

**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
DIVISION OF HOUSING POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

651 Bannon Street, Suite 400  
Sacramento, CA 95811  
(916) 263-2911 / FAX (916) 263-7453  
[www.hcd.ca.gov](http://www.hcd.ca.gov)



March 7, 2025

Steve Monowitz, Director  
Community Development Department  
County of San Mateo  
455 County Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063

Dear Steve Monowitz:

**RE: County of San Mateo's 6th Cycle (2023-2031) Revised Draft Housing Element**

Thank you for submitting the County of San Mateo's (County) revised draft housing element that was received for review February 5, 2025. Pursuant to Government Code section 65585, the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) is reporting the results of its review. In addition, HCD considered comments from Housing Leadership Council of San Mateo County pursuant to Government Code section 65585, subdivision (c).

HCD is pleased to find the revised draft housing element meets the statutory requirements of State Housing Element Law (Gov. Code, § 65580 et seq.). The revised draft addresses the statutory requirements described in HCD's July 5, 2024 review. However, the housing element cannot be found in substantial compliance until the County has completed necessary rezones as described below. The housing element will comply with State Housing Element Law when rezoning is complete and the element is re-adopted, submitted to, and approved by HCD, in accordance with Government Code section 65585.

A jurisdiction that did not adopt a compliant housing element within 120 days from the statutory deadline must rezone sites within one year of the statutory deadline and meet requirements pursuant to Government Code sections 65583, subdivision (c)(1)(A) and 65583.2, subdivision (c). As this year has passed and Programs have not been completed, the housing element is out of compliance and will remain out of compliance until the rezoning have been completed. Once the County completes the rezone, a copy of the resolution or ordinance should be transmitted to HCD. HCD will review the documentation and issue correspondence identifying the updated status of the County housing element compliance.

As a reminder, the County's 6th cycle housing element was due January 31, 2023. As of today, the County has not completed the housing element process for the 6th cycle. The County's 5th cycle housing element no longer satisfies statutory requirements. HCD encourages the County to diligently move forward with rezoning and adopt and submit to HCD to regain housing element compliance.

For your information, since the element relies on nonvacant sites to accommodate 50 percent or more of the lower-income Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), requirements are triggered to make findings based on substantial evidence (as part of adoption) that the existing use is not an impediment and will likely discontinue in the planning period pursuant to Government Code section 65583.2, subdivision (g)(2).

Pursuant to Government Code section 65583.3, subdivision (b), the County must utilize standards, forms, and definitions adopted by HCD when preparing the sites inventory and submit an electronic version of the sites inventory. While the County has submitted an electronic version of the sites inventory, if changes occur or have occurred since submittal, any future adopted version of the element must also submit the electronic version of the sites inventory.

Public participation in the development, adoption and implementation of the housing element is essential to effective housing planning. Throughout the housing element process, the County must continue to engage the community, including organizations that represent lower-income and special needs households, by making information regularly available while considering and incorporating comments where appropriate. Please be aware, any revisions to the element must be posted on the local government's website and to email a link to all individuals and organizations that have previously requested notices relating to the local government's housing element at least seven days before submitting to HCD.

Several federal, state, and regional funding programs consider housing element compliance as an eligibility or ranking criteria. For example, the CalTrans Senate Bill (SB) 1 Sustainable Communities grant, the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities programs, and HCD's Permanent Local Housing Allocation consider housing element compliance and/or annual reporting requirements pursuant to Government Code section 65400. With a compliant housing element, the County will meet housing element requirements for these and other funding sources.

For your information, some general plan element updates are triggered by housing element adoption. HCD reminds the County to consider timing provisions and welcomes the opportunity to provide technical assistance. For information, please see the Technical Advisories issued by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research at: <https://www.opr.ca.gov/planning/general-plan/guidelines.html>.

HCD appreciates the dedication and collaboration the housing element team provided during the housing element update and review. HCD's looks forward to receiving the re-adopted housing element and assisting the County through the rezoning process. If you have any questions or need additional technical assistance, please contact Anthony Errichetto, of our staff, at [Anthony.Errichetto@hcd.ca.gov](mailto:Anthony.Errichetto@hcd.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul McDougall", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Paul McDougall  
Senior Program Manager