



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date: 8/4/2021

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Regular Meeting Location: [Zoom.us/join](https://zoom.us/join) – ID #997-7506-7654

A. Call To Order

Chair Grove called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Present: Bigelow, Grove, Horst, Leitch, Merriman, Nguyen, Pimentel

Absent:

Staff: Deputy Community Development Director Rhonda Coffman, Assistant Community Development Director Deanna Chow, Management Analyst II Mike Noce, Senior Planner Calvin Chan

C. Public Comment

None.

D. Regular Business

D1. Approve minutes for the Housing Commission regular meeting on July 7, 2021 ([Attachment](#))

ACTION: Motion and second (Bigelow/ Leitch), to approve the Housing Commission regular meeting minutes on July 7, 2021, passed 5-0 (Merriman and Pimentel abstain).

D2. Review and provide feedback on potential land use strategies to meet the Regional Housing Need Allocation for the 2023-2031 planning period as part of the Housing Element Update (Staff Report #21-008-HC)

M-Group representative Geoff Bradly provided a presentation ([Attachment](#)).

- Lynne Bramlett spoke in support of equal distribution of the project pipeline across all City districts and provided prioritization of policies to increase housing affordability in Menlo Park.
- MidPen Housing (MidPen) representative Andrew Bielak spoke in support of continuing MidPen's partnership with the City to develop additional affordable housing including robust community outreach.
- Kelsey Banes spoke in support of fair housing strategies that improve all low income categories and provided input on increasing affordable housing and the importance of evaluating segregation patterns.
- Pamela Jones spoke in support of increased transparency regarding city owned property and outreach to all Menlo Park neighborhoods, a moratorium for non-compliant accessory dwelling units, and identifying additional housing solutions.
- Housing Leadership Council representative Ken Chan referenced a letter sent to the Commission

(Attachment).

- Adina Levin spoke in support of furthering fair housing for all income levels, analyzing the use of public lands for housing and the need for policies to promote more housing downtown.

D3. Selection of the Housing Commission Chair and Vice Chair

Chair Grove introduced the item.

- Lynne Bramlett spoke in support of the previous process for the selection of the chair and vice chair.

ACTION: Motion and second (Pimentel/ Leitch) to select Karen Grove as the Housing Commission Chair, passed 6-1 (Nguyen dissenting).

ACTION: Motion and second (Grove/ Bigelow) to select Rachel Horst as the Housing Commission Vice Chair, passed 6-1 (Nguyen dissenting).

E. **Reports and Announcements**

E1. Ad hoc subcommittee reports (10 minutes):

Commissioner Horst shared updates and expects to bring items to the Commission for review within the next couple months.

E2. Commissioner updates

None.

E3. Recommended future agenda items.

None.

E4. Staff updates and announcements

None.

F. **Adjournment**

Chair Grove adjourned the meeting at 9:40 p.m.

Mike Noce, Management Analyst II, Community Development

Approved by the Housing Commission on September 1, 2021

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS, COVID-19, EMERGENCY ADVISORY NOTICE

On March 19, 2020, the Governor ordered a statewide stay-at-home order calling on all individuals living in the State of California to stay at home or at their place of residence to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Additionally, the Governor has temporarily suspended certain requirements of the Brown Act. For the duration of the shelter in place order, the following public meeting protocols will apply.

Teleconference meeting: All members of the Housing Commission, city staff, applicants, and members of the public will be participating by teleconference. To promote social distancing while allowing essential governmental functions to continue, the Governor has temporarily waived portions of the open meetings act and rules pertaining to teleconference meetings. This meeting is conducted in compliance with the Governor's Executive Order N-25-20 issued March 12, 2020, and supplemental Executive Order N-29-20 issued March 17, 2020.

- How to participate in the meeting
 - Access the meeting real-time online at:
[Zoom.us/join](https://zoom.us/join) – Regular Meeting ID #997-7506-7654
 - Access the regular meeting real-time via telephone (listen only mode)
at: (669) 900-6833 Regular Meeting ID 997-7506-7654

Subject to Change: Given the current public health emergency and the rapidly evolving federal, state, county and local orders, the format of this meeting may be altered or the meeting may be canceled. You may check on the status of the meeting by visiting the City's website www.menlopark.org. The instructions for logging on to the webinar and/or the access code is subject to change. If you have difficulty accessing the webinar, please check the latest online edition of the posted agenda for updated information (menlopark.org/agenda).



POTENTIAL HOUSING ELEMENT
LAND USE STRATEGIES

Housing Commission Study Session
August 4, 2021

- RHNA Overview
- Fair Housing Overview
- Potential Land Use Strategies
- Next Steps



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5TH CYCLE REGIONAL HOUSING NEED
ALLOCATION (RHNA) PROGRESS

	Allocation	Total through 2020	Percent Complete
Very Low	233	148	64%
Low	129	80	62%
Moderate	143	11	8%
Above Moderate	150	1,177	785%
Total	655	1,416	



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AFFORDABLE HOUSING INCOME

Table 2: 2021 HCD Income Limits for San Mateo County (\$)

San Mateo County Area Median Income (\$149,600)	Number of Persons in Household							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Extremely Low 0-30% of AMI	38,400	43,850	49,350	54,800	59,200	63,600	68,000	72,350
Very Low 31-50% of AMI	63,950	73,100	82,250	91,350	98,700	106,000	113,300	120,600
Low 51-80% of AMI	102,450	117,100	131,750	146,350	158,100	169,800	181,500	193,200
Median (100%)	104,700	119,700	134,650	149,600	161,550	173,550	185,500	197,450
Moderate 81-120% of AMI	125,650	143,600	161,550	179,500	193,850	208,200	222,600	236,950



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6TH CYCLE RHNA
2023-2031

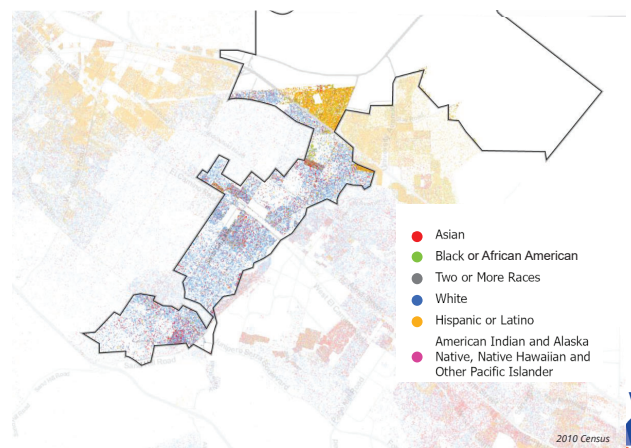
	5 th Cycle	6 th Cycle
Very Low	233	740
Low	129	426
Moderate	143	496
Above Moderate	150	1,284
Total	655	2,946*

* 15-30% buffer is **3,388 to 3,830**



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FAIR HOUSING

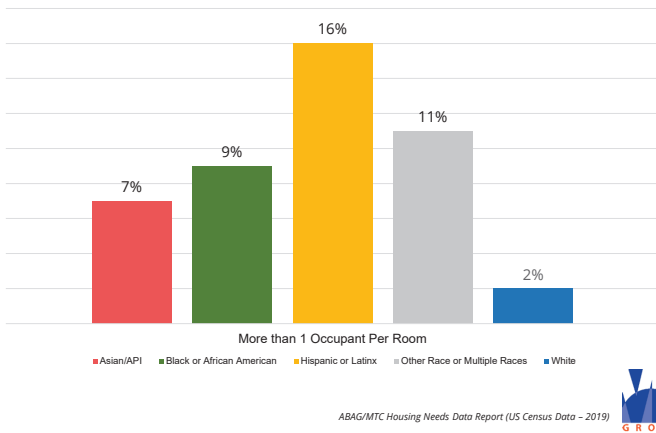


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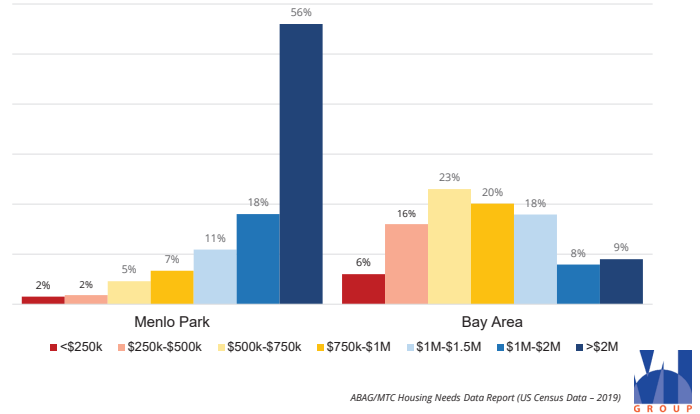


FAIR HOUSING

FAIR HOUSING



- Purchasing a home is out of reach for many working and middle-class families.



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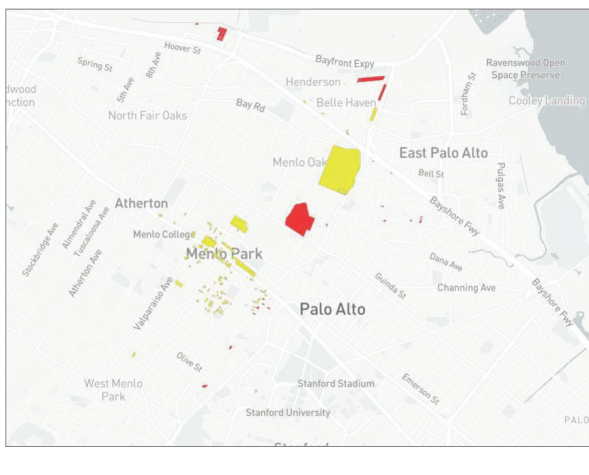
POTENTIAL HOUSING SOLUTIONS



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5TH CYCLE SITES



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MAJOR PIPELINE PROJECTS

Project	Status	Units
111 Independence Dr.	Approved	105
115 Independence Dr. (Menlo Portal)	Pending/ Aug 9 th PC	335
123 Independence Dr.	Pending	383
141 Jefferson Dr. (Menlo Uptown)	Pending/ Appealed to CC	480
165 Jefferson Dr. (Menlo Flats)	Pending	158
Willow Village	Pending	1,729
TOTAL UNITS		3,192



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RELIGIOUS FACILITIES



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RELIGIOUS FACILITIES - AB1851

- AB 1851 (2020)
- Develop housing in parking areas
- Could be enhanced with local incentives



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COMMERCIAL SITES



COMMERCIAL SITES

- Many zoning districts are currently commercial use only and could be shifted to mixed-use areas
- Ideal sites are close to transit and services



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EL CAMINO REAL/DOWNTOWN



EL CAMINO REAL/DOWNTOWN

- Evaluate additional housing opportunities within Specific Plan area
- Proximity to Caltrain and downtown services could support higher residential densities

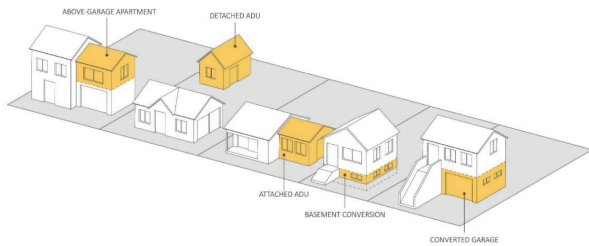


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ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS



ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS



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ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

Two "Safe-Harbor" Methodologies:

- 1) 2018-2020 average as baseline: 2) Pre-2018 ADU Streamlining x 5:

Year	Units
2018	15
2019	4
2020	13
Average	10.6

10.6 x 8-year planning period
= **85 units**

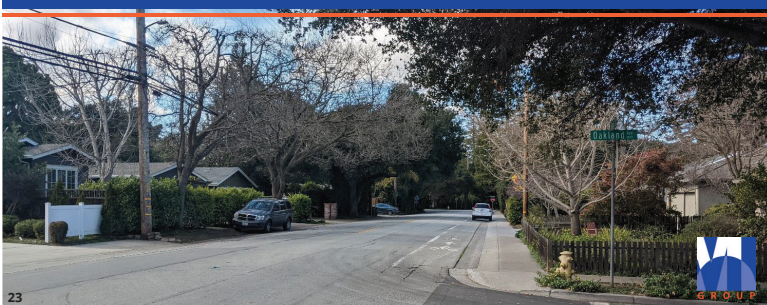
Year	Units
2015	8
2016	7
2017	13
Average	9.3

9.3 x 5 = 47 ADUs/year
47 x 8-year planning period
= **376 units**



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HOUSING IN SINGLE FAMILY AREAS



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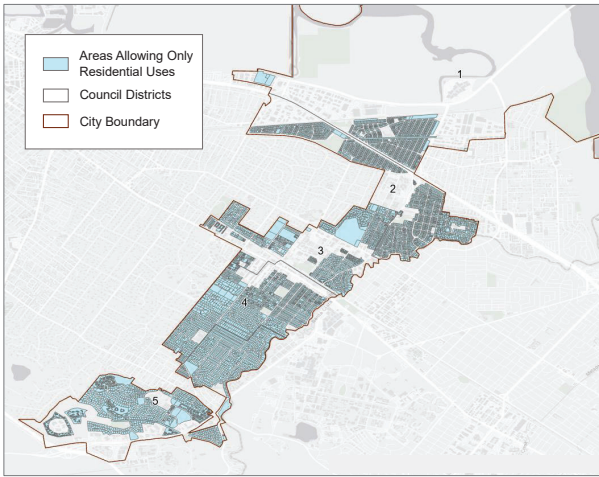
HOUSING IN SINGLE FAMILY AREAS

- SB9 would allow duplexes in SFR with ministerial approval
- Many cities are considering 4-plexes:
 - Sacramento
 - San Francisco
 - San Jose
 - Berkeley
- Potential for more locally planned solutions:
 - Focus on corner lots or lots over a certain size
 - Areas near transit & services
 - Equity considerations



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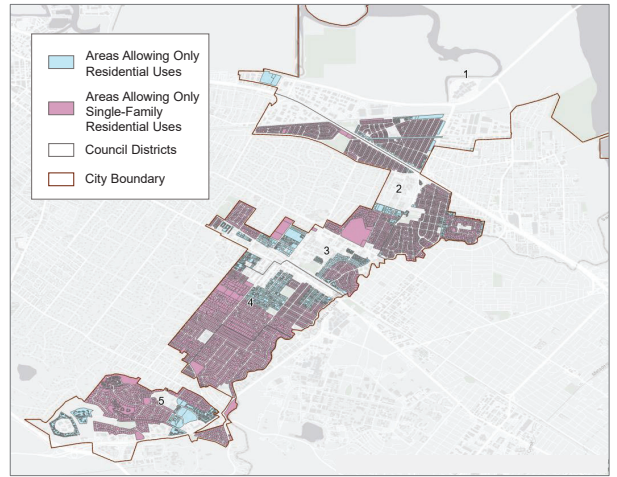
CONSIDERATIONS



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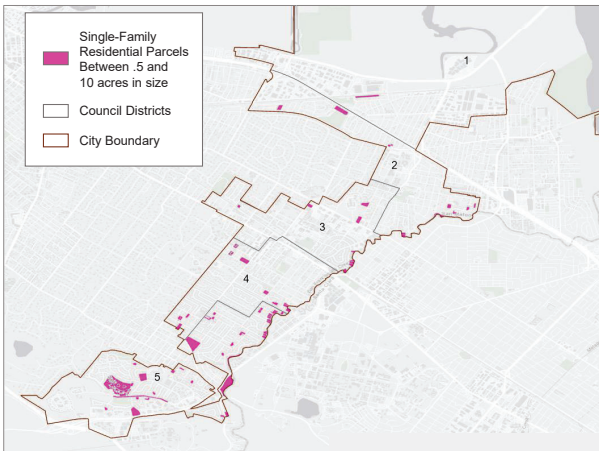
CONSIDERATIONS



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CONSIDERATIONS



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LAND USE STRATEGIES OVERVIEW

Potential Strategy	Magnitude of New Units
Pipeline Projects	3,192
5 th Cycle Sites	Variable
Religious Facilities	Variable
Commercial Sites	Variable
El Camino Real/Downtown	Variable
Accessory Dwelling Units	Approx. 80-400
Single Family Areas	Variable

Variable = Unit Capacity Highly Variable based on Approach



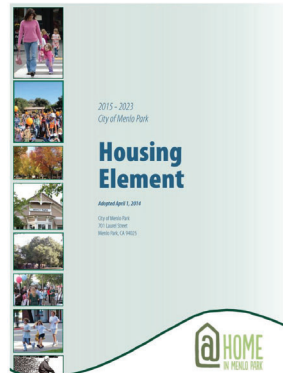
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QUESTIONS FOR THE COMMISSION



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- For the current Housing Element, what is working well and what could be improved?



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QUESTIONS FOR THE COMMISSION

- During the current Housing Element cycle (2015-2023), the affordable (very low-, low-, and moderate-income) housing goals from the RHNA have been met at approximately 47% as of 2020, while market rate (above moderate income) housing has been produced well above the goal.

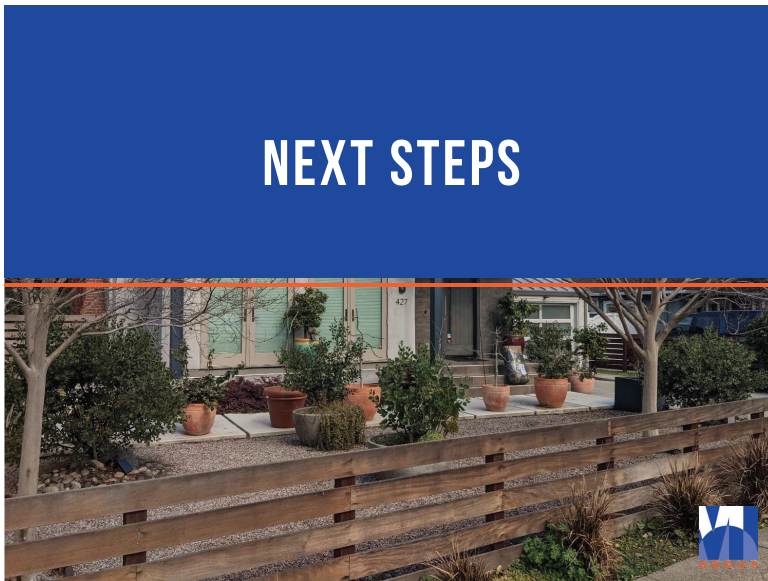
How can Menlo Park increase affordable housing production?



QUESTIONS FOR THE COMMISSION

- AB 686 was adopted in 2018 to require public agencies to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing and actively combat racial and economic segregation.

How can the Housing Element Update best address these topics?



2021 *Join us and give feedback!* Community Outreach Schedule

August

- 1** Downtown Pop-Up #1 – Existing Conditions, Preliminary Outreach, Survey
9:00AM – 1:00PM
 - 4** Preliminary Land Use Strategies & Policy Review with Housing Commission
6:30PM
 - 5** CEOC Meeting
6:00PM – 8:00PM
 - 7** Belle Haven Pop-up #1 – Existing Conditions, Preliminary Outreach, Survey
10:00AM – 2:00PM
 - 14** Community Meeting #2 – Housing Strategies and Community Input Summary
10:00AM – 12:00PM
- Community Meeting #3 – Housing Equity, Safety & Environmental Justice
- Downtown Pop-Up #2 – Existing Conditions, Preliminary Outreach, Survey

September

- Belle Haven Pop-Up #2 – Existing Conditions, Preliminary Outreach, Survey
- Community Meeting #4 – Preferred Housing Strategies Workshop
- Downtown Pop-Up #3 - Reviewing Housing Locations Workshop and Upcoming Events
CEOC Meeting
- Belle Haven Pop-Up #3 - Reviewing Housing Locations Workshop and Upcoming Events
- Land Use Meeting with Planning Commission and Housing Commission

October

- Community Meeting #5 – Draft Policy Review on Housing Element
- CEOC Meeting
- Community Meeting #6 – Draft Policy Review on Environmental Justice and Safety
- Preferred Land Use Alternatives to City Council





August 4, 2021

Attention Assistant Community Development Director Deanna Chow
Via Email

Dear Assistant Community Development Director Chow,

We at Housing Leadership Council of San Mateo County (HLC) work with communities and leaders to produce and preserve quality affordable homes in San Mateo County. In coalition with our legal partners at Public Interest Law Project and Public Advocates, we are concerned about the housing element process in Menlo Park and offer the following comments in response to the recent staff report and information made available to the public about that process:

Defining Affordable Housing:

The housing element requires local jurisdictions to ensure that households and individuals of all income levels and racial backgrounds have a meaningful opportunity to choose where to live and have access to public amenities and other resources in their neighborhoods. Affordable housing encompass a diversity of housing types and funding structures, ranging from permanent supportive housing for community members transitioning out of homelessness to homes for moderate-income households, who may make \$100,000 or more per year depending on household size.

Modern affordable homes are well-designed and well-managed, often by mission-driven nonprofit organizations that are accountable to their boards and the community to provide long term stability and opportunities for their residents. Most affordable homes are financed by tax credits and have a mix of [Low, Very Low, and Extremely Low](#)

[Income residents](#). This mix of incomes provides a stream of revenue to the building for maintenance and operations, and allows for some of the homes to be deeply affordable, including for individuals without income.

We are committed to increasing access to deeply affordable homes throughout the County and to ensuring that existing low-income residents and communities of color are protected from displacement. The housing element is a critical plan to help meet the housing needs of our communities' most vulnerable residents. We are concerned about the lack of focus on affordable homes in the current dialogue regarding Menlo Park's upcoming housing element revision and write to provide specific suggestions about public engagement, sites, and affirmatively furthering fair housing.

Public Engagement:

State law requires local governments to make “a *diligent* effort...to achieve public participation of *all economic segments* of the community in the development of the housing element.” Gov. Code 65583(c)(9) (emphasis added). The state Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) recently emphasized that “A diligent effort means going beyond simply giving the public an opportunity to provide input and should be proactively and broadly conducted through a variety of methods to assure access and participation.” (Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Guidance, April 2021) This means that the City of Menlo Park must make an intentional, proactive, and robust effort to solicit and incorporate input from community members of all economic backgrounds as it develops all aspects of its housing element.

HCD's recent [AFFH Guidance Memo](#) provides substantial information about what local governments should do to meet this requirement. It emphasizes that the housing element “must describe meaningful, frequent, and ongoing community participation, consultation, and coordination that is integrated with the broader stakeholder outreach and community participation process for the overall housing element,” (p. 10). The memo also states that local governments should create an outreach plan, release drafts of the housing element to the public for review and comment with ample time before submission to HCD, and schedule community input meetings at accessible locations and times, including on evenings and weekends (p. 10). HCD states that the following components are key for meaningful engagement at community meetings:

- “Translation of materials and making translation available at meetings
- Working with CBOs and other community stakeholders to develop effective outreach and engagement plans
- Making accessible information materials that avoid use of overly technical language

- Offering mini-grants to CBOs and other stakeholders to assist with engagement of low-income households and protected classes” (p. 11)

Key stakeholders with whom to conduct meaningful engagement include:

- “Community-based and other organizations (CBOs) that represent protected class members
- Public housing authorities
- Housing and community development providers
- Lower income community members and households that include persons in protected classes
- Fair housing agencies
- Independent living centers
- Regional centers
- Homeless services agencies
- Churches and community service organizations that serve ethnic/linguistic minorities” (p. 11)

Moreover, new housing element requirements to affirmatively furthering fair housing demand that the housing element examine housing needs and disparities for members of protected classes based, in part, on “local data and knowledge,” including “information obtained through community participation or consultation, such as narrative descriptions of people’s lived experiences.” This means that cities must explicitly and specifically seek out information about fair housing issues and housing disparities in their community engagement and outreach process.

Throughout the public participation process, the City must engage in thoughtful outreach to community members with limited English proficiency, including translation of notices and housing element materials into Spanish. It must make both in-person and online events accessible to people with disabilities, including by providing reasonable accommodations. It must ensure transparency by informing the public about all steps and opportunities to share feedback, have meetings at times when community members are available, and proactively reach out to individuals and groups who need housing and who have not had meaningful opportunities to take part in the planning process. It should reach out to local groups that serve, work with, and/or are comprised of people disproportionately affected by the City’s severe lack of affordable housing, including Housing Choices, Mental Health Associates, The Center for Independence of Individuals with Disabilities, Nuestra Casa, Rebuilding the Village, Street Life Ministries, LifeMoves, Samaritan House, Golden Gate Regional Center, Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse, El Comité de Vecinos, Faith in Action, Youth United for Community

Action, El Concilio of San Mateo County, Rebuilding Together, WeHope, Puente de la Costa Sur, and Ayudando Latinos a Soñar.

Identification of Sites:

Page 5 of the July 29, 2021 staff report states: “While the total number of units shown in Table 5 could address a substantial portion of Menlo Park’s RHNA, reliance on the number alone does not meet the statutory requirements to address affordability by income categories and fair housing requirements (AFFH).” Unfortunately, without detail on where the current sites are in the City and the levels of affordability they could accommodate, it is impossible to have a well-informed discussion about the sites that have been identified thus far, and what additional sites in what areas of the City will be needed to meet the requirements of the housing element law. Please provide more detail and a map of the current pipeline and recent developments, including the school district where the properties are located, and indicate the actual or projected affordability levels for these planned developments. As discussed in more detail below, the sites inventory will also need to be further analyzed, and likely expanded, following the full assessment of fair housing required by Government Code 65583(c)(10).

Not only is the analysis on the current housing development picture inadequate, the options outlined to expand sites does not include the single strongest tool available to the city: **prioritization of Public Land for affordable homes.**

Public Land is critical to the development of deeply affordable homes. In San Mateo County, 65% of all affordable homes are built on parcels owned by public agencies. Government entities, like Menlo Park, have an obligation to serve the public good. This strategy is so important to meeting our housing needs that the state legislature has passed a [number of laws](#) requiring the prioritization of affordable homes on publicly owned land. Without this strategy, the city is unlikely to successfully build affordable homes throughout the City especially in high-resource neighborhoods, or in any part of the city outside of Belle Haven. Cities and other local agencies that have converted public land to allow for housing include sites that were previously used as parking lots, community centers, city halls, and police stations. Sometimes the original use is relocated to a different location, but often both uses are accommodated in the same location by increasing the allowable density. For example, a surface parking lot may become a [parking garage, office building, and affordable homes.](#)

Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing:

The housing element must include an assessment of fair housing, and its site identification and programs must affirmatively further fair housing, meaning that they

must “address significant disparities in housing needs and in access to opportunity, replacing segregated living patterns with truly integrated and balanced living patterns, transforming racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity, and fostering and maintaining compliance with civil rights and fair housing laws.” Gov. Code 65583(c)(10), 8899.50(a)(1). The housing element must identify sites for lower-income housing “throughout the community” and consistently with the City’s duty to affirmatively further fair housing. Gov. Code 65583.2(a). To meet this legal requirement, we encourage the City to identify viable sites for deeply affordable housing in each school district within Menlo Park. This would help ensure that Black and brown community members, who are disproportionately lower-income, can live in places with access to educational opportunity. Taking this long overdue step in this housing element would clearly demonstrate the City’s commitment to desegregating the community and ensuring that our most vulnerable families have access to high opportunity neighborhoods.

Please keep us informed about future meetings on this important plan. As the City continues work to update its housing element, we hope that it will fully embrace its responsibility to the public and its legal obligations to actively engage all constituents who need to be part of the conversation, particularly those who have been historically and systematically disenfranchised.

Sincerely,

Evelyn Stivers, HLC
Angela Solis, HLC
Ken Chan, HLC
Shajuti Hossain, Public Advocates
Sam Tepperman-Gelfant, Public Advocates
Melissa A. Morris, Public Interest Law Project

Cc:

Adina Levine, Menlo Together
Paul McDougal, California Housing and Community Development Department
Jan Stokely, Housing Choices
Ellen Wu, Urban Habitat
Ofelia Bello, Youth United for Community Action
Melissa Platte, Mental Health Associates
Jason Tarricone, Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto
Lorena Melgarejo, Faith In Action Bay Area
Kelsey Baner, Peninsula for Everyone