise in this field of work.

While Strategic Economics will present Grand Nexus Study results at one East Palo Alto public hearing, the consultant will be expected to prepare the staff report and coordinate with Strategic Economics. Also, the consultant may help prepare for additional reports or presentations including meetings with City staff, the City Council, and community stakeholders, including developers, residents, and other boards and commissions.

While the Grand Nexus Study will provide a written report summarizing findings, analysis and recommendations, the consultant is expected to provide additional findings, analysis and recommendations based on additional community and stakeholder input (i.e. input from developers, residents, and other boards and commissions).

5. Will the consultant be able to rely on the East Palo Alto Counsel for the review of any ordinance updates?

Ordinance and guidelines updates, public hearing notices, staff reports, and any other related materials shall be drafted by the consultant and reviewed by key staff, including the Housing Project Manager, Housing & Economic Development Manager, Community and Economic Development Director, City Attorney and City Manager. The City Attorney will be involved in the review and approval of any ordinance updates.