

Ongoing Efforts to Encourage Affordable Housing



County Housing Element

Sections 2.1 and 2.2 of the [Housing Element](#) outline policies for meeting Sonoma County's RHNA, including a proposal to waive fees for affordable housing. The Housing Element lists 32 programs to boost affordable housing production, including the [County Fund for Housing](#) (CFH).

The Combined Fund for Housing

The CFH provides low-interest loans and grants to expand the County's affordable housing stock. Developers may use CFH funding to offset the cost of impact fees.

Over the last three years, the County has been the sole contributor to the CFH and has contributed \$9.7 million, comprised of regular contributions from the affordable housing in-lieu fees charged on market rate developments, Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT), and a one-time contribution of General Fund. Over the same period, the CFH awarded funding to six projects in Petaluma, Windsor, Santa Rosa, Healdsburg and Cloverdale. Housing Element Program 1b states that the County will continue providing loans from CFH funds to housing projects located within cities, however, due to the increased RHNA requirement, the Community Development Commission will prioritize CFH for units in the unincorporated County.

Density Bonus Programs

The County offers [density bonus programs](#) to encourage denser development resulting in more affordable units. Through these programs, developers are allowed to build at densities up to 100% greater than those for which the land is zoned, in exchange for guarantees that the housing will be rented or sold to eligible households at affordable prices.

Fee Deferral

The County offers a fee deferral program for [single](#) and [multi-family](#) housing, which allows the payment of development fees to be deferred until the permanent financing for an affordable housing project is obtained.