

**CITY OF HEALDSBURG
COMMUNITY HOUSING COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA**

City Hall Council Chamber
401 Grove Street, Healdsburg, CA 95448
Phone: 431-3317

Date: February 8, 2016
Time: 6:00 P.M.
Date Posted: February 3, 2016

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of February 8, 2016 Agenda
4. Approval of January 11, 2016 Meeting Minutes

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA MATTERS

This time is set aside to receive comments from the public regarding matters of general interest not on the agenda, but related to the Community Housing Committee. *Pursuant to the Brown Act, however, the Committee cannot consider any issues or take action on any requests during this comment period. Speakers are encouraged to limit their comments to 3 minutes maximum so that all speakers have an opportunity to address the Committee.* Members of the audience desiring to address the Committee please walk to the public speaker podium and, after receiving recognition from the Chair, please state your name and make your comments.

6. OLD BUSINESS

7. NEW BUSINESS

Highlights of Public Opinion Poll of Healdsburg Residents Regarding Proposed Amendments to the Existing Growth Management Ordinance & City Council Direction

8. RECESS TO WORK SESSION

Breakout Discussion on Housing Action Plan Draft Objectives

9. RECONVENE REGULAR MEETING

- Wrap-Up and Discussion on Housing Action Plan Draft Objectives
- Update on Housing Action Plan Public Outreach Schedule

10. DISCUSSION REGARDING CORRESPONDENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Article submitted by Vice-Chair Burg: Can Moderate Housing Return to Sonoma County, Sonoma Independent, October 15, 2015
- Article submitted by Member Mansell: Tahoe economic study finds uneven recovery; workers suffer, ksl.com, January 17, 2016

11. ADJOURNMENT

SB 343 - DOCUMENTS RELATED TO OPEN SESSION AGENDAS: *Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the Community Housing Committee regarding any item on this agenda after the posting of this agenda and not otherwise exempt from disclosure, will be made available for public review in the City Clerk's Office located at City Hall, 401 Grove Street, Healdsburg, during normal business hours. If supplemental materials are made available to the members of the Community Housing Committee at the meeting, a copy will be available for public review at the City Hall Council Chamber, 401 Grove Street, Healdsburg, CA 95448.*

These writings will be made available in appropriate alternative formats upon request by a person with a disability, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

DISABLED ACCOMMODATIONS: *The City of Healdsburg will make reasonable accommodations for persons having special needs due to disabilities. Please contact Maria Curiel, City Clerk, at Healdsburg City Hall, 401 Grove Street, Healdsburg, California, 431-3317, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting, to ensure the necessary accommodations are made.*



**Community Housing Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 11, 2016
6:00 pm**

Present Committee Members: Abramson, Burg, Butler, Chambers, Civian, Lickey, Madarus, Mansell and Chairperson Worden

Absent Committee Members: None

CALLED TO ORDER

Chairperson Worden called to order the regular meeting of the Community Housing Committee of the City of Healdsburg at **6:01 p.m.**

INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairperson Worden introduced the two new Community Housing Committee Members; Councilmembers Brigette Mansell and Tom Chambers.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Chairperson Worden gave an overview on the process to elect a Vice-Chairperson. Committee Member Abramson made a motion, seconded by Committee Member Butler, to nominate Richard Burg as Vice Chair. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote. (Ayes 9, Noes, 0, Absent – None)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Committee Member Civian made a motion, seconded by Committee Member Lickey, to approve the January 11, 2016 meeting agenda as submitted. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote. (Ayes 9, Noes 0, Absent – None)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Committee Member Civian, seconded by Committee Member Lickey, made a motion to approve the December 10, 2015 regular meeting minutes as submitted. The motion carried on a voice vote. (Ayes 7, Noes 0, Absent – None, Abstentions – 2)

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA MATTERS

Michael Miller- Commented on different mechanisms and case studies done on subsidizing affordable housing.



OLD BUSINESS

None.

UPDATE ON THE CITY'S HOUSING PROGRAMS

Community Housing and Development Director Massey gave an update on the City's current housing programs including rent stabilization programs, transitional housing services, and affordable housing projects in the City. Director Massey also described the City's partnerships with experienced housing service providers including North Sonoma County Services, Fair Housing Sonoma County, Housing Land Trust of Sonoma County, and Community on the Shelterless. Director Massey described the City's housing program accomplishments to date as well as new programs the City is currently working to put in place.

Discussion ensued among Committee members about density, land use, and the maximum allowed units on the properties purchased with Redevelopment funds.

Chair Worden called for public comments.

Member of the public – Inquired about the process to identify developers for each property.

Director Massey described the request for qualifications process to identify developers.

Discussion ensued among Committee members about the services provided by North Sonoma County Services; criteria to qualify for services they provide, how the community finds out about the services; and the length of stay at the Victory apartments.

Jim Winston- Inquired about what the area median income would be for the Dry Creek property.

Director Massey stated the property was purchased with Redevelopment funds and therefore would be developed for low and moderate housing.

WORK SESSION TOPICS

Jim Heid, Urban Green, gave a presentation on work completed to date on the Growth Management Ordinance (GMO) amendments and outlined the preliminary timeline and process for completion of the Housing Action Plan, including public outreach opportunities. Mr. Heid facilitated a discussion of the proposed vision, goals and metrics to be included in the Plan.

Discussion ensued among Committee members about the policies and procedures for the Housing Action Plan, the timeline for preparation of the Plan, the vision statement, and the goals to be included in the Housing Action Plan.



Mr. Heid facilitated an exercise with the Committee Members and the public regarding the goals for the Plan.

Discussion ensued amongst the Committee Members and the public about the Housing Action Plan, including a discussion about density, Walk Score, types of housing, and zoning. It was requested that the number of units that could be built in Healdsburg be provided to cross check the number of units being proposed by the Committee.

The discussion concluded with a review of the next steps to be completed at the February meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair Worden distributed a handout from Warren Watkins to the Committee.

Discussion ensued about Committee Member Burg's correspondence regarding the Growth Management Ordinance survey.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other Community Housing Committee business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at approximately **7:57 p.m.**

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Jon Worden, Chair

Raina Allan, Administrative Specialist



**CITY OF HEALDSBURG
COMMUNITY HOUSING COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT**

AGENDA ITEM:	Highlights of Public Opinion Poll of Healdsburg Residents Regarding Proposed Amendments to the Existing Growth Management Ordinance & City Council Direction
MEETING DATE:	February 8, 2016
PREPARED BY:	Karen Massey, Community Housing and Development Director
REQUESTED ACTION:	Receive the information

BACKGROUND:

At its February 1, 2016 meeting, the Council received the results of the public opinion poll of Healdsburg residents regarding proposed amendments to the existing Growth Management Ordinance (GMO).

The results of the survey show that despite generally positive feelings about the City's direction, the cost of housing remains a top concern for local residents – with roughly three-quarters rating it a “very serious” problem in the City. There is also widespread concern about the range of different housing options available for local residents. With regard specifically to amending the City's GMO, the survey results show:

- 75% of respondents voiced support for updating the GMO to address the City's housing needs,
- More than two-thirds support a ballot measure to implement the recommendations of the Community Housing Committee,
- 65% of respondents generally approved of the notion of limiting the development of new housing to one percent of the existing supply of market-rate housing (currently about 4,500 units),
- 86% of respondents supported dedicating a portion of new housing units to be affordable to middle-income and working families, and
- 83% of respondents supported establishing a “Housing Cycle”, which would match the City's current eight year Housing Element, to review the City's housing needs.

A summary of the key findings of the survey is attached to this report.

After receiving public comments on the survey results, the City Council directed the proposed GMO amendments be returned to the Community Housing Committee for further discussion and a recommendation on how future allocations might be divided and included in the ballot measure language.

ATTACHMENTS:

Key Findings Memo

*Fairbank,
Maslin,
Maullin,
Metz &
Associates*

FM3

*Public Opinion Research
& Strategy*

TO: David Mickaelian
City of Healdsburg

FROM: David Metz
Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates

RE: Key Findings from Survey of Healdsburg Residents on the Updating of the
Growth Management Ordinance

DATE: January 20, 2016

Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) recently completed a survey of likely voters in the City of Healdsburg to assess public views towards updating the City's Growth Management Ordinance (GMO).¹ The results of the survey show that despite generally positive feelings about the City's direction, the cost of housing remains a top concern for local residents – with roughly three-quarters rating it a “very serious” problem in the City. There is also widespread concern about the range of different housing options available for local residents. With regard specifically to amending the City's GMO, the survey results show:

- 75% of respondents voiced support for updating the GMO to address the City's housing needs,
- More than two-thirds support a ballot measure to implement the recommendations of the Community Housing Committee,
- 65% of respondents generally approved of the notion of limiting the development of new housing to one percent of the existing supply of market-rate housing (currently about 4,500 units),
- 86% of respondents supported dedicating a portion of new housing units to be affordable to middle-income and working families,

¹ **Methodology:** From January 12 – 18, 2016, FM3 conducted 370 interviews with Healdsburg voters likely to cast ballots in November 2016. Interviews were conducted on landline phones, wireless phones, and online. Telephone interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. The margin of error for the full sample is +/- 5.1%; margins of error for subgroups within the sample will be higher. Some percentages do not sum to 100% because of rounding.

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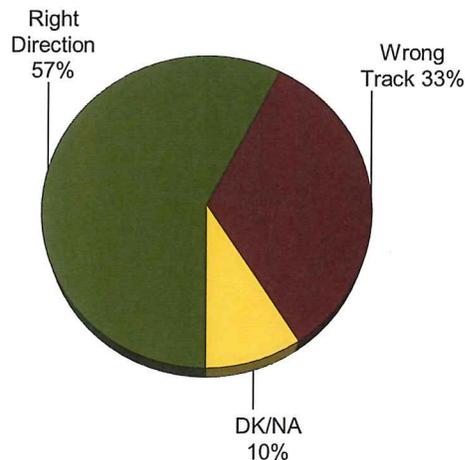
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Oakland, CA 94612
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Fax: (510) 451-0384*

- 83% of respondents supported establishing a “Housing Cycle”, which would match the City’s current eight year Housing Element, to review the City’s housing needs.

All of the key findings of the survey are summarized below:

- **Most Healdsburg respondents feel positive about the direction of the City.** As an introductory question, survey respondents were asked to indicate whether they thought things in the County were “generally headed in the right direction or pretty seriously off on the wrong track.” A 64-percent majority said that the County was headed in the right direction, and a slightly smaller majority, 57%, said the City of Healdsburg is headed in the right direction, as shown below in **Figure 1**.

**FIGURE 1:
Perception of the Direction of the City**



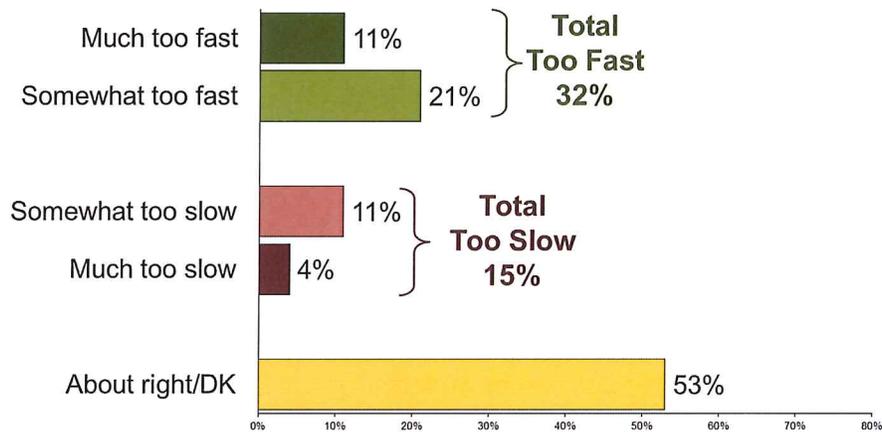
- **Housing costs are the dominant concern for local residents.** When asked to rate concern about a range of issues facing the City, housing costs and lack of housing options top the list. As shown in **Figure 2** below, respondents were presented with a list of issues facing the City, and were asked to rate each as an “extremely serious,” “very serious,” “somewhat serious” or “not serious” problem. More than seven in ten voiced concern about “the cost of housing” and “a lack of housing working families can afford.” More than three in five rated “a lack of housing options for people in different stages of their lives, and with different lifestyles” as a “very serious” problem. These concerns generally dwarfed other issues, like “jobs and the economy” or “traffic congestion.”

FIGURE 2:
Evaluation of the Seriousness of Problems Facing the City

Issue	TOTAL EXT/VERY	Ext. Ser.	Very Ser.	SW Ser.	Not Ser.
A lack of housing working families can afford	74%	43%	31%	17%	8%
The cost of housing	73%	46%	27%	18%	8%
A lack of housing options for people in different stages of their lives, and with different lifestyles	62%	29%	33%	22%	14%
Too many out of towners displacing long-term residents	46%	27%	19%	25%	24%
Traffic	29%	14%	15%	29%	43%
Too much growth and development	25%	12%	13%	24%	47%
Jobs and the local economy	25%	11%	13%	31%	36%
Overcrowding in the City	24%	11%	13%	22%	51%
A lack of open space	14%	6%	8%	26%	59%

- Overall, most Healdsburg respondents are comfortable with the pace of growth and development.** As shown in **Figure 2** above, relatively few local residents express concern about “too much growth and development” in the City (with just 25 percent rating it an “extremely serious” or “very serious” problem). And when asked directly whether “the rate of growth and development in Healdsburg is too fast, about right, or too slow,” a 53-percent plurality of respondents said it was “about right” (51%) or declined to offer an opinion (two percent.)

FIGURE 3:
Evaluation of the Rate of Growth and Development in the City of Healdsburg



- **At the same time, respondents expressed a desire to carefully evaluate growth to ensure that it is meeting the community’s needs.** Survey respondents were presented with a series of statements characterizing the impact of growth and development in the City of Healdsburg, and were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with each, as shown in **Figure 4** below. A few key trends emerge from the data:

- ✓ There is an overwhelming consensus that growth needs to be reviewed regularly to reflect changing conditions in the community (92% agree).
- ✓ Seven in ten (71%) say more growth is needed to keep the economy strong.
- ✓ Nearly nine in ten (86%) agree that there is a need for more housing affordable for people to work in Healdsburg. More than three-quarters (79%) agree that more development is necessary to provide homes that middle-income families can afford.
- ✓ While respondents generally view City policies and decisions relating to growth and development favorably, only a narrow majority (54%) said that they have had a positive impact on the community.
- ✓ Nearly nine in ten (82%) agree that Healdsburg needs more housing options – and agreement stays essentially the same (80%) when those options are detailed as “multi-unit, small lot, cottage court, and rental units.”

**FIGURE 4:
Agreement with Statements Evaluating Growth and Development in Healdsburg**

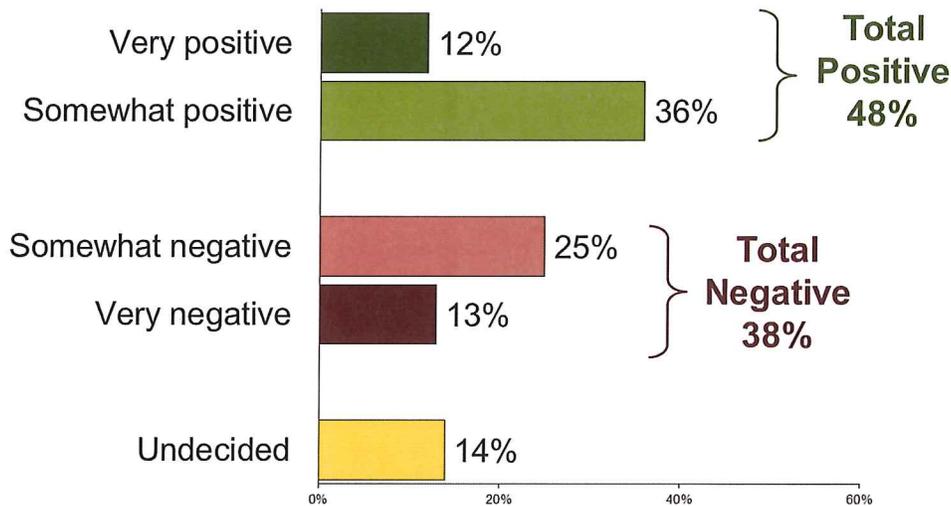
Statement	TOTAL AGREE	TOTAL DISAG.	Str. Agree	SW Agree	SW Disag.	Str. Disag.
Growth should be reviewed regularly to reflect changing economic conditions, community needs, and citizen desires.	92%	7%	63%	29%	3%	4%
The City needs more housing that is affordable for people who work in Healdsburg, so they can live and work here.*	86%	14%	66%	20%	5%	8%
The City needs more housing that is affordable for working people who provide basic City services like police, firefighters, teachers, and restaurant and hotel workers so they can afford to live and work in Healdsburg.*	84%	14%	65%	20%	9%	5%
Healdsburg needs a greater variety of housing options.*	82%	10%	59%	23%	5%	5%
Healdsburg needs a greater variety of housing options, including multi-unit, small lot, cottage court, and rental units.*	80%	18%	49%	32%	8%	10%
Additional development is necessary so that middle-income families can afford to live in Healdsburg.	79%	17%	48%	31%	9%	8%
Growth is necessary for Healdsburg to attract and retain, jobs and businesses and maintain a healthy, vital local economy.	71%	25%	33%	38%	14%	11%

Statement	TOTAL AGREE	TOTAL DISAG.	Str. Agree	SW Agree	SW Disag.	Str. Disag.
City policies and decisions limiting growth and development have made a positive impact upon the community.	54%	36%	16%	39%	19%	16%

* Asked of half sample only

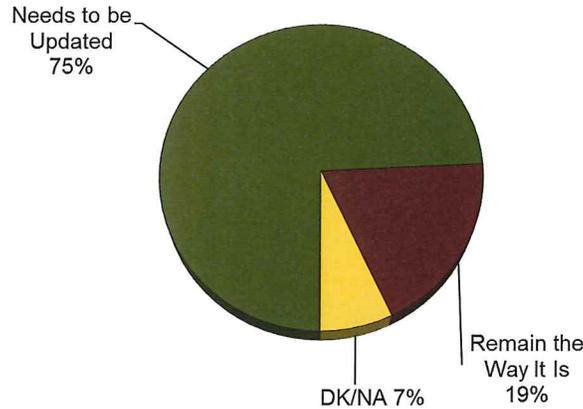
- Respondents are aware of the City’s Growth Management Ordinance, and think it has had – on balance – a positive impact on the city.** Roughly two-thirds of local residents (68%) say that they have heard of the GMO, including about one in five (22%) who say they have heard “a great deal” about it. Among this subgroup, most have a positive view of the Ordinance, as shown in **Figure 5** below.

FIGURE 5:
Perception of the GMO’s Impact on Healdsburg
(Among the 68% Aware of the Ordinance)



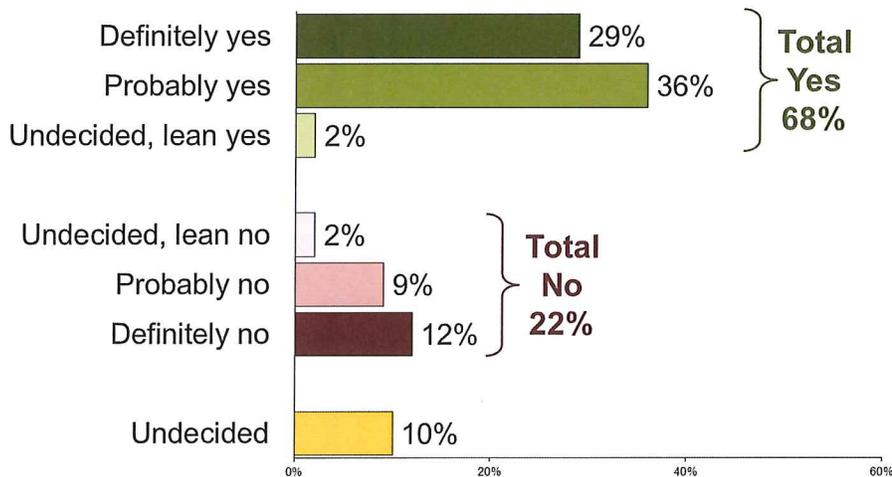
- More than three-quarters see a need for the Ordinance to be updated.** After being told more information about the GMO three-quarters of local residents (75%) say that they believe the GMO needs to be updated – while just 19 percent call for the Ordinance to remain in its current form (as shown below in **Figure 6**).

FIGURE 6:
Perception of the Need to Update the GMO



- Two-thirds of respondents initially backed a proposed ballot measure to update the GMO.** As shown below in **Figure 7**, 68% of respondents supported a ballot measure to update the GMO, just under one-quarter of respondents were opposed (22%), with the remainder undecided. Overall support was relatively tentative, with just one-in-four respondents “definite” in their “yes” vote and the remainder expressing some uncertainty – saying they would only “probably” vote “yes,” or were leaning in that direction.

FIGURE 7:
**Initial Support for a Ballot Measure to Update the GMO,
Given Draft Ballot Language**



- **Support for the proposed update stayed consistent as respondents received more information.** Survey respondents were given a variety of additional information about the potential measure, including a factual explanation of its key provisions and a series of rationales for its approval. That additional information had very little impact on levels of support for the measure, as detailed below in **Figure 8**. Roughly two-thirds of respondents expressed support for the measure throughout the survey.

**FIGURE 8:
Progression of Support for the Measure with Additional Information**

Position	Initial Vote	After Explanation	After Detailed Discussion
Definitely yes	29%	35%	34%
Probably/lean yes	38%	35%	35%
TOTAL YES	68%	70%	68%
Definitely no	12%	10%	12%
Probably/lean no	11%	13%	15%
TOTAL NO	22%	24%	26%
UNDECIDED	10%	6%	5%

- **Respondents were generally supportive of each of the major elements of the proposed update.** Survey respondents were asked to weigh in on a number of major individual provisions of the measure, as shown in **Figure 9**. There was overwhelming support for establishing a “Housing Cycle” to review the City’s housing needs, and for dedicating a portion of new housing units to be affordable to middle-income and working families. Respondents also generally approved of the notion of limiting the development of new housing to one percent of the existing supply of market-rate housing (currently about 4,500 units), meaning an average of 45 units per year, though support for that amount was more tentative than for other elements of the measure.

**FIGURE 9:
Support for Elements of the Proposed Update to the GMO**

Element	TOTAL SUPP.	TOTAL OPP.	Str. Supp.	SW Supp.	SW. Opp.	Str. Opp.	DK/NA
Requiring that a specified number of any new housing units be housing that middle-income and working families can afford	86%	13%	61%	25%	6%	7%	1%

Element	TOTAL SUPP.	TOTAL OPP.	Str. Supp.	SW Supp.	SW. Opp.	Str. Opp.	DK/NA
Establishing a Housing Cycle requiring that the City evaluate Healdsburg’s housing needs, and update the number of housing units to be developed to align with the City’s current and anticipated housing needs	83%	15%	47%	36%	7%	8%	2%
Limiting development of new housing units during the plan to no more than one percent of the existing market-rate housing units, which is currently approximately 4,500 units of existing market-rate housing*	65%	25%	23%	42%	17%	8%	11%
Limiting development of new housing units during the plan to no more than one percent of the existing market-rate housing units, which would currently mean building about 45 new units per year, on average*	56%	38%	17%	39%	21%	18%	6%

* Asked of half sample only

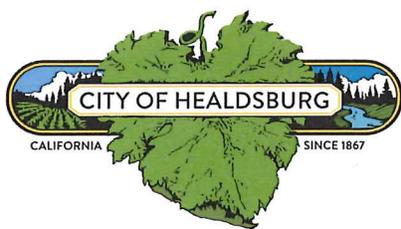
- **Voters express few strong opinions about how the amount of housing affordable to working families should be determined.** As shown in Figure 10, local voters are divided on whether the measure should set aside a specific proportion of new housing units that would be affordable for working families which would be enshrined in law (an option preferred by 41 percent of those polled) or whether determining that proportion should be delegated to City officials, to address changing needs (an option selected by 30 percent). Almost one-third chose both options, reject both, or decline to offer an opinion.

**FIGURE 10:
Preferred Approach to Determining Allocation of
New Housing Affordable for Working Families**

Statement	% Choosing
This measure should require a set level of new housing be affordable to working families that can only be changed with voter approval.	41%

Statement	% Choosing
This measure should allow City officials to determine what proportion of new housing should be affordable for working families, to respond to changing needs.	30%
Both/Neither/DK	29%

Taken together, the survey results reveal a broad consensus among Healdsburg residents in favor of updating the Growth Management Ordinance to reflect changing needs, in particular to address the cost of housing for working families, and to increase the number of housing options available in the City. More specifically, two-thirds of residents back a potential ballot measure to enact the changes to the GMO proposed by the Community Housing Committee.



**CITY OF HEALDSBURG
COMMUNITY HOUSING COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT**

AGENDA ITEM: Discussion on Housing Action Plan Draft Objectives

MEETING DATE: February 8, 2016

PREPARED BY: Karen Massey, Community Housing and Development Director

REQUESTED ACTION: Receive the information and provide feedback to Staff

BACKGROUND:

In January, the Community Housing Committee began outlining the plan components and timeline for completion of the Housing Action Plan as well as discussing the proposed vision, objectives and metrics to be included in the Plan. In addition to refining the Plan's vision and metrics, the Committee identified nine objectives of the Plan, as follows:

- HAP-Objective 1: Increase the quantity and quality of deed-restricted Affordable Housing
- HAP-Objective 2: Develop new pool of deed-restricted Middle Income Housing
- HAP-Objective 3: Incentivize development of new, market rate rental housing units
- HAP-Objective 4: Incentivize development of new Seniors appropriate Housing
- HAP-Objective 5: Encourage, facilitate and incentivize the development of creative density housing types including but not limited to small lot, cottage court, micro, co-housing, and secondary dwelling units (SDU's)
- HAP-Objective 6: Leverage Market Rate housing to deliver more deed-restricted affordable and workforce housing
- HAP-Objective 7: Encourage appropriately scaled and well-designed products in all new development
- HAP-Objective 8: Site and build affordable housing proximate to existing or planned services
- HAP-Objective 9: Address the role and impact of Second Home ownership on total housing stock

The first four objectives are more quantitative in nature with the remaining five objectives being more qualitative in nature.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

In preparation for the February 8th Committee meeting, Committee Members were assigned a homework exercise. The goal of the homework exercise was to initiate thinking on the Plan objectives by providing Committee Members a framing document outlining the Plan's purpose, a warmup visioning exercise, and a quantitative objectives exercise (covering only the first four objectives) as well as relevant supporting data and policy information, to begin identifying Plan targets and potential actions that may be required to achieve those targets.

Committee Members were asked to return their exercise to Staff by February 2nd such that Staff could begin synthesizing the data in preparation for the February 8th meeting. The results received to date have been synthesized and included as an attachment to this report. On the 8th, we will begin with an overview and background on the homework exercise and then use the breakout group format for the majority of the session, with the specific purpose of reaching some early consensus on the first four objectives defined at our last meeting.

Finally, on February 1st the Healdsburg Senior Citizen Advisory Commission approved recommendations for the Housing Action Plan, a copy of which has been attached to this report.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Homework Exercise
- Warm-Up Exercise Results
- Objectives Exercise Results
- Healdsburg Housing Action Plan Priorities Wordcloud
- Healdsburg Senior Citizen Advisory Commission Recommendations



CITY OF HEALDSBURG COMMUNITY HOUSING COMMITTEE

January 23, 2016

Committee Members,

Now the hard work begins! Enclosed you will find advance background reading and ‘homework’ for our February 8th Work Session.

Please take time to read this information carefully and form your initial thoughts on the specific questions provided. We have allocated approximately 10 days for this effort to let you digest all this information and work through it at your convenience. Furthermore, there are no ‘right answers’. The primary goal is to afford you time to begin to refine your thinking, get a better grasp on all the data that has been created, and provide us with a sense of the Committee’s early thinking as we prep for our work session. We will use the February 8th work session to discuss all of these concepts in more detail – but with this advance work we can have a more robust discussion about the ultimate solutions.

To have your thoughts included in our next work session, your responses are due back to staff (Karen) by Tuesday, February 2nd. We will be using the breakout group format for the majority of our February 8th session, with the specific purpose of reaching some early consensus on the specific Objectives defined at our last meeting.

In this package you will find the following information for your review:

Housing Action Plan Framing Document – this acts as the introductory component of the future Housing Action Plan and will provide you with valuable context relative to the Plan’s purpose, construction and role relative to other City documents. *Please read this first as it defines how your advisory efforts will inform the final product.*

Warmup Exercise – before diving into the numbers, we ask that you give some thought to this exercise as a way to blend aspiration, quality of place and vision into a simple summary. The exercise is self-explanatory and should be quick and fun. Don’t make this a thesis!

Objectives Exercise – at our last meeting we defined nine Objectives for the Housing Action Plan (see the third page of the framing document). At the February 8th meeting we will be focusing on the first four of these Objectives – all of which are ‘quantitative’ in nature. The worksheet provides some brief background on each Objective and then provides a place for you to document your initial thoughts on what an appropriate Target might be and your accompanying rationale. There is also a place for any recommendations on potential Actions that may be required to achieve that Target.

Data Points Summary – compiles a number of key housing data points for our community, from various sources, into one single ‘cliff notes’ version. The summary is an important resource to help you

understand the current numbers and state of housing in Healdsburg as you formulate your suggested Targets and recommended Actions.

Relevant Policies Summary – compiles key goals, policies and recommendations from existing City documents that relate to the Housing Action Plan. These illustrate much of the work that has already been done in the POLICY arena so that we can avoid duplicating past efforts. As our product is a Housing Action Plan, translating these policies and other recommendations into *specific measurable Actions*, will be our biggest contribution to the subject area.

Following submission of your responses, you will receive an agenda packet for the February 8th meeting around Wednesday, February 3rd. Synthesis of the results from the Worksheets will be shared with the Committee at the start of our meeting, before we go into our break out groups.

Once you've completed the homework, please return it to staff (Karen) by end of business, Tuesday February 2nd. Please be sure your response includes these three things:

1. Warmup exercise,
2. Objectives exercise, and
3. Any recommended actions you suggest are needed to support each of the objectives.

If you have any questions or require further clarification, please feel free to call or email.

Thank you,

Karen Massey
Community Housing & Development Director

Jim Heid
UrbanGreen

Attachments:

Housing Action Plan Framing Document
Warmup Exercise
Objectives Exercise
Data Points Summary
Relevant Policies Summary
General Plan Guiding Policies

2016-2022 HEALDSBURG ACTION PLAN: FRAMING DOCUMENT

Working Draft January 23, 2016

HOUSING ACTION PLAN OVERVIEW

The City of Healdsburg's Housing Action Plan is a companion document to other policy documents that inform, shape and direct the character and type of growth occurring in Healdsburg. These include the Strategic Plan, the General Plan, the Housing Element (which is part of the General Plan), the Land Use Code, the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance (which is part of the Land Use Code), the Urban Growth Boundary and the City's Growth Management Ordinance.

These documents have a statutory and regulatory role in shaping the physical form and make-up of the community. Alternatively, the Housing Action Plan is *a statement of the community's values and priorities related to Housing*, which forms a 'call-to-action' for both City leadership and residents to more pro-actively shape the community's housing character over the defined *Housing Cycle*.

The Housing Cycle runs concurrently with the City's Housing Element. The Housing Element is one of the nine Elements of the City's General Plan. It provides the policy basis and requirements for how the City will address its housing needs over the life of the General Plan; unlike the other Elements, the Housing Element must be updated every eight years per state standards. Aligning the Housing Cycle with the timeframe of the Housing Element provides a unique housing management tool – one that is long enough to smooth out the consequences of inevitable real estate cycles, while also short enough to respond to rapid changes in housing norms.

HOUSING ACTION PLAN PURPOSE

The Housing Action Plan is meant to facilitate five key outcomes:

- *Tell Healdsburg's Housing Story* – what the town values, the role housing plays in creating a sustainable, thriving community, and how we plan to get there.
- *Establish Clear and Measurable Targets* – measurable targets for housing, established by Staff working with the community, that will allow leadership to better direct the City's resources (financial and human) to accomplish what the community has said is important, while fulfilling state mandated goals.
- *Attract Like Minded Partners* – instead of waiting for new development 'to show up', the Housing Action Plan will provide a clear statement of what our community wants to see in its new housing – and what it is willing to do to achieve that. The real estate development community – both for profit and non-profit, will be attracted by what is important to us, and those who share our values and vision, will be more inclined to participate.
- *Put Housing in Context* – the complexity of housing our community will not be solved by a single solution. Nor is it an isolated issue. The Housing Action Plan will make evident the linkage of housing to alternative transportation, community health, green building, economic vitality and long term sustainability. It will also identify specific measurable actions the community should take to achieve the stated vision and targets.
- *Create the Foundation for Implementing the GMO* – through all of the above, the Housing Action Plan will establish the rationale for how housing allocations – created by the City's Growth Management Ordinance – should be directed, managed and used to attract and guide new development in achieving the outcomes we desire.

HOUSING ACTION PLAN STRUCTURE

The Housing Action Plan is organized around two key themes - *Increasing the Diversity of Housing in Our Community* **and** *Increasing the Affordability of Housing in Our Community*.

Increasing the Diversity of Housing focuses on how to widen the portfolio of housing types in our Community. Through a series of community workshops held in 2015, attendees regularly noted that Healdsburg's housing options are too homogenous, and exciting new housing types (including but not limited to co-housing, cottage courts, small lot homes) that are being built in other communities are not occurring here. Analysis completed through the 2015 Housing Element Update corroborated this perception, showing that the proportion of single family homes in Healdsburg is larger than what is seen in more diverse, sustainable communities.

Increasing the Affordability of Housing will focus on the tools, options and techniques needed to build more deed-restricted housing that meets the needs of low income families in our community. Increasing affordability will address the need for both increasing supply (building more units) and reducing cost of ownership – by building more efficiently, reducing operating costs, and looking for locations where alternative transportation reduces the 'housing/transportation' burden.

HOUSING ACTION PLAN CONTENTS

The City of Healdsburg's General Plan acts as the overarching 'blueprint' for the City's growth. It does this by establishing a set of specific goals and associated policies. A Goal *'is a general direction that the City intends to take in making planning or development decisions. A goal is a general expression of community values and is abstract in nature rather than quantifiable or time-dependent'*¹.

The Housing Action Plan is a complement to the General Plan, but by contrast, *the Housing Action Plan will articulate specific Objectives that are both time dependent and quantifiable. An Objective is 'a specific result ... to achieve within a time frame and with available resources. Objectives are more specific and easier to measure than goals. Objectives are basic tools that underlie all planning and strategic activities'*².

The measurement of Objectives will be done by setting a series of Targets – which are measurable by nature and intended to be fulfilled by the end of the Housing Cycle. A bi-annual reporting process (report card) will provide the opportunity to assess progress in achieving these Targets, and hence meet our stated Objectives. This in turn will help the City's leadership adjust resources, adapt policies or tools as necessary, all in an effort to achieve the stated outcomes by the end of the Housing Cycle.

With each new Housing Cycle, a new set of Targets will be developed that respond to community needs and priorities - concurrently with, and informed by - the Housing Element Update.

A VISION FOR HEALDSBURG IN 2022

Through the series of community workshops completed in 2015, and with direct input from the Community Housing Committee, a vision for housing in Healdsburg has evolved. The vision combines the key themes of diversity and affordability and states:

¹ City of Healdsburg General Plan 2011, page vi

² <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/objective.html#ixzz3x9VGCjwa>

“In 2022, Healdsburg is a diverse, thriving community supported a wide diversity of housing – both type and price.

Individuals at different life stages and of different economic levels participate in active, welcoming neighborhoods that together make up the larger community.

Owners and renters have wide choices in housing options – apartments, single family homes, live/work units, cottage courts, co-housing and townhomes – that meet their individual needs, incomes, lifestyles and family makeup.”

This statement establishes the long term, desired role for housing in Healdsburg and forms the foundation for the Housing Action Plan’s Objectives during this inaugural cycle (2016-2022).

HOUSING ACTION PLAN OBJECTIVES

The following Objectives articulate the specific results to be achieved by the Housing Action Plan.

HAP-Objective 1:

Increase the quantity and quality of deed-restricted Affordable Housing

HAP-Objective 2:

Develop new pool of deed-restricted Middle Income Housing

HAP-Objective 3:

Incentivize development of new, market rate rental housing units

HAP-Objective 4:

Incentivize development of new Seniors appropriate Housing

HAP-Objective 5:

Encourage, facilitate and incentivize the development of creative density housing types including but not limited to small lot, cottage court, micro, co-housing and secondary dwelling units (SDU’s)

HAP-Objective 6:

Leverage Market Rate housing to deliver more deed-restricted affordable and workforce housing

HAP-Objective 7:

Encourage appropriately scaled and well-designed products in all new development

HAP-Objective 8:

Site and build affordable housing proximate to existing or planned services

HAP-Objective 9:

Address the role and impact of Second Home ownership on total housing stock

2016-2022 HEALDSBURG ACTION PLAN: WARM UP EXERCISE

Reflecting on the Vision Statement for the HAP, imagine you are now walking down a street in Healdsburg in 2022. Pick a street that you know.

In 250 words or less, describe what you see that is different than the way it looks today. Identify what the HAP, and the process we are involved in, has done to make that happen.

2016-2022 HEALDSBURG ACTION PLAN: OBJECTIVES EXERCISE

HAP-Objective 1:

Increase the quantity and quality of deed-restricted Affordable Housing

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Healdsburg has 402 Deed-Restricted Affordable Housing Units in its total ‘stock’, which equals 8.2% of all housing units. This puts us in the middle of our neighboring communities which range from 5-11.5%. Our affordable housing options are largely multi-family rental due to the nature of constructing for affordability and management efficiency of properties. For more information refer to Tables 1-5, 7 and 8.

Healdsburg follows state guidelines for defining affordability, using three categories based on income level relative to the Area Median Income (AMI), measured at the County level.³ The three categories, utilized in the Housing Element include:

- Very Low and below – 0-50% AMI
- Low – 51-80% AMI
- Moderate and Above – Over 81% AMI

THE EXERCISE

To address this objective the HAP will define specific goals for how much affordable housing, and what kind, we should build in the next six years. Provide your initial thoughts to the following questions. ***NOTE AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS IN HEALDSBURG DO NOT REQUIRE A HOUSING ALLOCATION AND THEREFORE ARE NOT LIMITED BY THE GMO.***

By 2022, Healdsburg should achieve the following targets related to deed restricted affordable housing:

1. Increase the % of deed restricted affordable housing to equal or exceed _____% of total housing stock.
2. How many units will this require be built? _____
3. Of the total units proposed, they should be distributed as follows (take the answer to #2 and divide three times – once for a, once for b, and once for c)
 - a. By Income _____ Very Low _____ Low _____ Moderate
 - b. By Tenure _____ Ownership _____ Rental
 - c. By Unit Type _____ Single Family _____ Multi-Family

³ For 2015, the Sonoma County AMI was \$76,900.

What other actions need to be considered to achieve this Objective?

Example: Revise the current Inclusionary Housing Ordinance to adjust the % requirements for Very Low, Low and Moderate in equal proportions, starting with Very Low, to be evenly split between Low and Moderate.

Action:

Action:

HAP-Objective 2:

Develop a new pool of deed-restricted Middle Income Housing

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The City of Healdsburg has experienced an increasing challenge for individuals and families that work in town, being able to live in town. This challenge is evidenced by economics that show many families make too much money to qualify for Affordable Housing, but not enough money to qualify for financing that would allow the purchase of a median priced home⁴, or pay a median rent.

To resolve this challenge the Community Housing Committee, following analyses by an outside consultant (EPS), determined that housing for *middle income families* should be defined as 121% - 160% of AMI.

THE EXERCISE

To address this objective the HAP will define specific goals for how much 'middle income' housing we would like to see built over the next six years. Provide your initial thoughts to the following questions,

RECOGNIZING THAT MIDDLE INCOME HOUSING WILL REQUIRE SOME PORTION OF THE 270 ALLOCATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN RECOMMENDED FOR THE NEXT SIX YEARS.

By 2022, Healdsburg should achieve the following targets related to construction of missing middle housing:

- 1. How many units of missing middle housing should be built through encouragement, incentives and policies between 2016-2022? _____
- 2. Of the total units proposed, they should be distributed:
 - b. By Tenure _____ Ownership _____ Rental
 - c. By Unit Type _____ Single Family _____ Multi-Family

What other actions should we consider to achieve this Objective?

Example: Revise the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance to require an additional % of housing that meets the requirements of Middle Income buyers and renters.

Action:

Action:

⁴ In October of 2015, Zillow.com posts Healdsburg's median home price as \$615,000

HAP-Objective 3:

Incentivize development of new, market rate rental housing units

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Currently, Healdsburg’s stock of market rate rental apartments is low relative to normal community standards. Deducting deed-restricted affordable units from the total of multi-family units in buildings of 5 units or more, there are only 156 apartments available to the market.

Since the passage of Measure M (the Growth Management Ordinance) in 2000, the mechanics of the housing allocation process has made the development of new rental apartments in buildings of 5 + units economically infeasible⁵.

As prices and demand have risen in recent years, the lack of new supply and high demand has created increasing rental prices. Concurrently, demographic changes including aging baby boomers and young millennials are looking to rent apartments at unprecedented levels, as their lifestyles and needs change. In its current form Healdsburg is not equipped to support these households.

THE EXERCISE

To address this objective the HAP COULD prioritize rental apartments as one of its primary targets. To accomplish this it could reserve some of the proposed Directed Allocations for this goal, or it could simply emphasize rental apartments as a policy objective and encourage their development.

RECOGNIZING THAT MARKET RATE RENTAL WILL REQUIRE SOME PORTION OF THE 270 ALLOCATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN RECOMMENDED FOR THE NEXT SIX YEARS,

1. How many units of MARKET RATE rental housing should be built through encouragement, incentives and policies between 2016-2022? _____
2. Do you support setting aside some portion of the proposed DIRECTED ALLOCATIONS to accelerate the development of market rate rental housing? ___Y ___N
3. Are there certain criteria you would recommend for access to the allocations as a way to direct where development should go (e.g walkable to daily services, etc)?

What other actions should we consider to achieve this Objective?

Example: Prioritize an approach to use of Allocations with the Growth Management Ordinance (via the Policy and Procedures) to incentivize and encourage the construction of rental apartments.

Action:

Action:

⁵ Due to uncertainty of allocations, developers are unable to secure financing for projects that require enough units to achieve economies of scale in construction and operation.

HAP-Objective 4:

Incentivize development of new Seniors appropriate housing

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

As Healdsburg’s median age increases, the number of seniors living in single-family homes increases. Healdsburg’s senior households (those with a member 65 years or older) make up 863 ownership units and 284 rental units.⁶

With increased age, fixed incomes and decreased mobility, new housing types that require less maintenance, provide a supportive environment and do not require personal automobiles for transportation could be a valuable asset to Healdsburg – freeing up existing housing units for younger families and improving the quality of life of aging residents.

Healdsburg currently has:⁷

- 350 units for occupants 55 years and older.
- 59 deed restricted affordable units for residents 62 and older.
- 129 units in Senior Living Facilities.

THE EXERCISE

To address this objective the HAP COULD prioritize Seniors Housing as one of its primary targets. To accomplish this it could reserve some of the proposed Directed Allocations for this goal or it could simply emphasize Seniors Housing as a policy objective and encourage its development.

RECOGNIZING THAT SENIORS HOUSING WILL REQUIRE SOME PORTION OF THE 270 ALLOCATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN RECOMMENDED FOR THE NEXT SIX YEARS,

1. How many units of MARKET RATE Seniors housing units should be built through encouragement, incentives and policies between 2016-2022? _____
2. Do you support setting aside some portion of the proposed DIRECTED ALLOCATIONS to accelerate the development of seniors housing? _____ Y _____ N
3. Are there certain criteria you would recommend for access to the allocations as a way to direct where development should go (e.g walkable to daily services, etc)

What other actions should we consider to achieve this objective?

Example: Right-size parking requirements for seniors housing needs.

Action:

Action:

⁶ Healdsburg Housing Element page 42

⁷ Healdsburg Housing Element page 43

2016-2022 HEALDSBURG ACTION PLAN: DATA POINTS SUMMARY

Table 1: TOTAL HOUSING STOCK

Total Housing Units	Units	% of Total
Market Rate Units	4,502	91.8%
Deed Restricted Affordable Units	402	8.2%

Source: Total Units -Healdsburg Housing Element P22. Deed Restricted P53, Table 29

Table 2: CURRENT AFFORDABLE HOUSING MIX

Units Available by Income Limit	Units	% of Total (Deed Restricted, Affordable Units)
Very Low and below (0-50% AMI)	201	50%
Low (51% - 80% AMI)	183	46%
Moderate (81% - 120% AMI)	18	4%

Source: Healdsburg Housing Element P53, Table 29. Edited by UrbanGreen

Table 3: HOUSEHOLD INCOME LEVELS

Income Level	Households	%
Very Low and below (0-50% AMI)	1,295	29.7%
Low (51% - 80% AMI)	615	14.1%
Moderate & Above (Over 81% AMI)	2,225	56.1%

Source: Healdsburg Housing Element P19, Table 9. Edited by UrbanGreen

Table 4: HOW WE STACK UP WITH OTHER NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES

City	Total Housing Units	Affordable Units	
		Units	%
Sebastopol	3,485	402	11.5%
Rohnert Park	16,551	1,701	10.3%
Cotati	2,988	278	9.3%
Healdsburg	4,904	402	8.2%
Santa Rosa	68,551	4,311	6.3%
Petaluma	22,868	1,417	6.2%
Cloverdale	3,427	205	5%
Windsor	9,549	485	5%

Source: Housing Land Trust of Sonoma County

Table 5: INCREASING OUR STOCK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING – TARGET IMPLICATIONS

Desired shift in baseline(1)	New Housing Units needed to be Constructed 2016-2202 to achieve goal
To increase from 8.2% to 9%	64
To increase from 8.2% to 10%	115
To increase from 8.2% to 11%	167
To increase from 8.2% to 12%	219
To increase from 8.2% to 15%	374
To increase from 8.2% to 20%	633

(1) Assumes all 270 allocations for this housing cycle are subscribed. Does not consider Middle Income housing as part of Affordable %.

Table 6: MARKET RATE HOUSING BY TYPE

Housing Type	Units	% of Total Market Rate units
Single Family Detached	3,647	81%
Single Family Attached	139	3.1%
Multi-Family 2-4 Units	490	10.9%
Multi-Family 5+ Units	156	3.5%
Mobile Homes	70	1.5%
Total	4,502	100%

Source: Healdsburg Housing Element P22, Table 11, and Healdsburg Housing Element P53, Table 29. Sorting and compilation by UrbanGreen

Table 7: AFFORDABLE HOUSING BY TENURE

Affordable Housing Type	Units	% of Total
Ownership	51	12.7%
Rental	351	87.3%
Total	402	100%

Source: Healdsburg Housing Element P53, Table 29. Note does not include Midtowne or Chiquita Grove which will add 10 ownership units.

Table 8: AFFORDABLE HOUSING BY TYPE

Affordable Housing Type	Units	% of Total Market Rate Units
Single Family Detached	43	1.5%
Single Family Attached	31	16.4%
Multi-Family 2-4 Units	0	0%
Multi-Family 5+ Units	328	82.1%
Mobile Homes	0	0%
Total	402	100.0%

Source: Healdsburg Housing Element P22, Table 11, and Healdsburg Housing Element P53, Table 29. Sorting and compilation by UrbanGreen

TABLE 9: HOUSING UNITS NEEDED TO MEET DESIRED LIVING AND WORKING IN HEALDSBURG GOAL

Policy Target (% of residents living and working in Healdsburg)	Number of Allocations Required (2) 2016-2022	NEW HOUSING UNITS DISTRIBUTED BY CATEGORY		
		Deed-Restricted Affordable Housing (0-120% AMI)	Deed-Restricted Workforce * (121-160% AMI)	Market Rate Housing* (161%+ AMI)
33% (1)	63	77	31	32
35%	108	131	53	55
40%(3)	219	267	107	112
45%	329	403	161	168
50%	440	539	215	225

* Requires GMO allocation

(1) Current City of Healdsburg percentage of residents working in town

(2) Derived and adjusted from EPS Housing Needs Assessment presentation 11.26.15. Calculates new jobs created during 2016-2022, and housing required at 1.3 jobs per household, less 10% housing filled by existing stock turnover.

(3) Policy target recommended by EPS

Source: EPS Housing Needs Assessment presentation 11.26.15.

Simplified, re-sorted and adapted to 6 year housing cycle by UrbanGreen 1.18.16

TABLE 10: REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ALLOCATION (RHNA) TARGETS

Income Level	Units	
Extremely Low (0-30% AMI)	15	81
Very Low (31-50% AMI)	16	
Low (51% - 80% AMI)	24	
Moderate (81% - 120% AMI)	26	
Above Moderate/Workforce/Missing Middle (121% - 160% AMI)*	0	0
Market Rate (>161% AMI)*	76	76
Total	157	157

Source: Healdsburg Housing Element P60, Table 32.

*Expansion and terminology for consistency with CHC discussions by UrbanGreen

TABLE 11: DIRECTED VS OPEN ALLOCATIONS SCENARIOS(1)

Total Allocations Available = 270

% OPEN Allocations	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%
Directed Housing Delivered (2)	216	189	162	135	108	81	54
Market Rate Units Delivered	54	81	108	135	162	189	216

(1) Assumes passage of current GMO Ballot initiative resulting in 45 allocations per year for six years (2017-2022), and full subscription of all available allocations in that period

(3) Based on prior Committee conversations these could be prioritized for deed restricted missing middle housing, creative density housing products, market rate rental apartments, seniors housing etc.

Source: UrbanGreen

TABLE 12: HEALDSBURG DEMOGRAPHICS BY AGE

Age	2000	2010
Preschool (Age 0-4)	632	634
School Age (5-17)	2,156	1,912
College Age (18-24)	954	925
Young Adults (25-44)	2,845	2,750
Middle Age (45-64)	2,628	3,349
Senior Adults (65+)	1,507	1,684

Source: Healdsburg Housing Element P14, Table 2.

TABLE 13: HEALDSBURG DEMOGRAPHICS SENIORS BY INCOME LEVEL (2010)

Income Level	# of Seniors
Extremely Low Income	245
Very Low Income	220
Low Income	175
Moderate Income and Above	645

Source: Healdsburg Housing Element P21, Table 10.

2016-2022 HEALDSBURG ACTION PLAN: RELEVANT POLICIES SUMMARY

HAP-Objective 1: *Increase the quantity and quality of deed-restricted Affordable Housing*

- H-12 **Inclusionary Housing Program.** Continue to implement the Inclusionary Housing Program. Consider revisions to the inclusionary housing requirements, including a revision to include an inclusionary housing obligation for units under 1,300 square feet, which are currently (2014) exempt, and revisions to the current fee structure to be on a per-square-foot basis.
- H-A-4 Provide a wide range of housing opportunities for all economic segments of the community, while maintaining a mix of housing types in Healdsburg.
- H-C-1 Maintain an adequate supply of land appropriate in terms of density and location for the development of housing affordable to lower- and moderate-income households.
- H-C-2 Work with non-profit organizations to benefit from their expertise and the resources available to them for the development of affordable housing and its ongoing support.
- H-C-3 Facilitate the development of housing affordable to lower- and moderate-income households, including first-time homebuyers.
- H-C-7 Approve density bonuses and other affordable housing incentives in accordance with State law and continue to grant an additional density bonus when an applicant proposes a project in which 100 percent of the remaining units not restricted to lower-income households will be affordable to moderate-income households.
- H-7 **Provide City Assistance.** Provide financial assistance to developers of affordable housing through land donations and long-term leases, the ongoing fee-deferral program, subsidies for City fees and on- and off-site improvements, loans, and other forms of assistance. The City shall consider its unmet regional housing needs, including those of extremely low-income households, when providing such assistance.
- H-14 **Affordable Secondary Dwelling Unit Incentive Program.** Develop an affordable secondary dwelling unit incentive program to encourage property owners to deed restrict secondary dwelling units as affordable rental housing for lower- or moderate-income households. As part of the program, the City shall establish long-term affordability requirements and a monitoring program to ensure the long-term affordability is maintained. The City shall impose a small monitoring fee to cover program costs. Incentives may include but are not limited to:
- An increase in the maximum allowed size of second units;
 - A reduction in the minimum lot size on which second units are allowed;
 - Reduced setbacks and/or other property development standards; and/or
 - Permit and development fee modifications.
- H-E-4 Promote the siting, production, rehabilitation, and preservation of housing for extremely low-income households, including non-traditional housing types.

HAP-Objective 2: *Develop new pool of deed-restricted Middle Income Housing*

- H-12 **Inclusionary Housing Program.** Continue to implement the Inclusionary Housing Program. Consider revisions to the inclusionary housing requirements, including a revision to include an inclusionary housing obligation for units under 1,300 square feet, which are currently (2014) exempt, and revisions to the current fee structure to be on a per-square-foot basis.
- H-A-4 Provide a wide range of housing opportunities for all economic segments of the community, while maintaining a mix of housing types in Healdsburg.
- H-C-1 Maintain an adequate supply of land appropriate in terms of density and location for the development of housing affordable to lower- and moderate-income households.
- H-C-3 Facilitate the development of housing affordable to lower- and moderate-income households, including first-time homebuyers.
- H-C-8 Strive to provide housing opportunities that are affordable to the local workforce.

HAP-Objective 3: *Incentivize development of new, market rate rental housing units*

- H-A-6 Encourage the retention and development of rental units.

HAP-Objective 4: *Incentivize development of new Seniors appropriate Housing*

- H-B-5 Continue to reduce the required number of parking spaces and waive the requirement for covered parking for senior and affordable housing developments, as feasible, if this will reduce development costs or improve the design of a project.
- H-E-5 Encourage development, rehabilitation, and preservation of senior housing, particularly in neighborhoods that are accessible to public transit, commercial services, and health and community facilities.

HAP-Objective 5: *Encourage, facilitate and incentivize the development of creative density housing types including but not limited to small lot, cottage court, micro, co-housing, and secondary dwelling units (SDU's)*

- H-A-2 Encourage residential projects to develop at the higher end of the allowable density range.
- H-A-4 Provide a wide range of housing opportunities for all economic segments of the community, while maintaining a mix of housing types in Healdsburg.
- H-C-11 Explore creative housing types such as accessory dwelling units, co-op housing, micro units, and other flexible housing types to increase opportunities for affordable rental and homeownership.

- H-15 **Provide Information on Secondary Dwelling Units.** Promote the development of second dwelling units by preparing and distributing an informational brochure on the permitting procedures and other requirements for building secondary dwelling units in the city.

HAP-Objective 6: Leverage Market Rate housing to deliver more deed-restricted affordable and workforce housing

- H-12 **Inclusionary Housing Program.** Continue to implement the Inclusionary Housing Program. Consider revisions to the inclusionary housing requirements, including a revision to include an inclusionary housing obligation for units under 1,300 square feet, which are currently (2014) exempt, and revisions to the current fee structure to be on a per-square-foot basis.
- H-C-5 Continue to require the provision of low- and moderate-income housing within residential development projects subject to the Inclusionary Housing Program.

HAP-Objective 7: Encourage appropriately scaled and well-designed products in all new development

- H-G-2 Require energy-efficiency performance in new housing that meets or exceeds minimum State standards.
- H-G-3 Promote energy-efficient residential site development practices.
- H-45 **Green City Program.** Ensure that the designs and construction practices for new residences and additions to existing residences comply with the CalGreen.

HAP-Objective 8: Site and build affordable housing proximate to existing or planned services

- H-A-7 Avoid concentrations of lower-income households to promote social and economic integration.
- H-G-6 Provide safe routes for bicycling and walking between housing and transit stops, commercial services, and schools.
- H-G-7 Promote infill development to maximize the use of existing infrastructure and encourage patronage of alternative transportation modes.

HAP-Objective 9: Address the role and impact of Second Home ownership on total housing stock

Guiding Principles

Identity

A Maintain Healdsburg's role within the region.

Healdsburg, one of the oldest cities in Sonoma County, has long been the residential and commercial center of a productive agricultural area. The City will continue to fulfill this role by providing housing, jobs and commercial services to its residents and the surrounding region as well as supporting diverse local agriculture.

B Promote city-centered growth.

Long before the citizens of Healdsburg voted for a 20-year Urban Growth Boundary in 1996, Healdsburg was defined by physical boundaries. The City will continue to focus inward - beyond 2016 - with infill development and redevelopment of underutilized sites. New development will be compact and efficient to make the best use of remaining lands. The City will identify areas that need special attention and develop strategies for them. The City will continue to work with Sonoma County to ensure that designated community separators surrounding the City remain in agricultural use and open space.

C Protect the city's scenic hillsides and ridgelines.

Densely-wooded Fitch Mountain and the hillsides and ridgelines surrounding Healdsburg are visible from nearly everywhere in the community, making the natural environment omnipresent. The ridgelines were important living and tactical areas of local Native American tribes. The visual qualities of these scenic resources will be preserved.

D Respect the City's past and its roots.

The area that now comprises Healdsburg and its Urban Service Area was originally inhabited by Native Americans. Healdsburg is one of the oldest cities in Sonoma County with buildings of many different ages and styles mixed in an unusually fine-grained pattern across all but the newest areas of our community. Healdsburg's cultural and historic heritage provides an important aspect of its identity. New development will protect this diverse heritage by respecting Native American archaeological and cultural resources, historic neighborhoods and districts, and historically-significant structures and features. The City will promote public awareness of and support for historic preservation.

E Protect neighborhood character.

Healdsburg is a community of established neighborhoods with individual patterns of land use, landscape, circulation and built form that have evolved over time. New development shall respect neighborhood character, patterns, and forms.

F Protect and enhance the downtown and its plaza.

Downtown, including Healdsburg's plaza at the heart of the community, is the City's primary activity node and center of commerce, serving residents and visitors as well as the surrounding region. Efforts to enhance the downtown's pedestrian orientation, collection of unique, locally-owned businesses and its historic character and charm will continue. Residential uses will continue to be allowed in the downtown to promote its vitality.

G Enhance gateways and strengthen primary corridors.

Major entryways to, and corridors within the community will be enhanced to improve the visual character of Healdsburg's gateways and thoroughfares.

H Embrace the city's waterways.

Healdsburg's identity, origins, history and ecology are directly linked to the Russian River watershed. The City will promote a healthy watershed along with an accessible interface between the community, Foss Creek and the river.

2 Balance

A Balance resident and visitor needs.

One of Healdsburg's most unique qualities is that it is a vibrant community that is also attractive to non-residents. The City will continue to provide for local residents while taking strategic advantage of the benefits visitors bring to the City.

B Manage residential growth to ensure a measured pace of development.

In 2000, Healdsburg citizens approved by referendum a growth management program that limits the number of residential building permits each year. Although it is possible that the voters may modify the ordinance to remedy unintended impacts on housing affordability, the General Plan assumes that the underlying premise of limits on the pace of growth will be preserved.

C Promote a mix of housing types and affordable housing distributed throughout the community.

Healdsburg is located within one of the most expensive housing markets in the country. The City will strive to provide opportunities to meet existing and future housing needs while dispersing affordable housing throughout the community.

D Ensure that infrastructure and services keep pace with development.

The City will implement strategies to develop and upgrade community facilities where needed, address service deficiencies in existing areas where infill development is anticipated and require new development to provide its fair share of required services and infrastructure.

E Maintain a jobs/housing balance.

An erosion of Healdsburg's job base could damage the City's vitality and identity. The City will continue efforts to maintain a balance between housing inventory and jobs.

3 Mobility

A Promote safe and convenient transportation alternatives.

Transportation alternatives to motor vehicles benefit the environment and public health, while meeting the needs of those unable to drive. Healdsburg's circulation system will accommodate and encourage all modes of transportation, including pedestrian, bicycle and bus and rail transit. Streets shall be designed to accommodate all modes of transportation where feasible.

B Promote connectivity among neighborhoods and throughout the City.

Healdsburg's historic street system is a traditional interconnected grid of narrow streets, on-street parking, street trees, and sidewalks that promotes pedestrian use. The City will maintain this pattern in existing neighborhoods and encourage connectivity and inclusiveness in new areas of development, including pedestrian and bicycle linkages.

C Maintain and improve operation of the Healdsburg Municipal Airport.

The Airport benefits area residents, tourists and industry through normal operations and in times of emergency.

4 Sustainability

A Protect agricultural resources.

Healdsburg's setting provides its citizens with an exceptional diversity of agricultural products. The City will support the protection of local agriculture to continue this diversity as well as preserve the open space that surrounds the community.

B Protect the environment.

The City will promote the protection of the environment through conservation of resources within the community and lead by example in its municipal processes and projects.

C Foster principles of sustainability and conservation.

Land use patterns and programs should conserve resources to ensure that today's needs do not compromise the ability of the community to meet its future needs. The City will adopt policies that promote sustainable development and lifestyles, educate the public regarding sustainable building practices, and lead by example in its municipal projects.

D Protect and enhance the natural habitat of Healdsburg's waterways.

Russian River, Foss Creek and other waterways supply water to Healdsburg and provide important habitat for wildlife. New development will maintain riparian habitat or restore it to its natural condition, provide public and visual access to waterways and avoid back-on treatment adjacent to waterways. Sensitive site design will be utilized to protect unique biotic features.

E Preserve and enhance Healdsburg's urban forest.

Healdsburg benefits from a healthy and diverse urban forest. It is an important part of the City's heritage and identity, creates a shade canopy which enhances the pedestrian environment, and has significant environmental benefits such as water retention, cooling effects, and oxygen generation. The City will preserve existing trees within the community and promote the extension and intensification of the traditional street tree pattern along city streets.

5 Vitality

A Provide an open and inviting business climate, a balanced economic environment, and a diverse tax base.

A healthy economy sustains the City's ability to provide important services to its residents. Healdsburg has traditionally supported a balanced, diverse, locally-centered economy, and benefits from significant direct and indirect advantages related to viticulture, wine production and associated visitor services. In recognition of these benefits, the City will continue to promote a balanced economy to guard against a downturn in any single sector.

B Support local businesses and industries.

While recognizing that there are limits on how the General Plan can impact a free market economic system, the City will support locally-owned businesses and industries that keep wages and profits in the community and contribute to the local identity.

C Protect and enhance qualities that attract visitors to the City.

The valleys surrounding Healdsburg have evolved into one of the prime wine-producing regions in the world. Combined with the historic character of the central plaza and conscious efforts to enhance the pedestrian character of the downtown, Healdsburg had developed a worldwide reputation as a tourist destination. The City will protect and enhance these qualities to continue to attract visitors to the community.

6 Livability

A Foster high quality design.

As land available for development within Healdsburg's Urban Growth Boundary is limited, the City will promote development that is of high quality, enhances the livability of the community, and furthers the vision of Healdsburg as outlined in these Guiding Principles.

B Maximize opportunities for active and passive recreation.

The City will work to provide parks, trails and recreation programs to meet the needs of its residents. Development on the northeast side of the City will provide connections to the Healdsburg Ridge Trail, Healdsburg's bicycle and pedestrian master plan, and access to vantage points and to the Russian River. Development along Foss Creek will provide connections to and extensions of the Foss Creek Pathway where feasible.

C Promote educational opportunities.

The City will support Healdsburg Unified School District and Santa Rosa Junior College in its efforts to provide quality education to the community.

D Meet health care needs.

The City will support local hospital services, clinics and medical emergency services.

7 Safety

A Minimize hazards to life and property.

The City will seek to minimize risks to life and property associated with wildland fires, flooding, seismic events and geologic hazards through the development review process and infrastructure improvements.

B Protect and improve Healdsburg's acoustic environment.

The City will ensure that development minimizes noise impacts and residents will be protected from unreasonable noise, provided such measures do not undermine the economic vitality of the community.

Warm-Up Exercise Results

(Preliminary Results as Of 2.3.16 Remaining Responses Pending)

Committee Member A

Walking down Matheson Street there are many more cars parked along the curb. On close inspection the reason is the development of back yard neighborhoods, small clusters of secondary units, with no space for cars. The increased density has resulted in some neighbors opening up rear fences to facilitate more direct walkthroughs to the alleys or the next block, this has also been problematic. It requires a level of cooperation and community that is not always easy when people do not have long histories. And the recent history of Healdsburg has continued to be one of real estate turnovers and second home buyers!

Committee Member B

I would pick two streets. One would be the east side of Healdsburg Avenue just south of the roundabout. There would be sites for 100 permitted and approved housing units clustered throughout the Nu Forest site. There would be a small number built at this point. Others would be in various stages of construction or site improvements. Half would be market rate units and half would be missing middle units. The required number of inclusionary units would be sited as well. Half of the total would be rental units and half would be ownership. Twenty percent would be small detached, single family units. The rest would be attached, higher density units. Some units would be the second story of retail/ office space. Also under construction would be other commercial/retail/office space well-sited to complement the neighborhood with services available to residents within easy walking of residences. Clear pedestrian walkways throughout the developments would be evident and would make easy walking access to the rest of downtown.

The other street would be one in an older neighborhood in town. Several small second units would have been built as additional rental stock. These would not necessarily be noticeable from the street. More cars would be parked on the street due to the increased density. The makeup of the street would not be appreciably different due to the continued high cost of housing on the street. There would be no complaints of Airbnb sites due to the continued will of the City Council to make them illegal and continue to provide enforcement.

Committee Member C

Most of the existing streets remain the same from my sidewalk view.

SDU's (granny units) are more common but should not dominate any views from my walking or driving perspective. They should blend with their existing neighborhoods.

Most new development is on newly created or extended streets. I see varied housing types, styles, and sizes – combinations of multifamily and single family. Most importantly it looks and feels like a neighborhood – not “housing development”.

Committee Member D

I am hopeful to experience a vibrant mixed use community of higher density housing and a satellite campus of Sonoma State University around the SMART station. This area will be pedestrian friendly with a broad spectrum of folks including middle income families. Through the revision of the GMO, we can allow carefully planned higher density projects. The HAP shall secure a significant portion of future housing for middle income people.

Committee Member E

1. In reality the correct answer is “nothing” or very little will change on existing streets. The reason is that most of the existing streets already have housing on them and in fill housing will blend in and new “granny units” will for the most part be located in the back yard.

1A. “Prince Street” (or any other street to be developed) I think there is one maybe 2 buildable lots left. I use Prince Street because it has a great mix of housing types - single family, duplex, triplex and small apartment buildings, the closer to town the higher the density. No McMansions on the street. Streets like this have made Healdsburg the community it is today and I would like to see more of this type of community.

Committee Member F

I want to see more affordable housing spread around Healdsburg. It should show density (10-20 units per acre), multi-storied preferred, multi-family and 75% rental. I see new housing from 10- to 60 units per parcel.

There will be some market rate housing but only 25% or less of total allocations. The missing middle will be about 35-40% and 35-40% will be affordable from 50-120% AMI or 80-120% AMI.

COMMUNITY HOUSING COMMITTEE SUMMARY OF ALLOCATIONS PROPOSALS

Summarized February 3, 2016

**PRELIMINARY RESULTS AS OF 2.3.16
REMAINING RESPONSES PENDING**

	Committee A	Committee B	Committee C	Committee D	Committee E	Committee F	Committee G	Committee H
OBJECTIVE 1: AFFORDABLE HOUSING								
Target % of Total Housing Stock by 2022	9%	11%	11%	11%	12-15%	12-20%		
How many units will this require be built over 6 years?	64	150	167	177	374 (2)	633 (2)		
How would you distribute those units?								
Very Low	33%	30%	0%	37%	25%	25%	#####	#####
Low	34%	20%	28%	37%	25%	25%	#####	#####
Mod	33%	50%	72%	27%	50%	50%	#####	#####
By Income								
Owned	34%	60%	26%	25%	50%	40%	#####	#####
Rental	66%	40%	74%	75%	50%	60%	#####	#####
Type								
Single Family	20%	23%	0%	14%	40%	40%	#####	#####
Multi-Family	80%	77%	100%	86%	60%	60%	#####	#####
	68	135	90	135	100	100		
OBJECTIVE 2: MIDDLE INCOME HOUSING								
How many units should we target to build over 6 years?								
How would you distribute those units?								
Owned	26%	67%	26%	33%	70%	50%	#####	#####
Rental	74%	33%	74%	67%	30%	50%	#####	#####
Type								
Single Family	15%	59%	0%	15%	70%	50%	#####	#####
Multi-Family	85%	41%	100%	85%	30%	50%	#####	#####
	120	N/A	72	68	0	0		
OBJECTIVE 3: MARKET RATE RENTAL HOUSING								
How many units should we target to build over 6 years?								
Should we use some directed allocations to incentivize?	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	-	-
Should we require locational criteria for allocations?	Y	Y	N/A	Y	N/A	N	-	-
OBJECTIVE 4: SENIORS HOUSING								
How many units should we target to build over 6 years?	40	40	72	N/A (1)	68	81	-	-
Should we use some directed allocations to incentivize?	N	N	N	N/A	Y	Y	-	-
Should we require locational criteria for allocations?	Y	Y	N/A	N/A	N/A	Y	-	-

N/A = No Answer

(1) Suggests that some portion of affordable be further defined for Seniors

(2) Upper end of band proposed

Healdsburg Senior Citizen Advisory Commission

Recommendations for the Housing Action Plan

Purpose of the Senior Citizen Advisory Commission

The Senior Citizen Advisory commission is charged with advising the City Council on matters affecting Healdsburg older adults.

Statement of the Issue

According to a survey conducted in 2014 by the Senior Citizen Advisory Commission, affordable housing is one of the top two most pressing needs of Healdsburg's older adults.

Background

Older adults in many communities are increasingly over represented in the category of "severely burdened" by rental and housing costs, which is defined by HUD as paying more than 30% of household income toward housing costs.

According to the 2015-2023 Healdsburg Housing Element and the 2010 Census:

- Healdsburg's population of 55-64 year olds rose 27.4% and 65 and older residents by 11.7%.
- At least 15% of the City's population is now 65 or older.
- 40% of the City's "extremely low" income households are older adults.

In addition, according to the Healdsburg Housing Element, there has been no dedicated senior housing built since the 1999 Parkland Senior Apartments project.

Recommendations

1. That the Housing Action Plan designate 15% of the proposed GMO directed allocations per cycle for adults 60 and older.
2. That the Housing Action Plan require design review to ensure the proposed GMO directed allocations include diverse housing types geared toward smaller, walkable, affordable housing.
3. That the Housing Action Plan increase the exempted inclusionary housing requirement for market rate projects to more rapidly build the affordable housing stock.
4. That the Housing Action Plan designate a percentage of exempted inclusionary housing allocations for older adults, and that these units be deed restricted to ensure continued housing stock for affordable rentals and home ownership.

APPROVED:



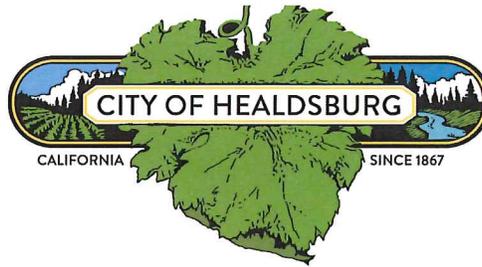
Laura Moore, Chair

ATTEST:



Mark Themig, Community Services Director

Adopted February 1, 2016



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

January 29, 2016

Housing Our Community Forums Continue this Winter/Spring

City of Healdsburg – January 29, 2016 – The City of Healdsburg will continue work started last year, by hosting three new “Housing Our Community” Forums this winter/spring. These three sessions will gather final community input as the City moves beyond policy revisions, to creation of its first ever **Housing Action Plan**.

The first Community Forum is scheduled for Thursday, February 25 from 6pm – 8pm at the Community Center, 1557 Healdsburg Ave. This will be an interactive workshop with participants helping to shape the vision, housing action plan objectives and prioritizing measurable community outcomes related to housing during 2016-2022.

The second Community Forum is scheduled for Thursday, March 31 from 6pm – 8pm at the Community Center, 1557 Healdsburg Ave. Using a moderated panel discussion the evening’s program will include a number of experienced and recognized housing developers who will discuss the mechanics of residential development, market realities in Healdsburg, and the types of policy changes that may need to occur in order for the community to achieve the kinds of housing development it would like to see.

The final Community Forum is scheduled for Thursday, April 28 from 6pm – 8pm at the Community Center, 1557 Healdsburg Ave. This forum will be a drop-in Open House followed by a concluding presentation of the Draft Housing Action Plan - vision, final objectives, measurable outcomes and key recommendations. There will be an interactive activity giving attendees the opportunity to prioritize Housing Action Plan Recommendations.

All Healdsburg residents are encouraged to attend these forums and get involved in this process.

For additional information, please visit <http://www.ci.healdsburg.ca.us/360/Housing> or call 707.431.1137.

401 GROVE STREET, HEALDSBURG, CA 95448 | 707.431.3317

CITYOFHEALDSBURG.ORG

Can Moderate Income Housing Return to Sonoma County?

Small homes and reduced regulations offer new solutions to a growing crisis
Lynda McDaniel October 5, 2015



Against all odds. Over the years, that’s been a powerful mantra whenever I’ve faced overwhelming obstacles and my own small-minded thinking. Instead of dwelling on the problems that could hold me back, I’d repeat this mantra to remind myself that I’ve overcome the odds before, and I can do it again. This simple maxim has helped me start and maintain my own successful writing business and find inspiring places to live—from a small farm in the North Georgia mountains to a townhouse in the suburbs of Washington D.C., to my rental home in Sebastopol.

These days, that mantra is getting a workout as I explore housing options in Sonoma County, where the median sales price of a home in June, 2015 was \$545,000 (up 11% in one year), and a new lease for a one-bedroom apartment, according to the National Association of Realtors, averages \$2,287, an increase of more than 30% during the past three years. Two bedroom rentals average \$3,100. And that is, if you can find an apartment or house, given the 97.2% occupancy rate of current inventory. One landlord recently shared that an ad he placed on craigslist generated 150 e-mails within a few hours.

To put these prices in perspective, the median household income in Sonoma County is now about \$62,000. Using the standard formula of 30% of pre-tax income for rent, these households would be able to pay about \$1,550 per month in rent—just two-thirds the average asking price for a one bedroom. And “average household income” factors in many dual income homes. For singles and retirees, \$1,550 is a big stretch. Although some County renters have leases that they can afford, when these leases expire, many face sharp increases to the new “market” rents. It is no wonder that I, like

thousands of other county residents, now worry that I am being priced out of the County where I love to live.

Another consequence is that moderate income renters who might otherwise want to move or retire to Sonoma County are forced to find housing elsewhere. Meanwhile, purchasing homes is even less attainable for average income buyers. Homes historically have sold for 2.6 times the median household income in any given area. That would mean about \$160,000 in Sonoma County, where the average home price has risen to eight times the median income.

The scarcity of adequate housing has begun to draw the attention of city and county governments and the media. That's a start, but as Pete Golis wrote in the *Press Democrat*, "there's been an abundance of talk about doing something about affordable housing but local agencies don't have much to show for it, save plans to do more talking." Meanwhile, more and more residents are being pushed out of the county as a new real estate bubble creates even higher and stronger barriers to entering the housing market.

To be sure, this issue is complex—and lacks a clear vocabulary. For the purposes of this article, I'm honoring the established definition of *affordable housing* as that for homeless, poor, and senior populations, and *accessible housing* for disabled residents. While there is overlap, I'm writing here about *attainable housing* for the squeezed working class and middle class. But even these definitions and demographics are misleading, segmenting the problems—and solutions. Instead, we need to look at the housing problem as everyone's problem. It affects our local economies, the sustainability of our communities, and even the environment.

In addition to ever-increasing prices, other factors that raise the odds against attainable housing include:

- An unlivable minimum wage
- Jobs lost during the Great Recession
- Decreasing real wages ("today's average hourly wage has just about the same purchasing power as it did in 1979," Pew Research Center's FactTank, October 9, 2014)
- Tough government regulations, and a rise in second-home purchases
- Vacation-rental conversions (which decrease community spirit and increase no-votes for school bonds and infrastructure improvements)

That list is enough to make even an optimist feel like giving up.

Which brings to mind a companion phrase to *Against all odds*—that is, *What if?* What if we could coexist with inevitable market fluctuations and bolster our communities at the same time? What if we

created attainable housing that strengthened our local economies and reduced our carbon footprint? What if city and county governments lowered permit fees and regulations to allow more creative solutions?

Let's take a closer look at how our neighbors are answering those propositions with creative solutions.

- 1. What if we encouraged the development of sustainable communities that allow people to divide the expense of buying land, share resources, live more ecologically, and support one another?**

Cohousing has become a familiar term. From its inception, the mission of cohousing was to create smaller and allegedly more affordable housing through shared facilities and financial burden. But to date, developments such as Two Acre Wood in Sebastopol, Yulupa Cohousing in Santa Rosa, and Frog Song in Cotati are not attainable for many working people or much of the middle class. This year, a 985-square foot, 2-bedroom, 1-bathroom unit in Two Acre Wood listed for \$375,000 with association dues of \$190/month.

For Murray Lewis and his wife, Pamela Lewis, buying land and/or a house in Sebastopol seems out of reach, even though they have land in the Pacific Northwest they could sell. "But everything costs so much more in Sonoma County," Lewis says. "We're interested in cohousing. If the county government could somehow subsidize projects to allow for more affordable cohousing, I would be supportive of that."

Jay Shafer's proposed Tiny House Village offers attainable "cohousing for the antisocial," a tongue-in-cheek tagline that refers to a supportive community with less interaction. On the other end of the communal continuum, Kai Lewis is working on a community development that shares meals, chores, garden produce, and resources such as a large kitchen and washer/dryers and other amenities. (We'll delve more into this model shortly.)

"People are interested in different degrees of sharing," says Cassandra Ferrera, a community-focused real estate agent with Green Key Real Estate. "I encourage people to choose their own adventure. Ask yourself what's right for you at this stage of life."

Ferrera sees her role as one of service, helping people fulfill their yearning for a place where they belong. "I help people find security through shelter," she adds.

Ferrera lives on one acre of land near Graton, where she and her two children plus two other households work together to create community and relearn homesteading skills. In other words, she's

living her mission. She sees the current trend toward more community-minded living as the maturation of the communal back-to-the-land movement of the 1970s. “This trend toward community is ancient, part of our recent history, and definitely part of our future. We’re growing toward a greater sophistication in how we do this with an increased awareness of how we live in community successfully.”

BENEFITS: Studies show that housing communities deliver more than neighborliness. Benefits include reduced carbon footprint, lower crime rates, and fewer foreclosures.

In addition, these communities help increase civic engagement, provide greater stability for local shop owners, and increase the tax base for municipalities and the county.

2. What if Sonoma County agencies followed the successful model of nearby Novato in relaxing fees and regulations?

Since Prop 13 passed in 1978, most local governments have been strapped for cash as inflation and costs rise but ad valorem property taxes cannot. They need revenue to deliver the services we expect—schools, police, fire, public works parks—and building fees and permits have become an important revenue source. (Fees in Sebastopol, for example, for one house can run as high as \$40,000 before construction begins.)

That’s why what happened in Novato in January 2015 was so remarkable. The city council approved a new zoning ordinance that created a new class of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), with dramatically lowered permitting requirements. Called Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (JADUs, aka granny or in-law flats and second units), these units are repurposed spaces already attached to an existing home, such as spare bedrooms and garages that can be converted to rental properties. Other relaxed requirements include no need for additional parking spaces or fire sprinkler systems; sewer fees for JADUs were slashed from \$8,990 to \$40 for JADUs. The North Marin Water District’s \$10,000 water connection fee was also eliminated in April. JADUs still require building permit fees, based on the expected project cost.

How did they accomplish this? The grassroots effort was organized by Lilypad Flexible Housing Initiative. Residents, homeowners, and advocacy groups for housing, housing, sustainability, and seniors, among others, came together at agency meetings to make these changes reality.

Una Hall wants to see this happen in Sonoma County. She is considering a JADU-type conversion in Sebastopol, but red tape, high fees, and NIMBYs (Not In My BackYard) have stood in her way. “What’s worse for the economy and tourism—having a few units with their garages turned into cute cottages or having people living on the streets?” she asks. “I have a garage I would consider

converting to a studio apartment—renting to a retiree or a single mother with a young child—but it’s not feasible. The City of Sebastopol needs to cut some of the permit fees and regulations for a small project like mine. Some people say this will bring down the quality of our schools or neighborhoods, but that’s just not true. More equitable communities pull people up; they don’t pull anything down.”

In most municipalities, second units can be no larger than 840 square feet or 1,000 square feet if part of the Affordable Housing program for low-income residents. Scroll through the lengthy list of requirements at these jurisdictions:

Sonoma County: <http://www.sonoma-county.org/prmd/housing/sus.pdf>

Sebastopol:

http://ci.sebastopol.ca.us/sites/default/files/jatkinson/what_you_need_to_know_about_second_units.pdf

Santa Rosa: http://ci.santa-rosa.ca.us/doclib/Documents/CDB_Second_Dwelling_Unit.pdf

BENEFITS: Repurposed garages, shared housing, and second units within existing municipalities can help reduce waste, traffic, and energy consumption—and foster increased use of public transportation. In addition, while the county and cities may lose some revenue from lowered fees, overall revenue collection rises when barriers are lowered and more people build much-needed housing that creates a more stable community.

3. What if we had a new model for mobile home parks?

Mobile home parks have been around for more than 60 years, but not much has changed over that time. And new parks haven’t been built in Sonoma County for decades. But that’s about to change. Jay Shafer’s Tiny House Village has been getting a lot of media attention for its innovative and appealing design—and zoning. Because these small houses are designed with wheels, this village can be zoned as a RV park, and that means the homes are taxed as personal property rather than real estate. The high-density design (16-22 houses per acre) helps defray the exorbitant cost of land in Sonoma County—and yet, allows for both “company and solitude,” as Shafer puts it. In other words, he wants to enjoy the fact that he lives in a community with neighbors who have his back but also the quiet time he needs. Originally slated to open in 2015, the village has been postponed, as he explains in his blog: “My plans for a village had to be put on hold for a couple years due to unforeseen personal circumstances ... I can’t make any promises, but I’m still hoping that, in spite of all my unexpected delays, we can still break ground before year’s end.”

Tiny Houses for a Big Change has a mission to “help end homelessness in Northern Sonoma County with a worker-owned business that trains the under and unemployed to build, live in & sell tiny homes.”

Workers in Sonoma County often cannot find attainable housing near their jobs. Just within the wine industry, for example, approximately 55,000 full-time wine industry workers are mostly living with friends, sleeping in their cars, and/or driving long distances to get to work.

“Single-family homes are not the future,” says Jay Beckwith, CEO at Sonoma Workforce Homes, an employee-owned company that is dedicated to affordable housing advocacy. “We’re in the process of experimenting and evolving a whole new discussion about micro-space living.”

Beckwith, who spent his early years in San Francisco working with the Whole Earth Catalog in the 1970s, sees a parallel with that movement and what’s happening today. “The Whole Earth Catalog and the lifestyle discussion that followed was, in part, responsible for Silicon Valley and other cultural changes,” he explains. “I think we’re now in a similar kind of period. I’m convinced the solution is multifamily, net-zero manufactured homes, and the tiny house movement is helping us toward that goal.”

If tiny homes seem too small for your needs, manufactured homes, such as those designed by Little House on the Trailer based in Petaluma, American Modern Modular based in Marin, and Healthy Buildings in Napa.



Small affordable home interior from Petaluma’s Little House on the Trailer

Homes range from a one bedroom/one bath, 400-square-foot home for \$49,999 to a two bedroom/two bath, 800 square-foot home starting at \$52,800. But again, the question of where to park them creates a barrier. Several new “mobile home” parks could open up attainable housing far more quickly and sustainably than a massive apartment or condo development.

BENEFITS: Economical places (to buy or rent) for people to park attainable housing options such as tiny houses and manufactured homes. Reduced carbon footprint when individuals live closer to downtown services and workers can live closer to jobs. Denser use of land within municipalities to increase sense of community and support of local economy.

4. What if the county made better use of the thousands of acres it owns?

Speaking of tiny homes, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors recently launched an experiment to create a tiny-home park with 10 homes on county-owned land, similar to Dignity Village in Portland, Oregon. The project is designed to help alleviate the “chronic shortage of shelter for the homeless in the county — a shortfall compounded by the area’s torrid housing market, including skyrocketing rents.” (Press Democrat, July 28, 2015).

Good news, and we need more efforts like this for the homeless and poor. But let’s not forget that one of the best ways to deal with homelessness is to *prevent* people becoming homeless in the first place and ensuring they can stay in their homes. For working people and many in the middle class, this has grown increasingly more difficult since the Great Recession; they’ve become what is now called the “housing insecure.” “Americans are feeling better about their job security and the economy, but most are theoretically only one paycheck away from the street.” (MarketWatch, Jan. 31, 2015)

So, what if the county could offer a similar experiment for other demographics, such as working people and the squeezed middle class? With thousands of acres of undeveloped land owned by the county, this land could become useful and profitable for the county through reasonable rents and/or land taxes.

BENEFITS: Stable populations keep local shops open and thriving. School and infrastructure bonds get passed. Sales taxes and the tax base increase. These improvements cost the county little—but help supervisors and councilmembers deliver the housing solutions they give lip service to.

5. What if there was legal help to avoid the inevitable problems that arise with cooperative living?

I know firsthand the problems that can arise in communal living. My back-to-the-land experience in the 1970s got off to a shaky start when legal and permit problems booted me off the land. And truth be known, those of us who’d banded together soon started seeing different goals for our community—things we never discussed during the early “wouldn’t it be great?” phase. I was eventually able to buy a small farm, but that didn’t satisfy my desire to live in a community.

I wish then we'd had a champion like Janelle Orsi, executive director and co-founder of Sustainable Economies Law Center (SELC) based in Oakland. Its mission, as stated on its website: "SELC cultivates a new legal landscape that supports community resilience and grassroots economic empowerment. We provide essential legal tools – education, research, advice, and advocacy – so communities everywhere can develop their own sustainable sources of food, housing, energy, jobs, and other vital aspects of a thriving community."

SELC offers an array of services to help individuals and groups navigate this somewhat new, and still counter-culture, approach to housing. Resources include a free and informative PDF booklet *Policies for Shareable Cities: A Policy Primer for Urban Leaders*; Orsi's book, *Practicing Law in the Sharing Economy: Helping People Build Cooperatives, Social Enterprise, and Local Sustainable Economies*, and a variety of newsletters and updates plus membership and volunteer opportunities.

BENEFITS: Access to legal communal arrangements that help avoid problems in the future. Empowerment and information to work with county and cities to exact change in restrictions and rules.

6. What if we joined together to take action and foment changes in fees, regulations, and opportunities?

As mentioned earlier, there's a wide range of communal opportunities, from Cassandra Ferrera's homestead of two or three families to a larger community such as Tiny Houses Village and Tiny Houses for a Big Change. Another model that's already attracting a following features approximately 15 houses with a common house and communal garden. In addition, pooled resources and shared tasks keep costs lower (with a barter system for anyone unable to work). The houses may vary in size, from tiny houses to larger houses that include, for example, artists' studios. Portland's Tiny House Community, profiled in the video below, is pioneering such a vision.

The community model is a dream of 26-year old Kai Lewis, a Summerfield and UC Santa Cruz grad who is the son of Murray and Pamela Lewis. "The lifestyle I want is a combination of self-sufficiency and community," he explains. "I like having my own space, but also being part of a close-knit community that shares meals and evenings. But the cost of living in Sonoma County and the amount of money it takes to make something like this happen is beyond my means."

To that end, Lewis is attracting a group of like-minded folks interested in forming a nonprofit and developing a business plan, an important step that many of these communities skipped in the past. In addition, they want to work together to foment change within county governments. For example, they plan to ask the county for a tax abatement on improvements (though they'd continue to pay taxes on

the actual property) and access a county program that offers low-interest loans around 3% to 4% for houses and other improvements.

“We hope the county can help us with the physical space, ideally away from town,” Lewis adds.

“We’re looking for the best of both worlds: close neighbors and country living rolled into one.”

BENEFIT: Attainable, collective housing developed faster and more economically and ecologically than commercial developments. Reduced carbon footprint, increased tax base, and improved local economy.

The need for attainable housing in Sonoma County is now. While these small ideas and experiments won’t solve the looming large problem, they are a start. And they illustrate the desire—no, make that *need*—we all share for having a place to call home. Caverly Whittemore, who lives at Burbank Gardens in Sebastopol, knows he’s fortunate to have such an affordable and attractive place to live. But he wants to see this happen for others. “We can’t keep losing our young people, seniors, and others because the cost of housing is out of control,” he says. “Politicians and county officials need to wake up and create up-to-date regulations and fees. We need to develop communication channels between people who are interested in housing alternatives, functioning together and networking. Like a pearl forming, we need a starting point that people can collect around, online and in person.”

As part of a community effort to discuss housing solutions, a new Facebook page has been formed here called “Solving Sonoma County’s Housing Crisis.” Anyone interested is invited to join, share and express.

Tahoe economic study finds uneven recovery; workers suffer

By The Associated Press | Posted Jan 17th, 2016 @ 8:51am

STATELINE, Nev. (AP) — Lake Tahoe's working class neighborhoods are suffering during an uneven economic recovery because of under-paying jobs, out-of-reach housing costs and aging infrastructure, according to a nonprofit group formed five years ago to develop strategies to diversify the economy.

More than 3 million visitors annually pump an estimated \$2 billion into the Tahoe area's economy, but most tourists rarely see the blight off the beaten path where seasonal workers live in rundown apartments and old motel rooms converted into long-term housing, according to a recent report by the Tahoe Prosperity Center.

"It's a tough place to make a living," said Heidi Hill Drum, executive director of the center.

"Tahoe is always going to be a great place to visit. We need to make it a great place to live," she told the Tahoe Daily Tribune (<http://tinyurl.com/jghnxyp>).

Among other things, the study entitled "Measuring For Prosperity," found that tourism-related jobs accounted for 50 percent of all jobs in the basin in 2003, but only 44 percent by 2013. Overall employment declined by 5,000 jobs during that period.

Unemployment has improved since 2010, but remains above state averages for both California and Nevada. Casino revenues have declined steadily since 2000, and dramatically since 2006 — trends that are much steeper in the Tahoe basin than Nevada overall, the report said.

"Newer hotel, restaurants and retail projects have had excellent success in the past couple of years," the study said. But many of the jobs are part-time and wages often too low to afford housing, so they commute from outside the basin to work.

"Young people may find many impediments to remaining in the region in terms of high housing costs, and lack of full-time living jobs," the study said.

Drum said the most surprising finding was that the region has a greater income-to-housing-cost disparity than even San Francisco — a metropolitan region commonly associated with a high cost of living.

The Tahoe region's average-household-income-to-home-value ratio is 10-to-1, meaning average home cost is roughly 10 times higher than average annual wages. San Francisco, by comparison, is 8-to-1.

Jesse Walker, a Tahoe-based economist who worked as a consultant on the report, said 3-to-1 is considered a more desirable, affordable ratio that exists in many other parts of the country.

The reason for such a discrepancy can be credited to low per-capita income. For example, the report says the average annual income for a South Lake Tahoe resident is below \$25,000, the study said. Basin-wide, that average is in the low 30s to high 20s, while the median single-family-home price is closer to \$500,000.

"If we don't do something to improve the ability for our workforce to afford quality housing, we are going to see them leave the basin in droves to pursue both housing and employment opportunities in Reno, Carson Valley and elsewhere," Walker said. "This is already occurring, and with the projected growth in Reno over the next five to 10 years, it will only get worse."

Drum agreed.

"The visitors will come anyway," she said. "If you create communities that have quality of life, it will benefit visitors. If we're raising the bar for our residents with restaurants, affordable housing and mixed-use development, it will benefit everyone."

"We're not talking about new development; we're talking about redevelopment," Drum added. "It's better for the environment. Outdated buildings are the main reason we're seeing sediment go into the lake. With redevelopment you get environmental benefits."

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