

1. INTRODUCTION

Under the requirements of State law, every city and county must prepare a housing element as part of its general plan. A housing element must document in detail the existing housing stock and its conditions and existing and projected housing needs. The State Government Code establishes requirements for the contents of the housing element. Government Code has mandated a Housing Element within every General Plan since 1969. This Housing Element (2021–2029) was prepared in compliance with State General Plan law. Once adopted by the City, the Housing Element must be submitted to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for certification.¹

Purpose

The State of California has declared that *"...the availability of housing is of vital statewide importance and the early attainment of decent housing and a suitable living environment for every California family is a priority of the highest order."* In addition, government should assist the private sector in developing the greatest diversity of housing opportunities feasible for all and accommodate regional housing needs through cooperative efforts, while maintaining a responsibility toward economic, environmental, and fiscal factors and community goals as outlined in the general plan.

Further, State Housing Element law requires "an assessment of housing needs and an inventory of resources and constraints relevant to the meeting of these needs." The law requires analyses of:

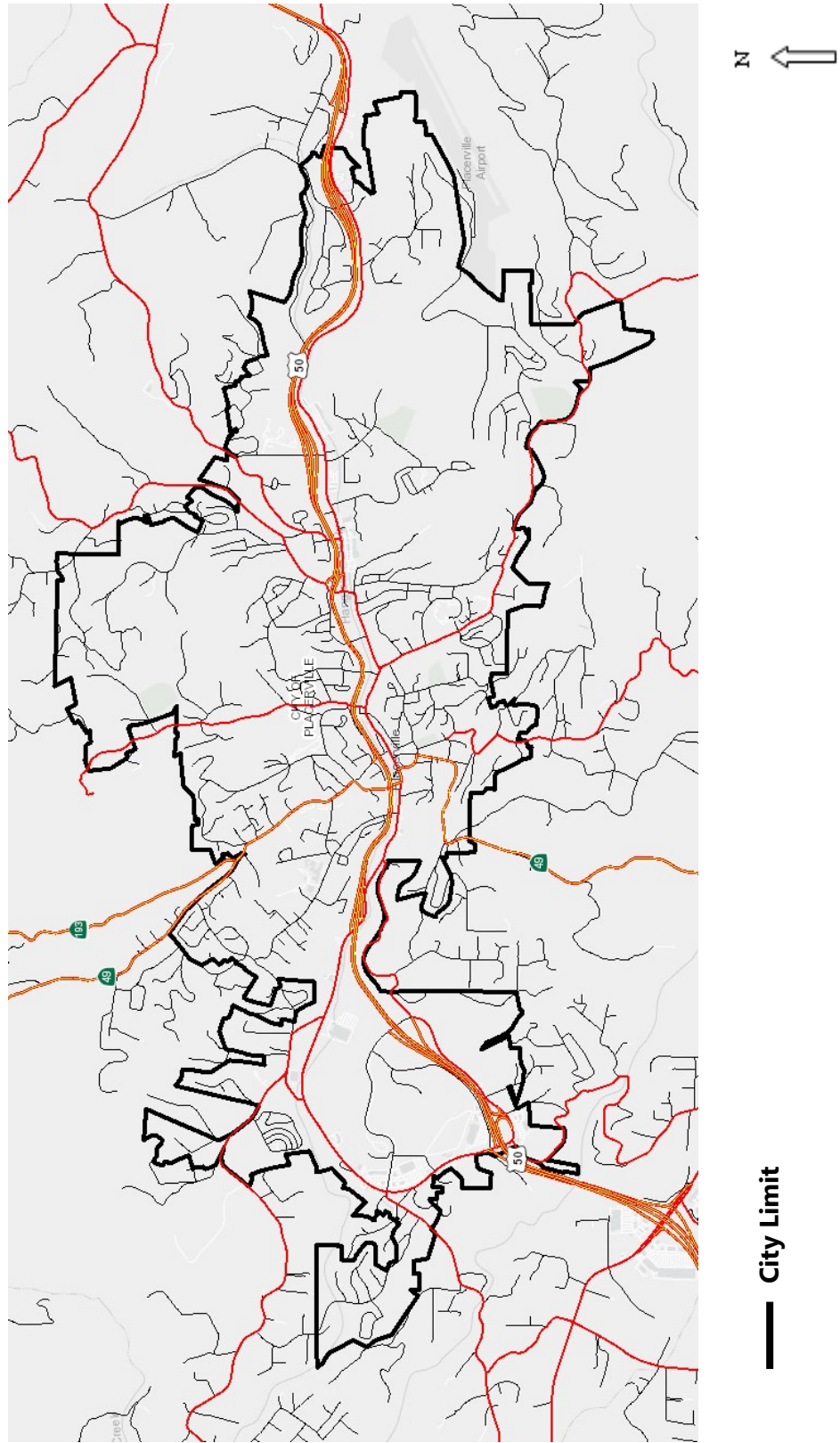
- The City's existing and projected fair share of the regional housing needs;
- Land suitable for residential development and an inventory of such land;
- Governmental and non-governmental constraints on the improvement, maintenance, and development of housing;
- Fair housing analysis;
- Special housing needs;
- Identification of zone where emergency shelters are allowed by-right
- Opportunities for energy conservation.
- Publicly assisted housing developments that are at-risk and eligible to convert to non-assisted housing developments;
- Goals, policies and implementation programs.

The purpose of these requirements is to develop an understanding of the existing and projected housing needs within the community and to set forth policies and schedules, which promote preservation, improvement and development of diverse types and costs of housing throughout the City.

¹ **Glossary of Common Terms Used within Housing Element**

Appendix A of this Chapter II contains a glossary with definitions of commonly used terms in the Housing Element.

Figure 1-1. Map of City of Placerville



Relationship / Consistency to Other General Plan Elements

State law requires consistency among Sections “Elements” of the General Plan. As such, goals and policies contained within the Housing Element should be interpreted and implemented consistent with the goals and policies of the rest of the General Plan. To ensure that the contents of the 2021-2029 Housing Element maintain consistency with the other Elements of the adopted General Plan, a consistency analysis of the entire document was conducted. Following are policies from the other General Plan elements that relate to housing. The City has found these policies consistent with the policies set forth in this Housing Element.

Section I. Land Use Element

- *Policy I.A.1: The City shall give infill development of vacant lands within the City limits priority over development in areas to be annexed, whenever feasible.*
- *Policy I.B.1: The City shall maintain an adequate supply of land in appropriate land use designations and zoning categories to accommodate projected household growth and achieve residential vacancy rates allowing turnover with relative ease.*
- *Policy I.B.2: The City shall promote the use of planned unit residential developments to maximize efficient and creative use of parcels while preserving trees, aesthetic rock outcrops, scenic views, open space, and other natural features.*
- *Policy I.B.3: The City shall discourage the development of small, isolated hillside residential areas that can be served only by long roads in steep terrain.*
- *Policy I.B.4: The City shall promote the protection and enhancement of the integrity and identity of residential neighborhoods.*

Section III. Transportation Element

- *Policy III.A.7: The City shall prohibit the development of private streets in new residential projects, except in extraordinary circumstances. In such cases, the private streets shall be developed to City street standards.*
- *Policy III.B.1: New local streets shall be designed to discourage heavy through traffic within residential neighborhoods.*

Section V. Natural, Cultural, and Scenic Resources Element

- *Policy V.G.6: The City shall support the efforts of property owners to preserve and renovate historic and architecturally significant structures. Where buildings cannot be preserved intact, the City shall seek to preserve the building facades.*

Section VI. Health and Safety Element

- *Goal VI.C: To prevent loss of lives, injury, and property damage due to flooding.*
- *Policy VI.C.1: The City shall continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. To this end, the City shall ensure that local regulations are in full compliance with standards adopted by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.*
- *Policy VI.C.2: New residential development shall be constructed so that the lowest floor is at least one foot above the 100-year flood level.*

- *Policy VI.C.3: Non-residential development shall be anchored and flood-proofed to prevent damage from 100-year flood, or alternatively, elevated to at least one foot above the 100-year flood level.*
- *Policy VI.C.4: Existing development shall comply with policies VI.C.2 and VII.C.3 when improvements are made costing at least 50 percent of the current market value of the structure before the improvements.*

Section VII. Community Design Element

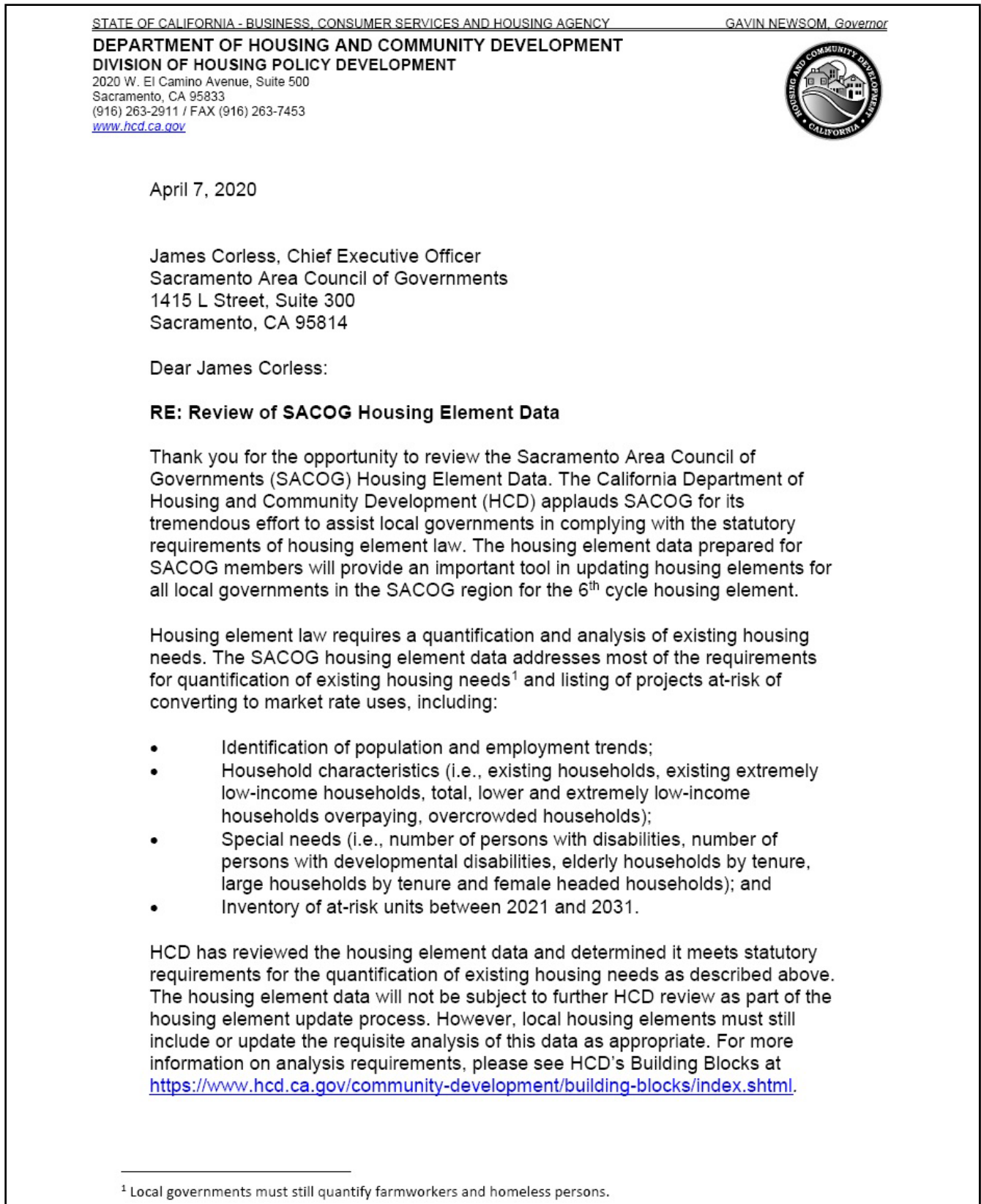
- *Policy VII.C.1: The City shall promote and protect residential neighborhoods from incompatible uses.*
- *Goal VII.C.3: In order to preserve, rehabilitate, or re-create historic structures in deteriorating older residential neighborhoods, the City shall encourage alternative uses if the uses are compatible with the adjacent neighborhood and if adequate parking and access are available or can be provided.*
- *Goal VII.C.6: The City shall encourage proper maintenance of homes, buildings, and yards to provide the best possible visual quality in each neighborhood.*

When any element of the General Plan is amended, the City will review the adopted Housing Element and if necessary, prepare an amendment to ensure continued consistency among elements. State law requires that upon revisions to the Housing Element, the Safety (City's Health and Safety Section) and Conservation (City's Natural, Cultural and Scenic Resources) Elements include an analysis and policies regarding flood hazard and management information. This analysis and affected policies is contained in Section 4. Potential Housing Constraints, of the 2021-2029 Cycle 6 Housing Element.

Data Sources and Methodology

Wherever possible, the primary data source for the 2021 – 2029 6th-Cycle Housing Element is the El Dorado County Housing Element Data Package (2019 Data Package) prepared by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) staff. This data meets statutory requirements for the quantification of existing housing needs. It was intended for use by the City for the Housing Element update. See HCD letter provided as Figure 1-1. Other data and information used within the document is referenced as indicated.

Figure 1-2: HCD Housing Element Data letter



James Corless, Chief Executive Officer
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HCD appreciates the efforts SACOG, particularly Tina Glover, Demographer, and Greg Chew, Senior Planner, provided in making the data available to streamline the preparation and review of housing elements for local governments in the SACOG region. HCD looks forward to working with SACOG and its members in the update of the housing elements. If you have any questions, please contact me at (916) 263-7420.

Sincerely,



Paul McDougall
Housing Policy Manager

Public Outreach and Participation

The City began its 6th Cycle 2021-2029 Housing Element Update process under the COVID-19 Local Emergency declared during March 2020 by the Placerville City Council, the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors and the El Dorado County Public Health Officer, under the Governor of California's State of Emergency, and under the National Emergency declared by the President of the United States. Impacts of COVID-19 on the residents, businesses and employment sources, social services, government operations and their resources within the City will avail themselves over the duration of the 2021-2029 planning period. The emergency declaration, its duration, and staff time limitations constrained the City's outreach.

Summary of Process

The City conducted public outreach by direct mailers to approximately 3,600 within the City's water and sewer utility bills, social network platform, website announcements, and dedicated webpage for the process, online questionnaire, email campaign and public hearings. Feedback was collected from diverse groups.

Questionnaire: Housing Goals and Policies

From August 10 to October 9, 2020, the City opened an online questionnaire where participants could answer questions pertaining to existing Housing Element housing goals and policy, potential policy expansion and housing constraints in Placerville. Physical copies of the questionnaire and questionnaire announcement postcards and flyers were also distributed to City public buildings open to the public during the same time. Responses received totaled 86.

Over 80% of respondents stated they live in Placerville. Several respondents represented an organization with a special interest in housing, including Hope House, the Placerville Mobility Support Group, the Housing Emergency Lodging Program (HELP), the Housing Development Corporation, Only Kindness, Inc., a home builder and housing provider.

The following 5th-Cycle Housing Element goals and polices received "Agree," or "Strongly Agree" in excess of 50% from those who responded. These goals and polices were continued as written or have been modified for the 6th-Cycle in response to their favorable support by the public.

Goal A: To designate sufficient land to accommodate Placerville's share of El Dorado County's future housing needs. [77.4% agree or strongly agree]

Policy A1: The City will maintain an inventory of vacant residential sites, to be updated annually. [75.6% agree or strongly agree]

Policy A3: The City will promote infill development by identifying suitable sites, design goals, and potential development incentives. [60.5% agree or strongly agree]

Goal B: To facilitate the development of housing for special needs households. [69.7% agree or strongly agree]

Policy B2: The City will implement state and federal requirements for persons with disabilities in new residential developments. [72% agree or strongly agree]

Policy B3: The City shall facilitate the development of senior housing by working with senior housing providers to identify adequate sites, assist in the acquisition of funds for low-income senior housing, and provide development incentives. [72.1% agree or strongly agree]

Policy B4: The City shall encourage housing that is affordable to the local workforce by identifying funding sources and potential sites that would make the production of housing financially feasible. [75.6% agree or strongly agree]

Goal C: To facilitate the development of housing affordable to low and moderate-income households. [65.1% agree or strongly agree]

Policy C1: The City will encourage the use of density bonuses and regulatory incentives as tools to assist affordable housing development. [54.6% agree or strongly agree]

Policy C2: The City shall pursue state and federal funding to assist in developing housing affordable to low and moderate-income households. [75.6% agree or strongly agree]

Policy C3: The City will review the Zoning Ordinance, permit processes, and development fees to identify and remove potential constraints to the development of a range of housing for all income levels and needs. [70.9% agree or strongly agree]

Goal D: To promote equal housing opportunity for all residents. [72.1% agree or strongly agree]

Questionnaire: City Resources and Fair Housing

From January 11, 2021 to February 12, 2021, the City conducted a second questionnaire, available in physical and online form, where participants could answer questions regarding fair housing and City resources. There were 215 total responses. Analysis of fair housing question responses received is provided in Appendix B. Fair Housing Assessment. Full responses to the questionnaire are provided in Appendix D.

Public Review Draft Housing Element

The Public Review Draft Housing Element was submitted to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) on May 14, 2021 for their 60-day review. On July 13, 2021, the City received HCD's review of the draft Housing Element.

The Public Review Draft Housing Element was made available beginning on July 15, 2021 via the Development Services Department counter, via the City's webpage dedicated to the Housing Element update, and the El Dorado County Public Library in Placerville. Public notification of the availability of the public draft Housing Element was done by email to questionnaire respondents who requested to be "notified by email," to those who have signed up to receive notice of Planning Commission meetings, and to organization with a special interest in housing, including but limited to El Dorado County LAFCO, El Dorado County Office of Education, the Housing Emergency Lodging Program (HELP), the Housing Development Corporation, and to comply with Assembly Bill 52 and Senate Bill 18, the local Native American tribes were notified as to the upcoming adoption of the Housing Element and resulting amendment to the General Plan. A link and information was posted to the City's Facebook page, to the "What's Happening in Placerville" section of the city website, and the City newsletter for July.

Input Received on Public Review Draft

Public participation on the Public Review Draft and the Final Draft Housing Element was minimal. Input received from community members included the following comments in italics followed by staff's response:

- *The City has an overwhelming need for affordable housing, especially for extremely low income households, recommending the City seek funding with the objective to develop at least four housing development projects that targets this income category.*

The Housing Element Update includes land inventory that is vacant, available and capable of meeting the City's RHNA for all income categories and Implementation Programs that respond to the issue regarding the development of lower income housing, including extremely low-income housing. These include:

- Program A-1 that requires the City to maintain land inventory to meet the City's RHNA during the 2021-2029 planning period;
- Program A-2, where the City will encourage and promote infill development on sites to accommodate affordable housing;
- Program A-3, where the City will utilize obtained grant funding to conduct environmental analyses on three sites, totaling four parcels, targeted for possible rezoning to the City's Housing Opportunity Overlay Zone at a density range of 20 to 24 dwelling units per acre suitable for the development of affordable housing; grant funding will also be utilized to develop objective design standards for the various types of attached single-family residences, and multi-family residences, so that it eliminates discretionary Site Plan Review, a potential constraint to the development of this housing; and
- Program B-9, where the City will encourage housing providers to designate a portion of new affordable housing units for addressing the City's specific housing need for extremely low income households, female headed households, large families and veterans.
 - *Increase the number of self-help housing project to at least 3, with at least one project targeting families.*

The Planning Commission during its review of the Housing Element Update and the public comment received did not address the suggestion to increase from one to three self-help housing projects over the planning period, for recommendation to City Council. However, City Council could consider this in future actions as a result of public and community outreach workshops that would occur under Implementation Program B-1 during the planning period. Eligible applicants include local governments and nonprofit corporations. The California Self-Help Housing Program (CSHHP) currently has no funding available.

- *Consider a rent stabilization ordinance for mobile home parks to preserve current affordable housing.*

The Housing Element Update also includes programs that evaluate options to provide protections for mobile home park conversion to retain affordable housing stock (Program G-3). The suggestion that the City consider a rent stabilization program for mobile home parks that would limit the amount that rents are allowed to increase as market values increases could help to support the housing goal of conserving existing affordable housing opportunities. The Planning Commission during its review of the Housing Element Update and the public comment received did not address this specific suggestion for recommendation to City Council. However,

City Council could consider this in future actions as a result of public and community outreach workshops that would occur under Implementation Program B-1 during the planning period.

- *Allow rooming and boarding house uses and provide incentives to landlords to establish these.*

Boarding houses by definition are housing facilities that provides lodging, with or without food, for paying guests. As a type of lodging facility as opposed to a multi-family use, boarding houses are outside the scope of the Housing Element. Boarding houses are difficult to regulate and are better supplanted by single-room occupancy (SRO) facilities which are a form of housing that is aimed at residents with low or very low incomes who rent small single rooms with common kitchen and bath facilities.

- *Suggestion that the 90 lower income category Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) units for the City should be reversed with the 169 units for the higher income category with 169 higher income, as the City needs more affordable housing units and not as many higher income units.*

The City is obligated under state statutes to meet its RHNA for all income categories.

- *Consider a ban on short-term rentals within residential zones.*

Due to complaints from neighbors and from other interested parties regarding short-term vacation rentals since 2013, and the City's concerns about the potential loss of affordable housing, in 2017 staff requested and received City Council authorization under Resolution No. 8530 to initiate amendments to the Zoning Ordinance regarding definitions of types of lodging facilities, and the regulation of short-term rentals. This work has not been completed but is expected to be completed by the end of 2021.

Public Hearings

Prior to adoption of the Housing Element, the Planning Commission held a noticed public hearing on August 17, 2021 to consider a final draft of the Housing Element that addressed comments from HCD and those received from members of the public and other interested parties and entities on the Public Review Draft. Notice of the public hearing was published in the Mountain Democrat newspaper on August 2, 2021, posted on the City's website and Facebook page and sent to the housing organizations and those identified above as having an interest in the Housing Element update. The Planning Commission considered public input, discussed the Housing Element, and recommended that the City Council approve the Addendum to the 2013-2021 Negative Declaration for the 2021-2029 Housing Element, and adopt the 2021-2029 Housing Element.

Prior to adoption of the Housing Element, the City Council held a noticed public hearing on August 31, 2021. Notice of the public hearing was published in the Mountain Democrat newspaper on August 20, 2021, posted on the City's website and Facebook page, and sent to the housing organizations and those identified above as having an interest in the Housing Element update. Following the public hearing, the City Council considered public input, discussed the Housing Element, and considered the Planning Commission's recommendation before adopting Resolution No. 9005 approving the Housing Element.