



CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO

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www.cityofepa.org

Notice of Exemption

California Environmental Quality Act

TO: COUNTY CLERK

County of San Mateo
555 County Center Redwood City,
California 94063-1665

TO: STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, California 95814

FROM: CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO

Planning Division
1960 Tate Street
East Palo Alto, California 94303

PROJECT TITLE: East Palo Alto 2023-2031 Housing Element

PROJECT LOCATION SPECIFIC:

City-wide

PROJECT LOCATION, CITY, COUNTY:

City of East Palo Alto, San Mateo County

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The City of East Palo Alto 2023-2031 Housing Element includes the City's overall Housing Workplan, which addresses the City's identified housing needs and includes goals, policies, and programs concerning housing and housing-related services. A central component to the plan is the City's approach to addressing its share of the regional housing need allocation (RHNA). The 2023-2031 Housing Element (RHNA 6) is a comprehensive review and update to the previous Housing Element which covered the 5th Cycle 2015-2023 planning period (RHNA 5). This update addresses all subjects required by Section 65583 of the Government Code, but also provides a focused, in-depth snapshot of the City's changing demographics, economics and urban characteristics. The update addresses and updates city-specific market shifts, risk of displacement, income and affordability, constraints to housing, a fair housing assessment and affirmation, detailed inventory of housing projects and sites, and a progress report from the perspective of the RHNA 5 Housing element period.

To satisfy and meet the RHNA allocation, the City prepared a parcel-specific land inventory that includes sites capable of accommodating the RHNA allocation through a variety of methods, including: (1) identification of additional increased capacity on existing, residentially zoned sites; (2) identification of residential property for potential rezoning to higher-density residential primary use; (3) identification of non-residential property for rezoning to residential primary use; (4) development of approved and/or anticipated projects which do not have certificates of occupancy; and (5) future development of accessory dwelling units (ADUs). The total number of units, by income category, must meet or exceed the City's RHNA.

For the eight-year planning cycle, the City's 6th Cycle RHNA allocation is 829 additional housing units, including: 159 moderate-income units, 410 above moderate-income units, 165 very low-income units, and 95 low-income units.

The number of total estimated units over the RHNA 6 period from all sites included in the Sites Inventory, also referred to as "Housing Opportunity Sites," is summarized in **Table 1** below. These Housing Opportunity Sites serve as quantified objectives because they provide the maximum number of housing units that can be constructed and redeveloped in the City over an eight-year timeframe. For the 2023-2031 housing cycle, the city's quantified objectives for construction are 1,794 units, with 704 of those being affordable to East Palo Alto residents (very low income or low income).

Table 1: Total Units from Sites Inventory Sites vs. RHNA 6

	VLI	LI	MOD	Above-Mod	Total
Housing Opportunity Sites	461	243	341	749	1794
RHNA 6	165	95	159	410	829
Difference	296	148	182	339	965
Percentage difference	179% over	156% over	114% over	83% over	116% over

Source: Housing Element Table 5.1.A. Assumed 115 additional ADU's (30% VLI, 30% LI, 30% MOD, and 10% Above-Mod) based on prior years' ADU counts.

The East Palo Alto Sites Inventory or Housing Opportunity Sites contains many "pipeline units," or units within projects that have been entitled or received SB 35 Zoning Clearance, and that are expected to apply for a building permit or begin construction after July 1, 2022, or in subsequent years. All such units are included in the Sites Inventory and will count towards the 6th RHNA cycle. Taking these unit counts into consideration, the City can meet or exceed the RHNA in every category.

For other sites in the Sites Inventory, there is an active development application with a high level of confidence they will lead to the construction of new units within the eight-year Housing Element cycle (2023-2031), such as the Ravenswood Business District/Four Corners Specific Plan. Or, there is significant developer interest and potential feasibility, but the ability to develop residential units relies on a rezoning of the parcel. For these reasons, the development proposal or preapplication was used to calculate the realistic capacity of certain sites.

The 2023-2031 Housing Element includes policies that would accommodate implementation measures to meet and exceed the City's RHNA allocation. The Project does not include the actual implementation measures and/or development of the housing units, which would be subject to future environmental evaluation as a part of the City's normal development review process.

NAME OR PUBLIC AGENCY APPROVING PROJECT

City of East Palo Alto, a municipal corporation

NAME OF PERSON OR AGENCY CARRYING OUT PROJECT:

City of East Palo Alto

EXEMPT STATUS (Check One)

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080 (b) (1); 15268)
- Declared Emergency (Sec 21080 (b) (4); 15269 (a))
- Emergency Project (Sec 21080 (b) (4) 15269 (b) (c))
- Categorical Exemption – CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) common sense exemption
- Statutory Exemption –

REASON WHY PROJECT IS EXEMPT

The Project is exempt under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) common sense exemption, because the Project involves the City's policies and programs to update its Housing Element and meet its RHNA allocation that either: would not cause a significant physical effect on the environment; the RHNA allocation could be met with projects that have been or will be analyzed under CEQA associated with normal application processing; or reflect policies that are consistent with and have been adequately analyzed within the City of East Palo Alto General Plan Vista 2035 EIR (SCH No. 2014092027).

Given its nature and scope, the proposed 2023-2031 Housing Element programs and policies would not result in direct or indirect physical environmental impacts. Specifically, the 2023-2031 Housing Element does not grant any development entitlements or authorize development beyond what is allowed under the City's current General Plan and Zoning Code (Municipal Code Title 18). Future housing development pursuant to the 2023-2031 Housing Element would be subject to compliance with the established regulatory framework, namely federal, State, regional, and local (i.e., General Plan policies, Municipal Code standards, and Standard Conditions of Approval). While by-right housing projects may be exempt from CEQA, all future housing development pursuant to the 2023-2031 Housing Element would be subject to further development and environmental review, which may include supporting technical studies and other information that will further satisfy CEQA.

Based on these factors, it can be seen with certainty that the proposed 2023-2031 Housing Element as a policy document would not have a significant physical effect on the environment; therefore, the 2023-2031 Housing Element is exempt from CEQA under the common sense exemption.

Attachment (on file with the City of East Palo Alto)

Technical Memorandum – City of East Palo Alto 2023-2031 Housing Element CEQA Determination (Kimley-Horn and Associates, February 6, 2023)

LEAD AGENCY CONTACT PERSON

Karen Camacho

AREA CODE, TELEPHONE, EXTENSION

(650) 505-9776

This notice shall be filed only after approval of an exempt project.

SIGNATURE



DATE:

2/22/2023

NAME: Karen Camacho

TITLE: Housing and Economic Development Manager

Signed by Applicant Lead Agency

AFFIDAVIT OF COUNTY CLERK FILING AND POSTING

I declare that on _____ I received and posted this Notice as required by California Public Resources Code Section 2115.2. Said Notice will remain posted for thirty (30) days from the filing date.

By _____ Date _____