



## February 16, 2022: West Marin Housing Element Sites Update Follow-up Questions & Answers

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### **1. How will community character be factored in?**

We advise against using the term “neighborhood character” as it is often used to support patterns of residential segregation. [This article](#) from the Hass Institute has some good information, if you’d like to learn more. However, if you are referring to architectural form and building design, staff are concurrently working on [Objective Design and Development Standards](#) for Multifamily housing. These standards will address building form, placement, parking and architectural style.

### **2. Are all sites included even if they are considered unrealistic for development (due to environmental hazards, wetland encroachment or the owner not interested in development)?**

The draft list of candidate housing sites is intended to show the community all possibilities for development through zoning and planning analysis. We did a comprehensive analysis of the sites, and we took into consideration environmental hazards, infrastructure, natural resources, and related factors to help us identify new housing opportunities. If a site is selected, additional environmental review will be conducted before determining if it is an obstacle to development. The inclusion of a site in the Housing Element does not mean it must be developed but offers additional options if a property owner does elect to develop housing.

### **3. Is there a consideration of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) that can be added to a site that has one house, knowing this would require innovative approaches to water, waste and other utility hook-ups?**

Increasing the number of ADUs is one method to reach our Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) goal. We establish the number of ADUs based on the number that have been permitted during the current housing element cycle.

Some areas of the County, such as West Marin, present additional barriers to development due to infrastructure (water, sewer) constraints. In addition to identifying sites, the Housing Element includes a section on goals, programs and policies that are intended to support the facilitation of housing development. A program or policy could be directed towards addressing this barrier. Community input on goals, programs and policies will be gathered in the next few months.

### **4. Have you considered creating incentives for private homeowners to deed-restrict units or properties as affordable to be included in the Housing Element?**

**This could add a great deal of already lived-in units to the goal and help create an opportunity to cut back on the overwhelming amount of vacation rentals and second homes.**

This approach could be a suggested program in the Housing Element but would not count toward the County's RHNA goal.

**5. How many housing units would be gained by prohibiting all short-term rentals of currently existing homes?**

Recent data from the County's Department of Finance, which monitors short-term rentals that pay a transient occupancy tax (TOT), shows about 476 records, representing about 10% of the residential property stock in West Marin. The proportion of short-term rentals fluctuates around West Marin, from high 35% (Muir Beach) and 21% (Stinson Beach) to lower 2% (San Geronimo) and 1% Woodacre. As noted in the previous response, the goals, programs and policies section of the Housing Element can include action goals related to this topic. Addressing the impacts of short-term rentals could be an important way to address local concerns and ensure more housing is available as long-term rentals, however, it would not count toward the County's RHNA goal.

Data sources:

Marin County Department of Finance Business License, [www.marincounty.org/bl](http://www.marincounty.org/bl), Retrieved 01/24/22. And 2021 Marin County Assessor-Recorder Secured Roll Data File

**6. What is the deadline for the 3,569 units to be built?**

While the County does not build housing, our requirement is to ensure that adequate zoning is in place, in addition to policies and programs that address any barriers to development. However, the State anticipates that development should occur within the 8-year cycle associated with the Housing Element (2023-2031). The County is required to submit Annual Progress Reports to the State Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) to ensure compliance.