

## SOLANO COUNTY HOUSING ELEMENT SUMMARY

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Housing | County of Solano Housing Element Update

# 2023-2031 HOUSING ELEMENT

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## **CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION**

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California Housing Element law requires every jurisdiction to prepare and adopt a housing element as part of general plans. Solano County formed a Regional Early Action Planning Housing Element Collaborative to address countywide housing issues and needs. Solano County is participating in a regional housing needs assessment to identify housing solutions that solve local housing problems and meet or exceed the regional housing needs assessment. A review of the previous element's goals, policies, programs, and objectives, an inventory of resources and constraints, a statement of community goals, quantified objectives, and policies are included in the housing element. According to state law, the Housing Element must be included in a California General Plan, and the County's 2008 General Plan includes several mandatory and optional elements. The Housing Element covers an eight-year time frame.

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### **Housing Element Organization**

State law requires that the Housing Element be included in the General Plan and include a Housing Needs Assessment, goals, objectives, and policies, and programs and activities to achieve those goals. The Solano County Housing Element is a comprehensive plan to address housing needs in the unincorporated area of Solano County for the planning period of January 31, 2023, through January 31, 2031. Solano County's Housing Element was prepared as part of a regional effort with the Solano County REAP Collaborative. Solano County's housing needs are addressed in Chapter 2. This section identifies actions the County will take to meet local housing goals. Appendix C discusses housing resources, existing housing stock, potential areas for future housing development, and energy conservation.

### **General Plan Consistency**

The Solano County Housing Element has been reviewed for consistency with the other General Plan elements, and will continue to be reviewed during future updates. The County is currently working to update the existing Safety Element to reflect the requirements of State law, including climate change adaptation and applicable resiliency strategies, and to include information to identify residential developments in hazard areas that do not have at least two evacuation routes.

### **Regional Housing Need**

California law requires the California Department of Housing and Community Development to project statewide housing needs and allocate the anticipated need to each region in the state. Solano County received 10,992 units from the Bay Area Governments.

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The County of Solano's share of the regional housing need is 315 housing units, with 80 units for very low-income households, 50 units for low-income households, 56 units for moderate-income households, and 129 units for above moderate-income households.

### **Public Workshops**

State law requires local jurisdictions to make a diligent effort to achieve public participation in the development of a housing element, particularly low-income and racial and ethnic households. Solano County completed public outreach at both the local and regional level to encourage community involvement in the Housing Element update. These included:

- Local Stakeholder Consultations
- Regional Stakeholder Consultations
- Community Workshops
- Online Community Survey
- Board of Supervisor Study Sessions
- Planning Commission and Board of Supervisor Meetings

### **Local Stakeholder Consultations**

Staff consulted with service providers and other stakeholders from different socioeconomic groups to solicit feedback on housing needs and programs for the county. SCHA and Travis Air Force Base representatives stressed that the shortage of rental housing in the unincorporated area is a barrier to housing, particularly for lower- and moderate-income households. They suggested identifying more project-based voucher opportunities to alleviate some of the pressure. The county participated in a consultation with the Yoche Dehe Wintun Nation (YDWN) Cultural Resources Department and discussed the importance of engaging with local tribal representatives early in any development process.

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### **Study Sessions**

The County held a virtual study session for the Board of Supervisors on March 8, 2022, to introduce the 2023-2031 Housing Element update and review new state laws.

### **Noticing of the Draft Housing Element**

The draft Housing Element was made available for 30 days for public comment and was noticed to residents through the same methods as the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors meetings.

### **Review of Previous Element**

Government Code Section 65588(a)(2) requires that local governments review their Housing Element as frequently as appropriate to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

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### **Goal**

The County's goal is to promote and ensure adequate housing in a satisfying environment for all residents of Solano County. The Housing Element includes a set of policies and programs that will help to achieve this goal. The County

provides financial assistance to affordable housing projects in exchange for agreements to keep assisted units permanently affordable and to leverage additional public and private funds to expand the local affordable housing stock. The County seeks to implement housing assistance programs through partnerships with other local public and private organizations. These partnerships allow the County to use its limited resources in the most efficient manner possible. Housing assistance outreach is an important activity that should be implemented through program partnerships.

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**Programs:** The County will pursue CDBG funds and other funding sources to assist private property owners in rehabilitating their housing stock, and will notify the public of available housing rehabilitation programs in coordination with city housing authorities and other public and private agencies. Code Enforcement will continue to be used to address safety and code compliance issues in areas of need, and improve housing and environmental conditions to reduce displacement risk.

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**Policies:** The county shall coordinate housing goals, objectives, policies, and programs with the cities in the county, and shall maintain an inventory of sites adequate to satisfy the county's housing need. The County shall encourage the development of secondary dwelling units to provide affordable housing, especially for people employed in the agricultural areas and the elderly.

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The county shall give first priority to undeveloped areas zoned for residential use, second priority to undeveloped areas designated but not zoned for rural residential use, and third priority to undeveloped areas designated for rural residential use.

**Programs:** The County will work with incorporated municipalities to increase the supply of affordable housing in areas designated as Urban Residential, and will support the annexation process of unincorporated areas into incorporated municipalities when the cities are ready to annex. The County will provide guidance and educational materials for building ADUs on the County's website, present the permitting procedures and construction resources at least two public meetings, and ask homeowner associations to encourage such uses. The program will track ADU approvals and affordability. The County is creating an accessory dwelling unit incentive program that would offer homeowners financial assistance for constructing ADUs.

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**C. Affordable Housing Assistance:** The County will address its full housing need allocation through the site's inventory analysis, but the ultimate number of new housing units is highly dependent on factors beyond the County's control.

**Programs:** The County will seek funding for affordable housing through CDBG and HOME funds, and will expand its Section 8 voucher program. The County will increase its competitiveness for these grants by preparing a Housing Element.

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**Responsibility:** Resource Management

The County will amend its Zoning Code to promote the use of density bonuses for affordable housing. Though there are no affordable units at risk of converting to market rate, the County shall maintain a database to identify units at risk.

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The County will work with the City of Vacaville Housing Authority to administer the Section 8 program and provide assistance to lower-income families that use housing choice vouchers to identify housing opportunities. The County will work with the Housing Authority to promote mortgage credit certificates and down payment assistance programs, and will maintain information on these programs on its website.

**Policies:** The County shall support and comply with Federal Civil Rights law on discrimination in housing.

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Programs: The County will coordinate programs and funding from state and federal programs through the Dixon Housing Authority, and will assist in the rehabilitation and/or establishment of new farm labor housing as demand necessitates. The County will develop an informational brochure, contact agricultural stakeholders, and assist nonprofit groups in locating suitable and available sites for farmworker housing, and expedite the permitting process for all farmworker housing projects.

Responsibility: Resource Management and HCD. The County will develop an informational brochure about farmworker housing and reach out to stakeholders to discuss the demand for this type of housing.

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The County will work with housing providers to address special housing needs, including those of seniors, large families, female-headed households, female-headed households with children, and persons with physical and developmental disabilities. The county will promote market-rate and affordable housing sites, housing programs, and financial assistance available from the county, state, and federal governments to encourage the construction of 25 accessible units near services in high resource areas to facilitate mobility opportunities. The County will cooperate with incorporated cities and other agencies to provide homeless shelters and related services. The County will continue to assess the magnitude of the homeless problem, promote housing assistance programs for the homeless, work with service agencies to provide short-term emergency housing for the homeless, and explore the feasibility of using CDBG funding to assist nonprofit agencies in these efforts.

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Funding Source: General Fund, Continuum of Care

The County provides financial and technical assistance to nonprofit and for-profit developers to facilitate the construction of housing affordable to extremely low-income households, persons with disabilities, and persons experiencing homelessness.

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The County has identified actions to affirmatively further fair housing in this Housing Element to comply with Assembly Bill (AB) 686. The County will implement the following actions to promote fair housing: support place-based revitalization, encourage new affordable housing opportunities, facilitate housing mobility opportunities, reduce displacement risk, provide fair housing support and assistance to at least 20 households annually, or as needed; and promote equal housing opportunities. By December 2025, the County will provide information on its website about affordable homeownership and rental options, and help lower-income households locate affordable housing opportunities.

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Solano County Health and Social Services will meet with school district representatives and transit agencies to ensure busing meets the needs of students in the unincorporated county, and will promote CalWorks in rural areas of the unincorporated county to improve access to employment training, assistance, and job opportunities.

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Programs: The County will provide information to developers and community organizations serving individuals with disabilities regarding reasonable accommodation policies, practices, and procedures based on the guidelines from the HCD, and will encourage universal design in all multifamily development.

Funding Source: General Fund

The County will continue to implement the expedited permit assistance program for residential projects and will establish a written policy or procedure to specify the approval process.

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Funding Source: General Fund

Employee housing is treated as a single-family structure in all zones that allow single-family residential uses, and is permitted in compliance with the California Employee Housing Act. Solano County's Zoning Code will be amended to permit transitional housing, supportive housing, emergency shelters, low-barrier navigation centers, and residential care facilities. These uses will be subject to the same restrictions as residential dwellings of the same type in the same zone.

F. Public Facilities and Services

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F.2 Domestic water for rural development shall be provided by on-site individual wells, unless public water service is provided by a public agency. Public water service shall be provided only to the developed areas and those designated for potential development.

Programs: F.1 Capital Improvements. Annually review and update the Capital Improvement Plan to ensure that housing goals are effectively applied.

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Funding Source: General Fund

The County will amend the Zoning Code to establish architectural review standards for residential projects, transitional and supportive housing, and low barrier navigation centers.

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Programs: The County will continue to have representation on the Green Building Committee, and will provide information on the County's website and through printed materials County buildings on the following programs: o Pacific Gas and Electric Company's Energy Savings Assistance Program, o California's Low-Income Weatherization Program, o Rising Sun Opportunity Center.

Funding Source: General Fund.

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Solano County will ensure that new residential construction meets or exceeds the state Title 24 standards for energy efficiency and conservation, and will protect solar access in residentially zoned areas.

### **Quantified Objectives**

The quantified objectives set a target goal for the jurisdiction to achieve based on needs, resources, and constraints.

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### **REVIEW OF PREVIOUS HOUSING ELEMENT**

California Government Code Section 65588 requires local governments to review their housing element as frequently as appropriate to evaluate the effectiveness of their housing element in meeting community needs.

### **Progress Toward Meeting Quantifiable Objectives**

ABAG determined that 103 additional housing units were needed in the unincorporated area to meet regional housing needs. However, the County issued 269 building permits, exceeding the RHNA allocation.

### **Efforts to Address Special Housing Needs**

California Government Code Section 65588 requires local governments to review the effectiveness of their housing element programs.

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The County administers the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, makes permit information for farmworker housing available at the public counter, provides \$605,000 to the Coordinated Entry System, and provides \$1 million to three projects that assist individuals experiencing homelessness and adults with mental health issues.

### **Evaluation of Past Accomplishments**

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The County was unable to operate the rehab program and apply for CDBG or HOME funds, so it combined with other programs.

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The County continues to coordinate programs to ensure there are a variety of housing types to meet the county's housing need ban. In 2015, 11 units were approved for low-income families, 7 units were approved for moderate-income families, and 14 units were approved for above-moderate-income families.

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The County updated the ordinance relating to second unit permitting and made information available at the public counter and the County's website. It approved 73 ADUs over the 2018-2021 timeframe. The County continues to support affordable housing sponsors by providing funds to subsidize the production of affordable housing. In 2021, the County will provide 19 tenant protection vouchers and 3 Mainstream CARES vouchers to assist non-elderly persons with a disability.

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The County continues to create opportunities to produce affordable housing for low-income households by accommodating secondary dwelling units.

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The County continued to provide funding to assist special-needs populations in 2018 by providing \$87,000 to the Community partnership (CAP) budget, \$40,000 to Mission Solano homeless shelter, and \$700,000 in loan forgiveness to two projects that assisted homelessness and adults with mental health issues.

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The funds were used to rehouse and provide homeless prevention services to 123 individuals/households, and to expand shelter capacity and outreach/drop-in centers for homeless youth. The County provided \$4 million in funding to CAP Solano to assist economically vulnerable renters and \$494,803 in funding to Volunteers of America to provide long-term rapid rehousing and case management.

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Solano County Probation awarded \$243,627 to assist individuals 18 to 25 and under the supervision of probation, and \$313,142 for homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing assistance. The Community Services Block Grant awarded \$205,339 to assist homeless shelters.

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The County provided information about reasonable accommodations and accessibility standards at its public counter and online in the County's zoning code. The architectural review process was applied to development projects as stipulated in the County Code.

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#### **Tables**

Solano County has a general plan, residential land use descriptions, residential development standards, residential parking requirements, timeframes for permit procedures, summary of road improvement standards, planning fees, total county fees, and cost for typical residential developments.

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#### **HOUSING CONSTRAINTS**

Various factors, including land use controls, development standards, processing fees, development impact fees, code enforcement, site improvement costs, development permit and approval processing, and availability of financing, can constrain housing supply.

Land Costs: Land costs contribute as much as half of the housing development cost, and are passed along to future occupants of the completed structure.

Loopnet listed a 55-acre property suitable for 10 single-family lots in Allendale for \$1,850,000, while a 0.84-acre parcel in Vacaville designated High-Density Residential for \$745,000 was listed for \$37,250. The cost of land adds \$185,000 to the cost of each home.

Construction Costs: Construction costs vary depending on several factors, including the amenities built into the unit, materials used, the prevailing labor rate, and the difficulty of building on the site.

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Multifamily construction costs are approximately \$162 per square foot. This is based on a two-story building with 20 units and an average unit size of 800 square feet each.

**Financing:** When interest rates decline, sales increase, and when interest rates increase, sales decrease. Variable rate mortgages allow homeowners to take advantage of lower initial interest rates, but they are not ideal for low- and moderate-income households. Table B-1 illustrates interest rates as of May 2022 for different types of home loans. The interest rate, not the annual percentage rate, is used to calculate the monthly principal and interest payment.

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**Flooding:** The County's 2022 Safety Element Draft of the General Plan specifies that flood-prone lands are subject to inundation as a result of heavy rainfall. Heavy seasonal rainfall, occurring between November and May, often results in stream overflows and flooding in the county. Urbanization is further aggravating the potential for stormwater flood damage by reducing floodplain area available to absorb stormwater and preventing natural absorption of stormwater in the higher land, upstream watersheds.

**Seismic Hazards:** Solano County is crossed by several active faults, which can cause rock fractures. These fractures become visible on the surface when earthquakes occur.

Non-seismic geologic hazards exist within the county, including landslides, rockfalls, and debris flows. These hazards depend on the geologic composition of the area and can occur in sloped areas with steep slopes.

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**Sewer:** Sewer service within unincorporated Solano County is provided through a number of different sources, including the City of Vacaville, the Suisun-Fairfield Sewer District, the Vallejo Sanitation and Flood Control District, and the City of Dixon. Solano County's unincorporated areas are served by septic tanks that treat sewage effluent by the biological activity in the soil. Septic tanks can be problematic when heavy rains saturate the soil and the leaching mechanisms do not operate at full capacity.

**Water:** Solano County has a number of water providers, districts, and sources, including the Solano County Water Agency (SCWA), the Rural North Vacaville Water District, the City of Vallejo, Suisun-Solano Water Authority, and private and community wells. SCWA has expressed concerns about water shortages during drought years, and new water quality standards may limit SCWA's ability to provide additional water service to unincorporated areas.

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Rural North Vacaville Water District has capacity for 533 connections, but most housing units within this area are served by well water, which is available for future development. Solano County has seven water treatment facilities, including the DE Plant and the NBR Plant, and Rio Vista and Dixon are served by groundwater well systems. The County will immediately forward its adopted Housing Element to its water and wastewater providers.

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### **Governmental Constraints**

Local governments have little influence on market factors such as interest rates, but their policies and regulations can affect the type, amount, and affordability of residential development.

**Land Use Controls:** The County's land use controls are limited to urban areas and are implemented through zoning districts.

### **General Plan Land Uses Designations**

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This designation helps preserve marsh habitats by encouraging marsh-oriented uses and prohibiting uses that would conflict with the preservation of marsh areas.

**Zoning Regulations:** The Solano County Zoning Ordinance establishes the types of allowed residential uses and residential development standards for each zoning district. Most land in the unincorporated area is designated for agriculture. The County's Zoning Ordinance contains several provisions appropriate for development standards, and the residential development standards are created to ensure that the overall health, safety, and welfare of the community are protected.

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**Parking Requirements:** California's Zoning Code requires sufficient parking for vehicles, but excessive parking requirements can detract from the feasibility of developing new housing at a range of densities necessary to facilitate affordable housing.

Typical Densities for Development: Solano County is 906 square miles with a population of 449,964 residents. It is bisected by Interstate 80 and is accessible via State Route 12 and Interstate 680. Most of the county's growth has been in single-family areas with residential lots varying in size from approximately 10,890 to 108,900 square feet. Multifamily densities vary in size from 1,742 to 10,890 square feet per unit.

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Measure A: Measure A was passed by the voters in 1984 and was reintroduced in 1994 as the Orderly Growth Initiative. The Orderly Growth Initiative was extended by Measure T in 2008 to 2028. If the land is immediately adjacent to comparably developed areas with sufficient capacity to provide services to the proposed converted site, and the conversion will not interfere with nearby agricultural uses, it can be redesignated to rural residential uses at one unit per 2.5 acres. Measure T, which limits the conversion of agricultural land to higher-density residential, also inhibits the ability to build housing at urban densities in the unincorporated area.

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Transitional and Supportive Housing: Transitional housing is defined as housing provided under a government program but recirculated to another eligible program recipient after six months. Supportive housing is housing with no limit on length of stay, linked to an on-site or off-site service that assists the resident in retaining the housing, improving his health status, and maximizing his ability to live and work in the community. Target population includes people with low incomes who have one or more disabilities, including mental illness, HIV or AIDS, substance abuse, or other chronic health conditions, and veterans. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65583(a)(5), transitional and supportive housing types must be explicitly permitted in the Zoning Code and must be subject to the same restrictions as other residential uses contained in the same type of structure.

Emergency Shelters: Government Code Section 65583(a)(5)) requires the County to allow emergency shelters in at least one zone that is appropriate for permanent emergency shelters, regardless of the demonstrated need. The County allows emergency shelters by-right in the Commercial Service (C-S) zone district. A shelter could be constructed on a portion of this site or as part of a larger commercial development.

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The maximum number of beds or persons permitted to be served nightly by the facility, the size and location of exterior and interior on-site waiting and client intake areas, the length of stay, and lighting. Solano County assisted in the development of Beck Mental Health Facility, which will house adult residents experiencing mental health challenges who are either on jail diversion, homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless. Solano County identified 375 emergency shelter beds, 121 transitional housing beds, and 431 permanent housing beds for homeless individuals and families in 2021, a significant increase from 230 sheltered people in 2020. The County will continue to assess the homeless problem, promote housing assistance programs for the homeless, work with service agencies to provide short-term emergency housing for the homeless, and explore using Community Development Block Grant funds to assist nonprofit agencies in these efforts.

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Mission Solano Rescue Mission: Mission Solano Rescue Mission provides emergency shelter and long-term residential treatment for homeless men, women, and children struggling with addiction.

Community Resources Services (Rosewood House): Community Resources Services offers case management for homeless clients and assists incarcerated clients with basic needs, job searches, school reentry, and housing information.

Community Action North Bay: Community Action North Bay provides basic needs, such as food, clothing, and shelter, and supportive services, such as job training.

Heather House: Heather House provides temporary shelter, food, and case management to the homeless in Fairfield.

Beck Mental Health Facility: The Beck Mental Health Facility will be on the Department of Health and Social Services campus on Beck Avenue in Fairfield and will serve as temporary housing for clients with criminal justice system contacts.

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Fair Haven Commons will provide 72 affordable apartment homes for families and individuals, with 44 units being permanent supportive housing for those who are homeless and have mental health needs. Solano County is funding a 75-unit development in Vallejo to provide 23 permanent supportive housing units for those who are homeless and have mental health needs.

Low-Barrier Navigation Centers: Government Code Section 65662 requires that Low-Barrier Navigation Centers be developed as a use-by-right in zones where mixed uses are allowed or in nonresidential zones that permit multifamily housing. Community care facilities are defined as any facility, place or building that provides residential care, day care, or home-finding agency services for children, adults, or children and adults, including the physically impaired or handicapped. Group homes with six persons or fewer have the same parking requirements as conventional single-family units, but are considered a residential use of property rather than a community care facility. The County requires conditional use permits for community care facilities to ensure that no residential neighborhood is overly impacted with community care facilities, and to ensure that a proposed location is best suited for larger group homes of seven persons or greater.

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A community care facility may not be less than 400 feet from another community care facility in any one area of the county. The average parcel width in the rural residential (RR) and large traditional community residential (R-TC) zoning districts is between 163 feet and 223 feet. The Zoning Code currently defines a family as one or more persons, related or unrelated, living together as a single, nonprofit housekeeping unit.

Persons with Disabilities: Housing Element law requires jurisdictions to analyze potential governmental constraints to housing for persons with disabilities and provide reasonable accommodations. The County's Municipal Code includes administrative procedures for reviewing and approving requests for modifications to land use and zoning requirements for people with disabilities. A request for reasonable accommodation must be made if the requested accommodation will be used by an individual with a disability protected under fair housing laws.

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The County has included Program E.1 to review the current reasonable accommodation procedure and Program E.3 to amend the Zoning Ordinance to redefine family in compliance with State law. The County encourages the development of single-room occupancy (SRO) units, which are affordable to extremely low-income households. SRO units may include accessory uses, such as a commercial kitchen or common dining facilities for residents.

Farmworker Housing: Employee housing for six or fewer persons must be treated as a single-family structure and residential use, and no conditional use permit, zoning variance, or other zoning clearance is required. Currently, the County allows two types of employee housing: agricultural employee housing and HCD agricultural employee housing. HCD agricultural employee housing is permitted in all agricultural zones by-right provided all necessary permits have been obtained by the State.

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Accessory Dwelling Units: ADUs provide opportunities for affordable units, but are not permitted in certain residential zones due to health and safety concerns, environmental disasters, limited water availability, and no sewer availability.

Manufactured Housing and Mobile Homes: California Government Code Section 65852.3(a) requires that local jurisdictions allow manufactured homes on lots zoned for conventional single-family residential dwellings, but additional standards may be set for architectural features such as roof overhangs and siding or roofing materials.

Senate Bill 330: Solano County permits housing developments that comply with applicable general plan and zoning standards unless the project square footage or unit count changes by more than 20 percent.

Senate Bill 35: SB 35 requires jurisdictions that have failed to meet their RHNA to provide a streamlined approval process for affordable housing projects.

Permit Processing: The permit approval process can affect housing costs. The Planning Services Division complies with the Permit Streamlining Act, which sets deadlines for plan review.

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Once an application is complete, the Department of Resource Management will process a Tentative Parcel Map, which is subject to public hearing. Once approved, the applicant has two years to finalize the parcel map through recordation. A Final Map subdivision is processed in the same way as a Parcel Map subdivision, except that a Tentative Map is subject to review by the Solano County Planning Commission as the "advisory agency" and is subject to approval by the Board of Supervisors. After completing the subdivision process, the applicant must submit four sets of plans to the Department of Resource Management's Building and Safety Division for approval.

The application typically takes one month to process. In some cases, properties must be rezoned to a residential zoning district prior to subdivision. Rezoning applications are subject to environmental review. Multifamily projects are allowed in the R-TC-MF and R-TC-MU zoning districts and take approximately 60 days from start to finish, including secondary review.

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Design Review: Residential development design review is required in the A-SV-20, A-T-C, and A-T-C-NC districts of Solano County to promote a quality rural character in new development. Applicants should contact the Resource Management Department to schedule a preliminary application meeting to discuss the County approval process for their particular project. The Director of Resource Management will issue a design review permit based on the type of permitting required for the project.

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The Suisun Valley Design Guidelines shall serve as the guidelines for all new construction in the A-SV-20, A-T-C, and A-T-C-NC districts. The hearing authority shall approve, conditionally approve, or deny the design review within 10 days. The hearing authority finds that the project conforms with the Suisun Valley Design Guidelines, will maintain and enhance Suisun Valley's agricultural character, will maintain, enhance or restore natural features, will enhance quality of life and economic vitality, will ensure the highest-quality new construction, will minimize site disturbance, will preserve views of natural and cultural features.

Building Codes: Solano County uses the 2019 California Building Code, which includes accessibility requirements for commercial and public buildings. The County does not receive many requests to retrofit homes for disabled access or to create group homes for the disabled.

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The County's building regulations do not prohibit the retrofit of homes or the construction of new homes for disabled persons. In most cases, retrofitting homes for disabled access in the county would not violate setback regulations, and if a wheelchair ramp could not meet setback requirements, the county has an existing reasonable accommodation procedure to enable residents to request encroachment into the required setback areas for approved accommodations.

Code Enforcement: Solano County conducts code enforcement primarily on a complaint basis, and seeks voluntary compliance whenever possible. Legal action is only taken when all voluntary options have been exhausted. Site Improvements. The County Road Improvement Standards require no road improvements for subdivisions of properties under the A-20, A-40, A-80, and A-160 zoning districts, and are equal to or less than those required in surrounding counties and cities.

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All figures are minimums. Roadways shall be increased to accommodate on-street parking and/or designated bicycle routes, where warranted, and the Director of Transportation may impose additional or more stringent standards beyond those shown in the table above.

Fees: Solano County collects development and capital improvement fees at the time of building permit approval, rather than for planning applications. Fee estimates for an 1,800-square-foot secondary dwelling unit have also been included in Table B-9.

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Solano County assesses a fee for each square foot of a dwelling, ranging from \$1.94 per square foot in Vacaville to \$425 in Vacaville, and from \$0.40-0.87 per square foot for every other dwelling type.

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Overall Housing Development Costs: Based on the factors discussed previously, the cost to produce a single-family detached home is \$536,213, and for multifamily units it is \$62,784 per unit.

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The housing resources and opportunities report identifies the regional housing needs, provides an overview of available land, addresses realistic capacity, and identifies opportunities for energy conservation.

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### **Tables**

Solano County has a housing need of 34,000 units by 2032. The county has a land inventory of 8,500 acres and is able to meet this need with financial resources.

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### **HOUSING RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

California law requires that a housing element contain an inventory of land suitable for residential development, including vacant sites and underutilized sites. This section analyzes the resources available for housing development, rehabilitation, and preservation in unincorporated Solano County.

#### **Regional Housing Needs Allocation**

HCD gives each region a Regional Determination of housing need, and Solano County's region was given a Regional Determination of 441,176 units. Councils of governments must develop a methodology for allocating Regional Housing Units to each city and county in their region. Solano County's methodology was approved by HCD in 2021. The County of Solano's regional housing needs plan requires it to accommodate 315 housing units between June 30, 2022, and December 15, 2030, including 80 units for very low-income households.

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The unincorporated area's housing share represents approximately 2.8 percent of the total housing units allocated to Solano County for the period.

#### **Sites Identified in the Previous Housing Element**

To accommodate the lower-income RHNA, a non-vacant site must be rezoned within three years of the beginning of the planning period to allow residential use by right for housing developments with at least 20 percent affordable housing units.

#### **Availability of Land**

California State Housing Element law emphasizes the importance of adequate land for housing and requires each Housing Element to identify adequate sites to facilitate the development of a variety of housing types for all income levels. To demonstrate the County's capacity to potentially meet its RHNA, an adequate site inventory was prepared. This inventory includes sites that are zoned for single-family homes, multi-family, duplex, and mixed-use development, respectively, and are appropriate for moderate- and above moderate-income households.

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#### **Realistic Capacity**

The realistic residential development potential of vacant and non vacant sites was determined by reviewing the density of past and pending residential development in both the unincorporated and incorporated areas.

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#### **Sites Inventory**

The County prepared an inventory of vacant sites available to accommodate a portion of its moderate- and above moderate-income RHNA.

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#### **Accessory Dwelling Unit Potential**

California Government Code Section 65583.1(a) states that towns, cities, and counties may identify sites for ADUs based on the number of ADUs developed in the prior housing element planning period, and other relevant factors. The County is planning to promote ADUs by providing guidance and educational materials to property owners, streamlining procedures for ADUs, and providing information to homeowners' associations on the benefits of ADUs. ABAG conducted a regional analysis of existing ADU rents and prepared a draft report in September 2021 that determined affordability of ADUs for very low-income households, low-income households, moderate-income households, and above moderate-income households.

### **Manufactured Home Potential**

According to Homes Direct, new manufactured and modular homes in Solano County range from \$76,900 for a single and \$170,600 for a double, and \$145,200 on average. Most manufactured housing developed in the county serves cost-constrained families and individuals and households seeking small units. While land costs can vary depending on location, most areas in the unincorporated county have low land costs and do not add a significant barrier to development of mobile homes and mobile home parks.

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Most manufactured housing developed in the county serves cost-constrained families, and is an affordable alternative to traditional stick-built development. The County offers the Mortgage Credit Certificate Program to assist lower-income households to purchase a manufactured home. The County expects to add 80 manufactured/mobile homes to its housing stock between 2016 and 2021, with 48 homes being affordable to lower-income households, 24 affordable to moderate-income households, and 8 affordable to above moderate-income households.

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### **Multifamily Housing Opportunities**

The County has sites to ensure zoning for a variety of housing types consistent with Government Code Section 65583 and 65583.2, but does not have a corresponding zoning district that allows for the same density. The County's General Plan Urban Residential designation accounts for approximately 3,243 acres of land within the county, 1,106 of which are vacant, and 82 acres are considered to be more feasible for affordable development. The County will continue to work with the adjacent cities to encourage the development of these sites.

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The County has had success with this approach, as the City of Vacaville has annexed three project sites that were designated as Urban Residential. As a result, the Fairfield area has been credited with a greater portion of the overall County RHNA. The County supports lower-income households by providing financial support for projects in the incorporated cities. A multi-unit complex in Vallejo was recently rehabilitated and 29 affordable live/work units were created.

Page 101

The County has a surplus of 189 units to accommodate the RHNA, with 70 units in the lower-income category, 70 units in the moderate-income category, and 49 units above moderate-income. Solano County's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) is based on the state's 2021 income limits and the city's 2022 final methodology.

### **Financial Resources**

Solano County has access to a variety of funding sources for affordable housing activities, including CDBG funds from the state and Section 8 rental assistance.

Page 105

Housing costs include utility costs, and cheaply built homes invite complaints and discomfort. Improving energy efficiency in affordable housing does not make housing less affordable in the long run. Federal funds for rehabilitation, such as CDBG funds, can be used to assist homeowners with home upgrades that promote energy conservation. PG&E offers energy conservation services and participates in several programs to help low-income homeowners and renters conserve energy and control electricity costs. Unincorporated Solano County is serviced by MCE, a Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) energy provider. MCE offers solar rebates, electric vehicle rebates, energy upgrades, and rebates for water and energy saving measures for multifamily property owners. The REACH Program provides one-time energy assistance to low-income customers who have no other way to pay their energy bill.

Page 106

Solano County water customers can receive a \$100 rebate for buying and installing an EnergyStar Most Efficient clothes washer, and a \$300 credit for replacing their lawns with water-efficient landscaping.

Page 110

INTRODUCTION

The Solano County Housing Element Collaborative project website is a clearinghouse for all information related to the project, including public materials, updates, opportunities to get involved, and recordings of all past meetings.

#### STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

Staff conducted one-on-one interviews with 10 stakeholders from eight (8) organizations to obtain input on housing needs and programs.

Page 111

- Opportunities and concerns: what are the three (3) top opportunities for housing in this jurisdiction? - Barriers and needs: what are the biggest barriers to finding affordable, decent housing? - Conditions: how would you characterize the physical condition of housing in this jurisdiction? Based on conversations with stakeholders, there is a need for more permanent supportive housing programs, a pooling of resources, and education on fair housing laws among landlords and tenants. Single-family housing stock in need of rehabilitation should be acquired, repaired and rented to supplement the affordable housing shortage.

Page 112

All stakeholders expressed the need for more affordable housing and homeownership opportunities. Community land trusts and mixed-use housing were identified as strategies for achieving this, as well as the need for housing that supports wrap-around services and is located near transit routes.

#### HOUSING ELEMENT INTRODUCTION WORKSHOPS

The Solano County Housing Element Collaborative held two workshops to encourage public and stakeholder participation in the Housing Element update process. The workshops were advertised with flyers in English, Spanish, and Tagalog, and polling was conducted as part of each workshop.

Page 116

The Solano County Housing Element Collaborative held two virtual workshops to present the findings of the Housing Needs Assessment section of the Housing Element. Nineteen participants attended the lunch workshop, and eight participants attended the evening workshop.

#### FAIR HOUSING WORKSHOPS

The Solano County Housing Element Collaborative held two virtual Fair Housing Workshops to present an overview of the new Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) Requirement and to gather feedback from participants on their experiences with fair housing barriers.

Page 120

#### HOUSING SURVEY

The Solano County Housing Element Collaborative launched a housing survey in March 2022 and sent three separate email blasts reminding residents of the survey. The housing survey yielded 156 survey responses, of which 1 was completed in Spanish. Most respondents would like to see more small and affordable single-family homes built, as well as more senior housing and accessory dwelling units. Most respondents cited issues related to high rents, sales price, lack of adequate infrastructure, and roadway improvements.

Page 121

Cities should explore community land trusts to provide more homeownership opportunities, more green spaces, parks and such, more affordable rentals for young adults and/or students, and preservation of green and open space.

Page 131

Population, age, household type, and children present are included in the statistics for the Sun City, Vacaville area.

Page 134

The Housing Needs Assessment includes information about the jurisdiction's population, household characteristics, employment characteristics, and the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing. It also includes information about the racial and ethnic distribution of the population.

Page 139

US Census data includes people living in group homes, residence halls, residential treatment centers, skilled nursing facilities, and other housing that is managed by an organization providing housing and/or services.

Page 140

According to the 2015-2019 A Benicia, Rio Vista, and other cities in Solano County, 108 147 1722 603 households were severely overcrowded, resulting from either a lack of affordable housing (which forces more than it is of adequate size). According to the 2015-2019 ACS, overpaying or severely overpaying for housing among homeowners was most common in Vallejo (7,287 households, 31 sta), with 7,745 households paying more than 50 percent of gross income for housing.

Page 155

Overpayment is a problem for many lower-income households, particularly extremely low-income households. Approximately 50 percent of lower-income households report overpayment, and almost all are severely cost burdened, making up 9.6 percent of total county households. Owner households comprise 61.7 percent of total households, of which, 29.3 percent report overpayment. Approximately 2 fall within the lower-income categories (less than 80 percent of MFI), yet only 5 percent of costs remain a challenge for a substantial number of residents. Benicia's unemployment rate was 6.9 percent, with most residents working in the health and educational common sector. However, all jurisdictions had unemployment rates above 10 percent.

Page 172

The local housing market is influenced by housing, and the vacancy rate may indicate a shortage of housing. Many of the cities within Solano County have high vacancy rates, and Dixon and Benicia have the largest proportions of vacant units.

Page 182

Median Sales Price shows contract rents and median contract rent for all the jurisdictions in Solano County. The maximum affordable rent is \$373 monthly for an income household. Due to the limited availability of affordable housing and other jurisdictional, state, and federal programs for providing housing, only acutely low-income households, very low-income households, low-income households, and moderate-income households can afford housing.

Page 187

The population of Rio Vista was mostly composed of seniors (55.4%), persons with disabilities (including children), homeless persons, and farmworkers. A small proportion of households were headed by a person 65 years of age or older.

Page 192

There are six aspects of disability: hearing, vision, physical, mental, and learning. The ACS defines disability as "a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a p ty."

Page 194

A regional center is a point-of-entry service for people with developmental disabilities and their families in Napa, Sonoma, and Solano Counties. It provides diagnosis and evaluation, individual program services, advocacy, consultation with community resource development, and coordination of services with comm.

Page 197

Large households are more likely to command higher prices than smaller households, because they have more than one person per room, excluding bathrooms.

Page 198

Figure E-2 shows that single-parent households with children under the age of 18 have a larger proportion of income than two-parent households, and therefore may have trouble finding adequate, affordable housing or Female workers throughout Solano County.

Page 206

968 households (8.5 percent), 629 households (10.7 percent), and 848 households (9.5 percent) of households in Rio Vista and Vacaville were extremely low-income. This population includes persons who are homeless, parents,

seniors living on fixed incomes, and the long-term unemployed. As of 2021, there are 375 beds in emergency housing and 431 beds for permanent housing. The combination of loss of employment, inability to find and the high housing costs in Solano County has led to some individuals and families losing their housing.

Page 208

Shelter in local schools attributed to work by CAP Solano-homeless units are eligible to be converted to non-low-income housing due to the expiration of affordability restrictions, or due to the termination of a development tax increments, in-lieu fees or an inclusionary housing agreement. Certain companies and organizations provide housing choice vouchers to low-income households, including Veterans, and allow families to choose privately rented apartments or a portion of an entire apartment building.

Page 216

HUD pays the difference between what tenants can pay and what a home is worth. This means that if a home is worth \$111,180 to a very low-income four-person household for 20 years, a two-bedroom home would cost \$124,949 per unit.

Page 217

Affordable housing may require financial incentives to the project owner, local subsidies, or both. Multiple funding sources are available to the cities within Solano County for the acquisition, construction, reconstruction, and/or rehab of at-risk units.

Page 218

According to California law, owners of low income housing projects may convert their units to market rate housing after paying off their loan, provided that the rents required would exceed federal cost limits.

Page 220

The county will work with nonprofits to subsidize affordable housing units and promote the development of market rate housing, and will evaluate the feasibility of mortgages at lower interest rates. The report includes demographics, AllTransit performance scores, vacancy rates, regional unemployment rates, regional TCAC/HCD opportunity areas, income dot map, regional poverty rates, local poverty rates, dissimilarity indices, regional R/ECAPs, local RCAAs, percentage of children in married couple households, and local diversity index.

Page 225

The Regional and Local Assessment of Fair Housing, which includes the cities of Benicia, Dix and each participating jurisdiction prepared a local AFH, identifies factors that contribute to fair housing issues and suggests programs to meaningfully address these factors.

Page 226

To gauge these opinions, participants were polled on topics that influenced the location of new housing. They expressed concerns that overcrowded lower-income development would present an additional barrier to the provision of housing.

Page 229

Using Workshops virtually, the Collaborative presented an overview of the Assessment of experiences with fair housing in Solano County. The top barriers to obtaining or keeping housing were identified as accessibility conditions, landlord refusal, and overcrowding, and the top strategies for reducing displacement were identified.

Page 230

Participants wanted to see small/affordable single- supportive housing/assisted living, accessory dwelling units, tiny homes, and large-acreage homes built throughout Solano County. The greatest barriers to building housing were opposition to new housing to support existing cost of living. Local nonprofits and service providers were asked to discuss three top opportunities for housing in Solano County, including barriers to finding affordable, decent housing, and specific unmet housing needs. Housing advocates and service providers noted several observations and concerns related to themes emerging, including the demand for affordable housing, a shortage of housing resources, and a growing population of lo s for pallet and shipping container housing within the jurisdiction. Housing providers interviewed expressed that new low-income housing and properties owned by jurisdictions are valuable resources for providing low-income and disabled and/or senior households.

Page 233

The county's fair housing practices were shaped by individual discussions and the experiences of each service provider, and public comment related to fair housing was received.

Page 234

Due to the shortage of affordable rental housing, rent prices have increased and barriers to securing housing have been created. The opportunity mapping can help identify areas of high segregation and low resource areas, and identify areas that need housing to remediate conditions. The top 20 percent of highest scoring census tracts in the region are designated as high resource areas.

Page 235

Solano County has reported highest-resource designation areas in the northeast, and moderate-resource areas elsewhere.

Page 237

There are higher concentrations of very low-income households in northwest unincorporated Solano County, as well as south of Fairfield and Suisun City, and low-income households in unincorporated areas of Solano County. Poverty is found at a generally lower rate in unincorporated areas of Solano County.

Page 246

Solano County's unincorporated areas have not shifted substantially from 2014 to 2019. The county will work with incorporated urban environments to improve access to services in currently unincorporated areas.

Page 248

The percentage of Black residents that would have to move to a different area to experience a different level of segregation is considered to indicate low segregation. Solano County's population is primarily non-Hispanic, with the next-largest demographic groups being represented by smaller populations each comprising 0.3 percent. There are several possible RCAAs in Benicia and Vacaville and unincorporated areas, including the suburban communities of Alameda and Contion.

Page 256

While Solano County has become more diverse, several RCAAs are found in unincorporated areas that see a relatively high proportion of non-White residents. To increase housing mobility opportunities for lower- and -parent male-headed households due to facto , some low-income families may not have access to adequate housing due to lack of use determination, or were not pursued as a result of failure of the housing issue in Solano County.

Page 263

In Solano County, 19.3 percent of households consist of residents living alone, and 7.9 percent are single-parent, female-headed households. Areas of higher opportunity may have more single-parent, female-headed households, and 65 years or older may have more access to services and care facilities.

Page 271

There are several specialized programs available in Solano County, including the GoGo Grandparent program, Solano Mobi program, and the medical concierge service. These programs are available to all Solano County residents regardless of location, and may limit employment to housing mobility for those households reliant on transit.

Page 273

The Solano County Mobility Call Vacancy Rate is within Table F-5, Vallejo-Solano County, and provides an opportunity to increase housing options and mobility, particularly for lower-income residents. The county also has several areas of employment, including jobs that do not need to be commuted to.

Page 282

DOE publishes performance metrics for public schools in the state, including chronic absenteeism and the percentage of students in foster care. TCAC and HCD rely on this data to determine the expected educational outcome. In 2019, the DOE reported on only two public schools in Benicia County, and Suisun Valley Elementary had significantly lower performance scores than other schools. The eastern portion of the county has the highest

ELA Score Math Score Chronic Absenteeism Rate Suspension Rate Disadvantaged Foster Youth score, but the north and west of Dixon have the lowest educational scores and are largely open space, wildlife, and low-income households.

Page 288

CalEnviroScreen's percentiles are calculated based on an area's pollution burden and population. Areas with higher cumulative scores are mostly concentrated in the ABAG region.

Page 293

Mobility Call - Staff provide information and travel trip planning and offer one-on-one or group training on how to use fixed-route public transportation. Solano County offers an intercity (ITX ) Card program for qualified residents aged 60 and older and with a valid ADA card. Approximately 12.7 percent of the population in unincorporated Solano has a disability, and 4.5 percent have difficulties living independently and difficulty with self-care. There are currently no assisted living facilities in the area.

Page 294

Overcrowding may indicate a fair housing issue resulting from high housing costs (sometimes referred to as "doubling up"). Solano County has significantly lower overcrowding rates than the ABAG region, but is still overcrowded by 3.7 percent of renter households and 1.6 percent of owner-occupied households.

Page 297

According to the Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy , households earning above the AMI are less likely to be overcrowded, but households living below the poverty line need roommates to afford housing costs.

Page 300

In the Bay Area, approximately 26.0 percent of renters experience overpayment, followed by Other or Multiple Races households at 37.0 percent. Approximately 16.8 percent of renters are cost burdened and 14.8 percent are severely cost burdened, compared to 13.4 percent of homeowners.

Page 305

The unincorporated area of Solano County has a high rate of cost burdened households, including large families, single-parent households, and seniors. These households are at risk for displacement without assistance, and the County will facilitate the construction of residential care facilities and opportunities. The housing stock in Vallejo is fairly evenly dispersed throughout the County, with the majority of homes built prior to 1990. The smallest census-designated place, Elmira, has the newest housing stock, with 83.4 percent built between 1970 and 1989. Housing conditions in the unincorporated area of Dixon are substandard, with 15.4 percent of households experiencing one or more of the following conditions: lacks severely overcrowded, or is severely cost burdened.

Page 308

In 2019, there were 1,151 homeless people living in Solano County, an increase of 69 since 2015, and 19.0 percent were sheltered. There were approximately adult over 18, totaling 79 people or 6.9 percent of the population, and there were 5 individuals with disabilities, American being overrepresented in all Solano County.

Page 311

Shelter, Inc. provides wrap-around services to assist residents experiencing or at risk of homelessness. They work with rental property managers and owners to create opportunities for employment and housing, and provide ongoing resources and referrals to help reduce the risk of homelessness. The Homeless Outreach Partnership and Engagement (HOPE) Team and Street Medicine Outreach Team provide mental health support to homeless residents in encampments. Solano County is building a mental health residential treatment facility, 75 affordable apartments, and 23 permanently supportive units for homeless residents and those with mental health needs. It is also partnering with local food banks and service organizations to end homelessness.

Page 312

Program Plus provides healthy foods to low-income schools, a drive through distribution center for local fresh and non-perishable foods, and a mobile food pharmacy for patients with prescriptions for healthy shelf-stable foods.

Page 313

The average home price in Solano County has increased by 5 percent in unincorporated areas, and the median rent for a two-bedroom unit has increased by 9 percent. The difference in these trends indicates ability challenges, and the County will encourage and incentivize developers to develop a program to connect lower-income residents.

Page 314

In the Bay Area, cities with high levels of single-family zoning see greater access to resources resulting in positive life outcomes. However, where residential zoning is less than 40 percent, access to higher quality resources is greatest in areas with multifamily housing.

Page 316

Solano County prioritizes maintenance and improvements to public facilities, including in unincorporated areas, and funds them from a variety of sources. Potential impacts on operating budgets, benefits to communities, and mitigation of health or safety issues are discussed. Additionally, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau does not reflect all lenders, particularly local financial institutions.

Page 317

African-Americans represent 5.5 percent of loan applications and 7.9 percent of originated loans, while Asian applicants make up 7.6 percent of loan applications and 0.6 percent originated loans.

Page 319

The County has identified a surplus of sites available to meet the Regional Housing Needs Assessment allocation. The surplus is composed of 189 units, including 70 lower-income units, 70 moderate-income units, and 49 above moderate-income units. The County complies with Senate Bill 330 (Government Code Section 65589.5) by conducting five hearings for housing development projects and making a decision on a residential project within 90 days.

Page 320

Solano County offers accessibility accommodations, translation services, and fair housing information to ensure equal access to all governmental programs. FHEO provides complaint investigation and assistance in filing in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. LSNC assisted 2,930 tenants, homeowners, homebuyers, housing providers, and government agencies with fair housing issues. Among the issues addressed were a significant lack of affordable housing options, increased limited affordable, substandard stock as properties are remodeled and sold once, and other issues. A number of new laws have been passed in Solano County to ensure that tenants can easily access fair housing. These laws include a just-cause criminal background check requirement and an ordinance ensuring a fair chance to access housing service providers.

Page 322

In 2016, 2017, and 2018, FHAN filed lawsuits against banks and foreclosed properties in Vallejo-Fairfield MSA, indicating that banks-held and poorly maintained compared to those in White neighborhoods. Further, the County will work with local and landlords to prevent discriminatory actions and behaviors.

Page 324

The County has identified moderate- and above moderate-income sites in Allendale, Fairfield, and the unincorporated islands within Vallejo, which offer potential for low-density residential development. However, the inventory to meet the RHNA is not sufficient, and the County will adjust marketing efforts to address RHNA capacity.

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