



County of Sonoma  
Permit & Resource Management Department

December 28, 2022

## NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY of a Draft Environmental Impact Report and Notice of Public Hearing

**Date:** December 28, 2022

**Project Title:** Sonoma County Housing Element Update

**Lead Agency:** Sonoma County

**Project Location:** Unincorporated Areas Countywide (figure attached)

**Hearing Date:** February 2, 2023

**Hearing Time:** At or after 1 p.m.

**Hearing Body:** Sonoma County Planning Commission

**Hearing Location:** Online. Visit <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Planning-Agency/Full-Calendar/> for details.

**Public Review Period:** December 28, 2022 to February 13, 2023

**State Clearinghouse ID:** 2022060323

The Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department (Permit Sonoma) has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the County's Housing Element Update. The County is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the project. The intent of this Notice of Availability (NOA) is to notify interested parties that the Draft EIR is available for public review and comment.

**Project Location:** The Housing Element Update will apply to all unincorporated areas of Sonoma County. The project would also rezone up to 59 sites located in urban service areas of the unincorporated county for by-right, medium-density housing. Not all parcels have street addresses at this time. See Figures 1 through 13 for maps of inventory site locations.

**Project Description:** The proposed project would update the Housing Element of the County's General Plan. to further the goal of meeting the existing and projected housing needs of all household income levels. The project also provides evidence of the County's ability to accommodate its Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocation through the year 2031, as assigned by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), and identifies the rezone program needed to reach the required housing sites capacity. Sonoma County's RHNA allocation for the 2023-2031 planning period (6th RHNA cycle) is 3,881 units.



The project would amend the General Plan to adopt an updated Sonoma County Housing Element; amend the General Plan Land Use Map to change the land use and density on sites identified for rezoning, as necessary; amend area plans to change land uses and densities on the Rezoning Sites, where applicable; and, rezone up to 59 parcels to match new General Plan land uses or densities and/or to add the Workforce Housing (WH) Combining District, which would allow the development of jobs and housing on the same site or within walking distance from one another. The Housing Element Update includes a variety of programmed implementation actions, including rezoning under Senate Bill (SB) 10 (Government Code sec. 65913.5), which allows up to 10 dwelling units on any parcel, to allow additional density on urban infill sites that are zoned R1 (Low-Density Residential) and located outside of high and very high fire hazard severity zones. The Housing Element also proposes an implementation program (Program 15d) that would modify current zoning limitations on cottage housing developments in R1 and R2 (Medium-Density Residential) zoning districts and revise the by-right allowance for cottage housing from three units to four units per qualifying parcel.

**Potential Environmental Effects of the Project:** The Draft EIR finds that project implementation could result in significant and unavoidable impacts related to aesthetics, cultural resources, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards, transportation, utilities, and wildfire. Impacts in all other areas were found to be less than significant or less than significant with incorporation of mitigation measures. The draft EIR provides a detailed project description, an analysis of physical environmental effects of the project, and an identification of feasible mitigation measures and alternatives that would avoid or lessen the severity of project impacts. The project includes sites on a hazardous waste list enumerated under Section 65962.5 of the Government Code. Sites identified in the DEIR as SAN-9 and FOR-1 are associated with active GeoTracker cases. Refer to Impact HAZ-2 in Section 4.9 of the Draft EIR for more information.

**Availability of the Draft EIR:** The Draft EIR and all documents referenced therein will be available for review on the Housing Element Update web page: <https://permitsonoma.org/longrangeplans/proposedlong-rangeplans/housingelement>. A physical copy of the Draft EIR and documents incorporated by reference in the Draft EIR will be available for review at the Permit Sonoma offices, 2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95403, during its posted business hours. Electronic versions on flash drives or printed copies may be mailed upon request, at cost. To arrange payment and request a flash drive or printed copy of the Draft EIR or any of the documents referenced therein, contact Eric Gage, at [Eric.Gage@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Eric.Gage@sonoma-county.org) or (707) 565-1391.

**EIR Public Review Period:** The Housing Element Update Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has a 45-day public review period, **commencing December 28, 2022 and ending February 13, 2023.**

**Public Comments:** Please submit all written comments by 5:00 p.m. on February 13, 2023:

- By Email: [Eric.Gage@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Eric.Gage@sonoma-county.org)
- By Fax: (707) 565-1103
- By Regular Mail: Eric Gage, Permit Sonoma, 2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, California 95403

For comments submitted via email, please include “Draft EIR Comments: Housing Element Update” in the subject line and the name and physical address of the commenter in the body of the email.

**Public Hearing on Draft EIR:** The Sonoma County Planning Commission will hold a virtual public hearing on **February 2, 2023 at or after 1 PM.** The purpose of the public hearing is for the Planning Commission and Permit Sonoma staff to receive comments on the adequacy and accuracy of the EIR. The Planning Commission will not respond to any of the comments or take action on the project at this hearing. The



purpose of the public hearing is for the Planning Commission and Permit Sonoma staff to receive comments on the adequacy of the EIR. Certification of the Final EIR will be considered at a later hearing. Contact Eric Gage (Eric.Gage@sonoma-county.org or (707) 565-1391) if you wish to be on the mailing list for future notices.

**In accordance with Executive Orders N-25-20, N-29-20, and N-33-20 this meeting will be conducted via videoconference only without a physical location from which members of the public may observe and offer public comment. Members of the public may watch, listen, and participate in the hearing through Zoom or by phone.**

Members of the public who join the Zoom meeting, either through the Zoom app or by telephone, will have an opportunity to provide live comments during the hearing. Please refer to the meeting agenda for instructions on how to join the meeting via the Zoom app or by telephone. The agenda will be posted one week prior to the hearing date located: <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Planning-Agency/Full-Calendar/>

