

Chapter 01 - INTRODUCTION

The Housing Element of the General Plan is a comprehensive statement by the City of Yreka of its current and future housing needs and proposed actions to facilitate the provision of housing to meet those needs at all income levels. The policies contained in this element are an expression of the statewide housing priority to allow for the “attainment of decent housing and a suitable living environment for every Californian,” as well as a reflection of the unique concerns of the community. The purpose of the Housing Element is to establish specific goals, policies, and objectives relative to the provision of housing and to adopt an action plan toward this end. In addition, the element identifies and analyzes housing needs and resources and constraints to meeting those needs.

In an effort to ensure that adequate housing is developed to meet the needs of communities throughout the state, the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) determines the housing need for regions in the state in coordination with the regions planning body known as the council of governments (COG), which then divides the regions housing need amongst the various jurisdictions. For the 6th cycle, the City of Yreka has been given a regional housing needs allocation (RHNA) of 2 housing units. This means that the City is responsible for adequately planning for 2 new units over the course of the 6th cycle (2022-2030). This is substantially less than the prior cycle which had a RHNA of 103 units as shown in Table 1. To date, only seven housing units have been developed as part of the 5th cycle.

Table 1
Progress in Meeting 5th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Allocation

	5 th Cycle RHNA	Progress*	% of Progress	Remaining Need
Extremely Low-Income	12	0	0%	12
Very Low-Income	13	0	0%	13
Low-Income	17	0	0%	17
Moderate-Income	18	7	38.9%	11
Above Moderate- Income	43	0	0%	43
	103	7	6.8%	96

* Data presented in per HCD's <https://hcd.ca.gov/apr-data-dashboard-and-downloads> webpage, accessed June 24, 2022

1. GUIDING POLICY

In accordance with state law, the Housing Element is to be consistent and compatible with other General Plan elements. Additionally, the Housing Element is to provide clear policy and direction for making decisions pertaining to zoning, subdivision approval, housing allocations, and capital improvements. State law (Government Code Sections 65580 through 65589) mandates the contents of the Housing Element. By law, the Housing Element must contain:

- An assessment of housing needs and an inventory of resources and constraints relevant to meeting those needs including the housing needs for special needs populations (Appendix A);
- An assessment of fair housing as part of affirmatively furthering fair housing (Appendix B);

- A statement of the community's goals, quantified objectives, and policies relevant to the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing (Chapter 2);
- Programs that set forth a five-year schedule of actions that the local government is undertaking or intends to undertake to implement the policies and achieve the goals and objectives of the Housing Element (Chapter 2); and
- An evaluation of the schedule of actions from the previous Housing Element (Chapter 3).

Even though the focus of the Housing Element will be on lower- and moderate-income households, the element must also address the housing needs and policy issues for the entire community and be consistent with the adopted policies of the rest of the General Plan. Thus, the Housing Element's focus is to balance the desires of residents, maintain neighborhood character, utilize available public services, manage traffic, and minimize visual and other impacts of new development, while addressing the needs of low- and moderate-income households and special needs groups (such as seniors and individuals with disabilities).

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Yreka Housing Element is based on six strategic guiding principles:

- 1) Provide a range of housing that varies sufficiently in terms of cost, design, size, location, and tenure to meet the housing needs of all economic segments of the community at a level no greater than that which can be supported by the infrastructure.
- 2) Continue to promote housing for special needs groups. Special needs groups are defined in State law as the elderly; persons with disabilities, including a developmental disability; large families; farmworkers; families with female heads of households; and families and persons in need of emergency shelter.
- 3) Initiate all reasonable efforts to preserve, conserve, and enhance the quality of existing dwelling units and residential neighborhoods to ensure full utilization of the city's existing housing resources for as long as physically and economically feasible.
- 4) Ensure that all persons, regardless of race, sex, cultural origin, age, marital status, or physical handicaps, are provided a choice of housing locations within the community.
- 5) Pursue public and private resources available to promote diverse housing opportunities, and particularly to assist in the creation and retention of affordable housing.
- 6) Pursue sustainable development and energy efficiency for new residential development and existing housing stock.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation is an important part of developing the City's Housing Element. The information obtained through public meetings, surveys, and stakeholder interviews provide insight to the true needs of the community. While the City's RHNA may be low, the actual need of the community may be much greater. Through the public participation process the City can identify what issues and obstacles people may be experiencing when trying to find housing.

In developing the 6th Cycle Housing Element, the City conducted the following outreach efforts:

- Public Workshop on January 26th, 2022: introduced the Housing Element and update process, reviewed recent legislation, discussed current City demographics, and gathered public input on housing needs.
- City Council Meeting on April 19, 2022: provided overview of update process and steps taken to date, discussed initial findings from needs assessment, reviewed vacant sites inventory, gathered public input and comments from the Council.

- Stakeholder Interviews: City staff met with numerous individuals from the community to gather input on what types of housing are working for the area and what types of housing are needed.
- Coordination with the Continuum of Care network through Siskiyou County Health and Human Services to assess the needs of those experiencing homelessness. The City's efforts include interviewing caregivers, homeless youth programming staff, and receiving input from the individuals who are homeless.

Some of the issues identified through this process include the need for adequate workforce housing, low-income family housing with three or more bedrooms, programs for those experiencing homelessness, and non-vehicular access to everyday needs. These needs will be incorporated into this document through policies and programs that encourage a wide range of housing types that can be accessed by individuals and families from all income levels.

4. GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

State law requires that the Housing Element contain a statement of “the means by which consistency will be achieved with other general plan elements and community goals” (California Government Code, Section 65583[c] [6] [B]). This requires an evaluation of two primary characteristics: (1) an identification of other General Plan goals, policies, and programs that could affect implementation of the Housing Element or that could be affected by the implementation of the Housing Element; and (2) an identification of actions to ensure consistency between the Housing Element and affected parts of other General Plan elements. The adopted 2002–2022 General Plan (adopted 2003) is being updated in conjunction with this Housing Element which will help ensure consistency between the two documents. Programs developed as part of this element will be reflected in the rest of the General Plan Update. The City will maintain this consistency in the future by ensuring General Plan amendments are evaluated for consistency with all General Plan elements.

Due to the passage of SB 1000 (Leyva) relating to environmental justice in 2016, the City may be required to develop an Environmental Justice Element of the General Plan. For the purpose of general plan requirements, environmental justice is defined as: “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of people of all races, cultures, incomes, and national origins, with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies” (California Government Code, Section 65040.12). SB 1000 requires cities and counties with disadvantaged communities to incorporate environmental justice related goals, policies, and objectives into their general plans. Jurisdictions can address environmental justice in general plans either in a standalone element or integrated into other general plan elements, or both. This requirement must be fulfilled upon adoption or revision of two or more general plan elements concurrently on or after January 1, 2018. Should the City adopt an Environmental Justice Element, the Housing Element will be reviewed to ensure that disadvantaged communities are provided opportunities to obtain housing in areas that are not adversely affected by pollution. The City is in the early stages of a comprehensive update of the General Plan. As part of the update effort the City will review the statutory requirements and determine if the City required to prepare an Environmental Justice Element or if it is an optional element.

5. LOOKING AHEAD

During the 6th cycle planning period (2023 to 2031), the City will pursue regional collaborations to better address housing issues. Programs that implement a regional approach include HE-2.2.1 for the formation of a regional housing trust fund, and HE-3.3.1 for the preparation of a multijurisdictional assessment of fair housing. While housing issues may not be uniform between Siskiyou County and the eight cities, Yreka believes there are likely more shared issues and solutions as many housing issues do not occur in isolation or silos. Also, there are many small jurisdictions in Siskiyou county and bringing the resources to bear to prepare a legally sufficient housing

element is overly burdensome. Prior to the start of the 7th cycle, the City of Yreka would appreciate the Department of Housing and Community Development being willing to support the preparation of a regional housing element for the Siskiyou county region.

