

County of Sonoma Housing Element Update



2023 Housing Element & Final EIR



08/22/2023 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HEARING

Housing Element Project Team

Eric Gage, Permit Sonoma – Planner III & Project Manager

Ross Markey, Permit Sonoma– Planning Division Manager

Katie Green, AICP - Rincon Consultants – Senior Planner & Project Manager (CEQA)

Jane Riley, AICP - 4Leaf, Inc. – Director of Housing Policy (Housing Policy)

Christa Shaw, Permit Sonoma– County Counsel

Agenda



1. Background
2. Housing Strategy & Action Plan
3. Housing Sites Inventory
4. Final Environmental Impact Report
5. Recommendation and Next Steps

The background of the slide is a light gray color with a repeating pattern of 3D house icons. Each house is a simple geometric shape with a gabled roof and a chimney, rendered in a light gray color with a slight shadow. The houses are scattered across the page, creating a subtle, textured background. A thin horizontal line is visible across the middle of the page, just above the text.

Background

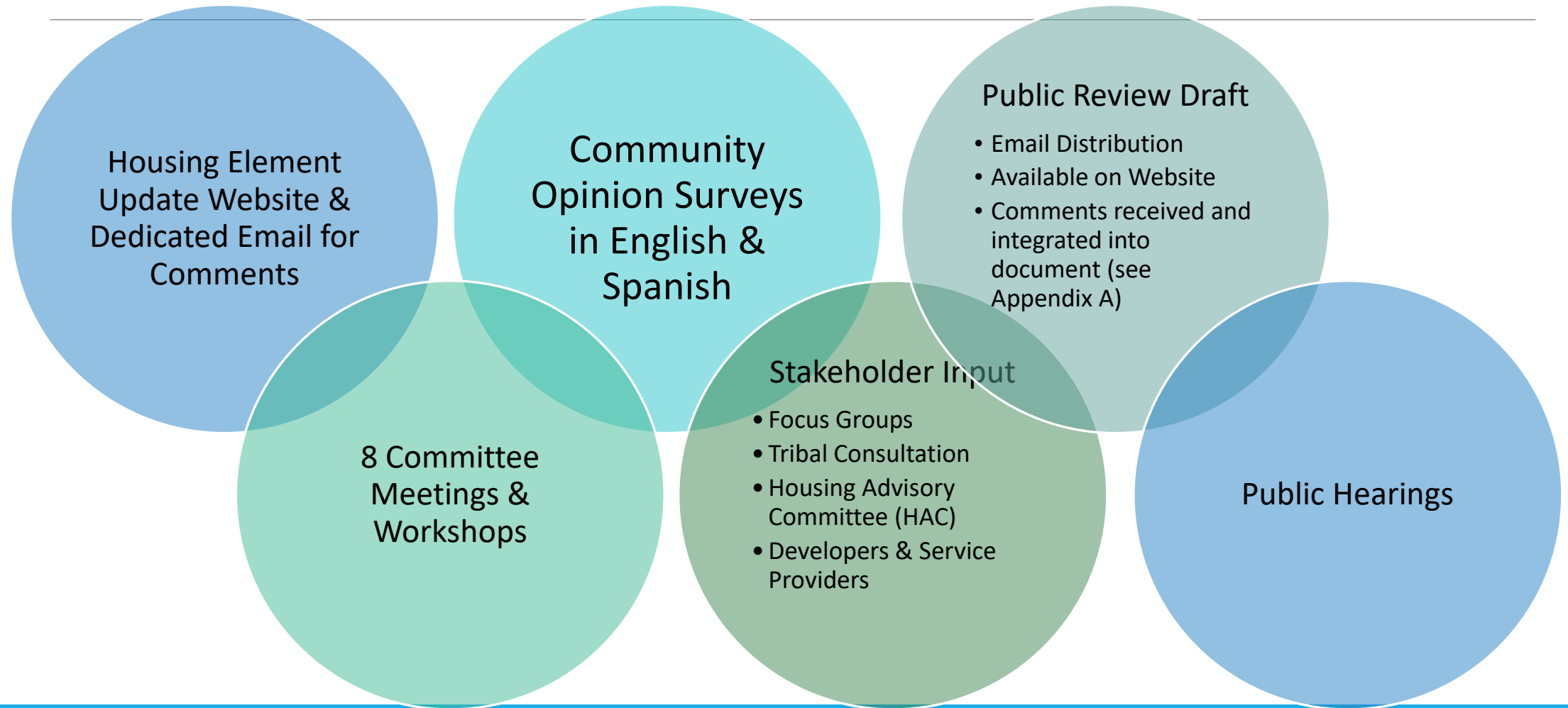
What is a Housing Element?

- Mandatory Element of County's General Plan
- Covers 8-year planning period 2023-2031
- Housing Sites Inventory to Meet Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA)
- Goals, Policies and Programs to Encourage and Facilitate Housing
- Must Affirmatively Further Fair Housing
- Many Statutory Requirements

Housing Element Update Timeline



Public Outreach – Housing Element



Public Comment on Draft Housing Element and EIR

Received over 270 written comments following publication of the Draft Housing Element and Environmental Impact Report

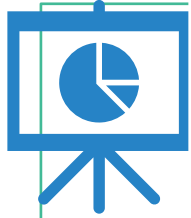
Commenters expressed concerns such as:

- Restriction of vacation rentals
- Additional permit streamlining and incentives for affordable housing
- Additional innovative housing types
- Additional support for tenant protections
- More specific program metrics and timelines
- Policies supporting farmworker housing, senior housing
- Neighborhood compatibility
- Public safety, flooding, wildfire risk, and emergency access
- Traffic congestion, parking
- Adequate water supply, and wastewater treatment capacity



Housing Strategy & Housing Action Plan

Sections of the Housing Element



Introduction and
Summary



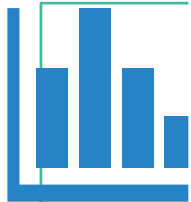
Housing Strategy



Housing Sites



Fair Housing
Contributing Factors



Technical
Background Report



Appendices and
Supporting Materials

Program Considerations



Laws,
including
new Housing
Element
laws



Input from
the public
and
stakeholders



Housing
development
targets set by
the RHNA














Affirmatively
Furthering
Fair Housing
(AFFH)



Address
Input
from HCD






Program 4: Actions to Meet RHNA

Actions include rezoning, adding the workforce housing zone, and adding units to the County campus

	LAWS	INPUT	RHNA	AFFH	HCD
4a. Rezone to default density (20 units per acre) or to add 'WH' Overlay Zoning					
4b. Rezone and update General Plan land use of Lance Drive parcels to match City's Specific Plan & rezoning					
4c. Add 200 units to County Administrative Center campus					
4d. Amend land use and zoning to allow default density on Inventory sites					















Program 6: Subregion for 7th Cycle RHNA
 Programs 9 & 10: No Net Loss

6: Form a subregion to distribute the 7th Cycle RHNA, rather than rely on ABAG. 9 & 10: Comply with No Net Loss Statutes; Create a “B” List by end of 2024

	LAWS	INPUT	RHNA	AFFH	HCD
6. Subregion for RHNA in 7 th Cycle					
9 & 10. No Net Loss, Backup List					







Program 15: General Plan and Zoning Code Updates

Eliminate GMO references; Code changes to address new laws; remove DUE penalty for 4-bedroom units; reduce ag acreage for ag units; Universal Design; SB 10; Local Guidelines; studies for parking and homeless

	LAWS	INPUT	RHNA	AFFH	HCD
15a,b. Code Changes for New Laws					
15c-15j. Code Changes to Encourage Additional Units & Accessibility					
15k,l. GP Text Amendments and Review of Local Guidelines					
15m,n. Consult with housing professionals and mitigate constraints					














Program 26: Incentivize Senior Housing
 Program 31: Housing Equity & Action Plan

Consider a Senior Housing Combining District; Promote and Encourage Universal Design in residential construction; HEIG expansion to include commission members; HEAP to prioritize implementation

	LAWS	INPUT	RHNA	AFFH	HCD
26a. Senior Housing Combining District w/reduced parking, fees					
26d. Promote Universal Design (UD)					
31. Housing Equity & Action Plan					

Program 32: Proactive Outreach

Continue proactive community outreach, including meaningful participation with vulnerable groups. Outreach to utility providers to ensure compliance with requirements to prioritize capacity for affordable units.

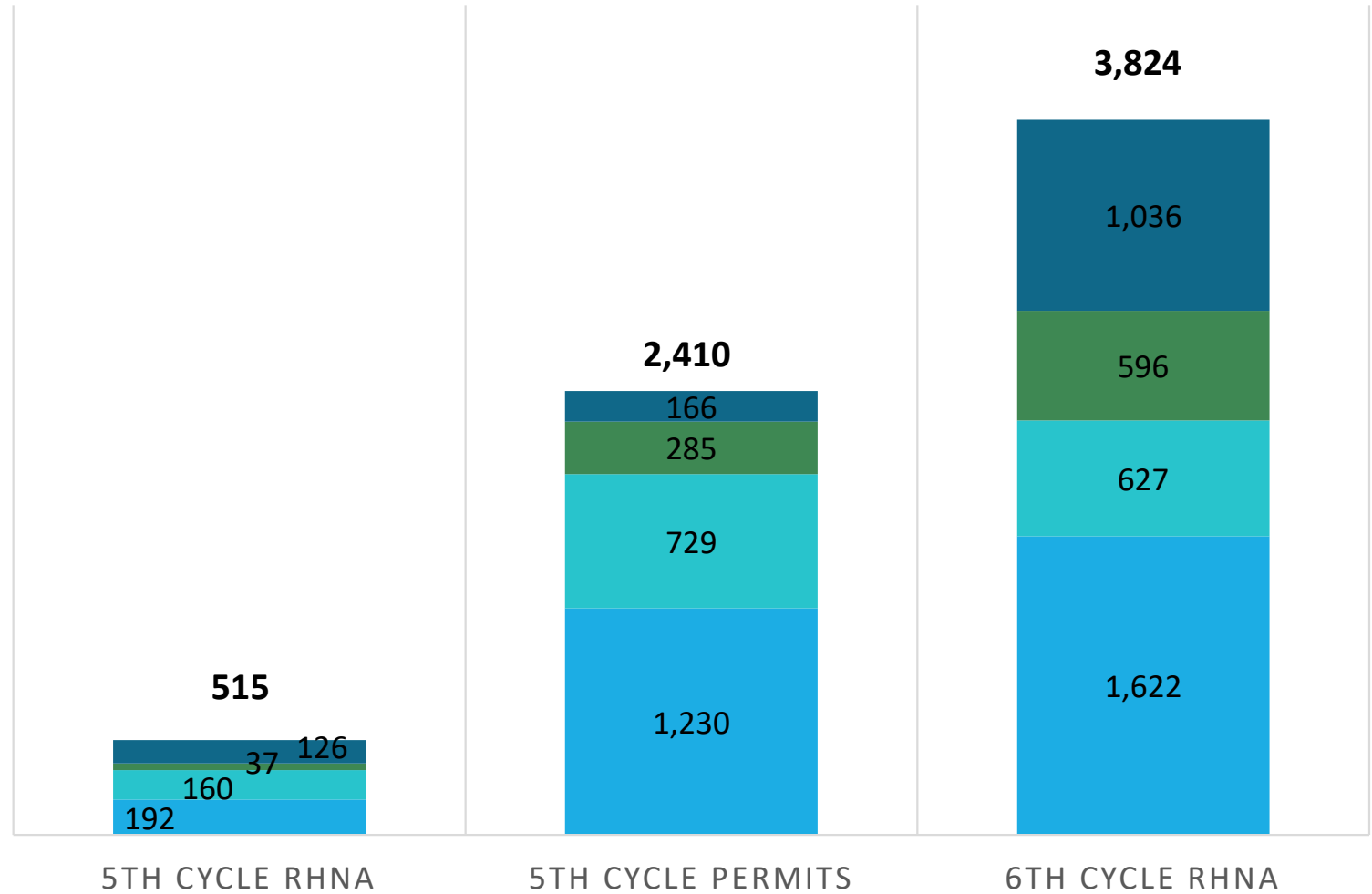
	LAWS	INPUT	RHNA	AFFH	HCD
32a,c. Continue outreach to builders, developers, providers & residents					
32b. Outreach to utilities to ensure planning and capacity for projects with affordable units, per GC 65589.7					
32d,e,f. Meaningful participation with vulnerable groups, fund outreach efforts, combat local opposition					



Housing Sites Inventory

RHNA Targets

- Very Low <50% AMI
- Low 50-80% AMI
- Moderate 80-120% AMI
- Above Moderate >120% AMI



Meeting the RHNA

	Very Low Income	Low Income	Moderate Income	Above Moderate Income	Total
RHNA Allocation	1,024	584	627	1,589	3,824
Planned and Approved Units	151	322	60	855	1,388
ADUs	244	245	245	82	816
Total Units (Credits + Sites)	395	567	305	937	2,204
Remaining RHNA After Credits	646		322	652	1,620
Unit Capacity of Sites in Inventory	857		639	832	2,328
Unit Surplus	211		317	180	708
Percent Buffer above RHNA	33%		98%	28%	44%

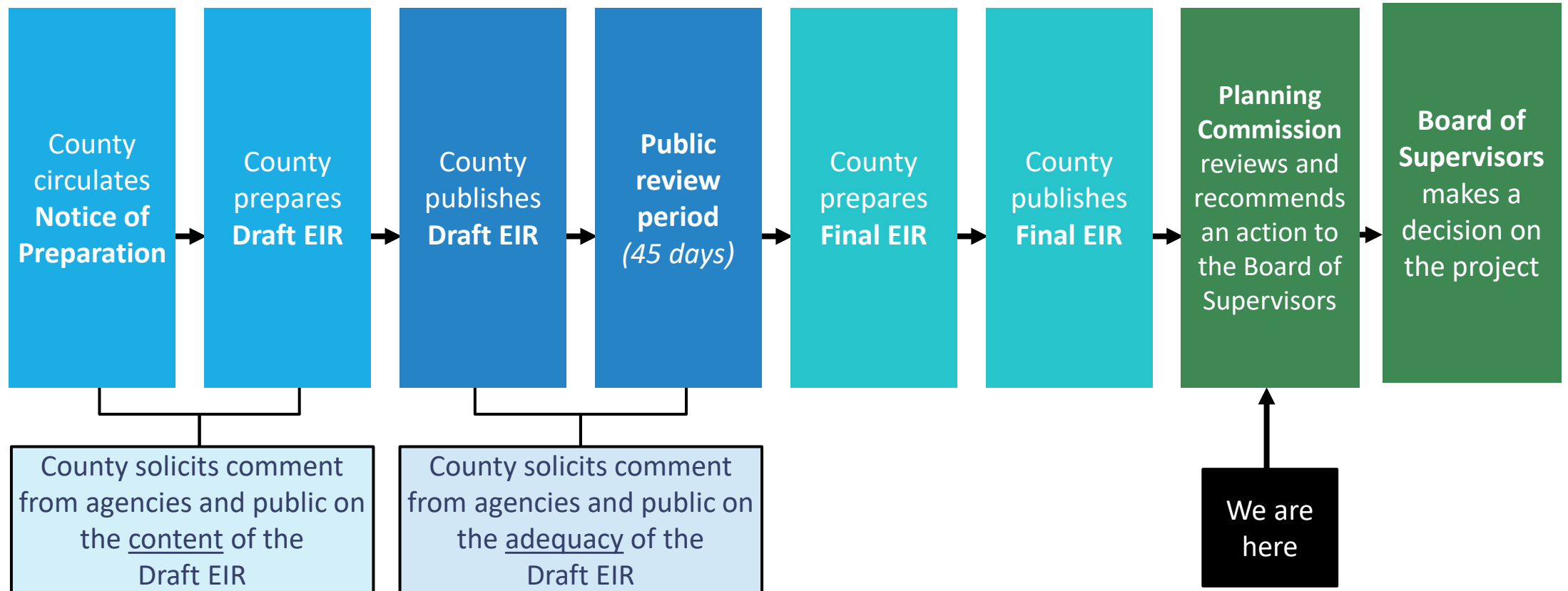
Choosing Sites for Inventory

- Statutory Considerations
 - At least .5 acres with realistic capacity for at least 16 units
 - Appropriate zoning (allows 20 units per acre)
 - Sewer and water available or planned
 - Capable of being developed and occupied by January 2031
 - Affirmatively Further Fair Housing (“AFFH”)
- Other Considerations
 - Emergency access and fire safety
 - Avoid adding significant new populations in Very High FHSZ
 - Two points of access are available to the site
 - Road widths either meet Fire Safe standards or can be improved
 - Environmental considerations, including flooding
 - Environmental Justice



Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

Environmental Review Process



Final EIR

- Consists of Responses to Comments and Errata to the Draft EIR
 - The FEIR presents specific changes to the text of the Draft EIR that are being made in response to comments received or to make corrections. In no case do these revisions result in a greater number of impacts or impacts of a substantially greater severity than those set forth in the Draft EIR.
- As discussed in the Draft EIR, there are impacts requiring mitigation in 15 different issue areas.
 - There are 6 issue areas in which significant and unavoidable impacts are identified: Aesthetics, Cultural Resources, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Transportation, Utilities & Service Systems, Wildfire

Statement of Overriding Considerations

The Board of Supervisors must make specific findings supporting the reasoning for approval of a project with significant and unavoidable impacts, and CEQA requires the decision-making agency to balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental impacts when determining whether to approve the project.

If the specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a proposed project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse environmental effects may be considered "acceptable," and the project may be approved.

Findings the Board May Make Within the Statement of Overriding Considerations

- The project updates policies in a manner that meets current legal requirements for Housing Elements. Under State law, the County must adopt a Housing Element Update which meets its assigned RHNA requirement and allow for future growth and development.
- The project creates the regulatory framework to improve and develop households of various sizes to meet the needs of residents at different income levels. To meet the targets set by Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA), the County must accommodate the production of abundant and affordable new housing in a wide diversity of forms.
- The proposed project would preserve existing housing and prevent displacement through policies that would help to prevent displacement of lower-income households and increase the availability of affordable housing.
- The project would encourage the development of higher-density housing in the County throughout the urban areas of the unincorporated county within an established, General Plan-designated Urban Service Area where public sewer and water service is available, near jobs, transit, services, and schools, and if near an incorporated city, within that city's voter-approved Urban Growth Boundary.

Next Steps

- **After making any necessary changes to integrate Board input**, the Housing Element will be sent to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for review and certification
- **The HCD will review the Housing Element** in 60 days and issue their findings. This may require making non-substantial edits to respond to comments.
- **Upon HCD certification of an adopted Housing Element, the County will be in compliance with Housing Element law.**
- **Post Adoption Implementation:** Funding requests from the Community Development Commission and Permit Sonoma for Housing Element implementation will be brought to the Board for review during FY 2024-25 Budget Hearings.



Policy Option 1: Planning Commission Recommendation

At the Planning Commission hearings of July 13 and 20, Commissioners made the following recommendations, incorporated into the draft Housing Element and the staff recommendation:

- Remove inventory sites AGU-1, GRA-4, PEN-1, PEN-9, SAN-2, SAN-10
- Add GRA-2 to Program 4 to be rezoned to UR-20 prior to January 31, 2024
- Revise language to Programs 4, 28, and 31
- Adopt the 2023-2031 Housing Element and repeal of existing 2014 Housing Element
- Amend zoning and land use of parcels, redesignating parcels as described in Appendix D of the Housing Element to allow increased residential development
- Adopt an ordinance to amend Zoning Code text making corrections needed for compliance with state law

Other Policy Options

Policy Option 2:

Amend the Planning Commission Recommendation to add the sites on the Planned, Approved, and Pending Projects list that were studied by the EIR but were not included in staff's recommendation to the Planning Commission to the Rezone Sites list in Appendix D of the Housing Element.

Policy Option 3:

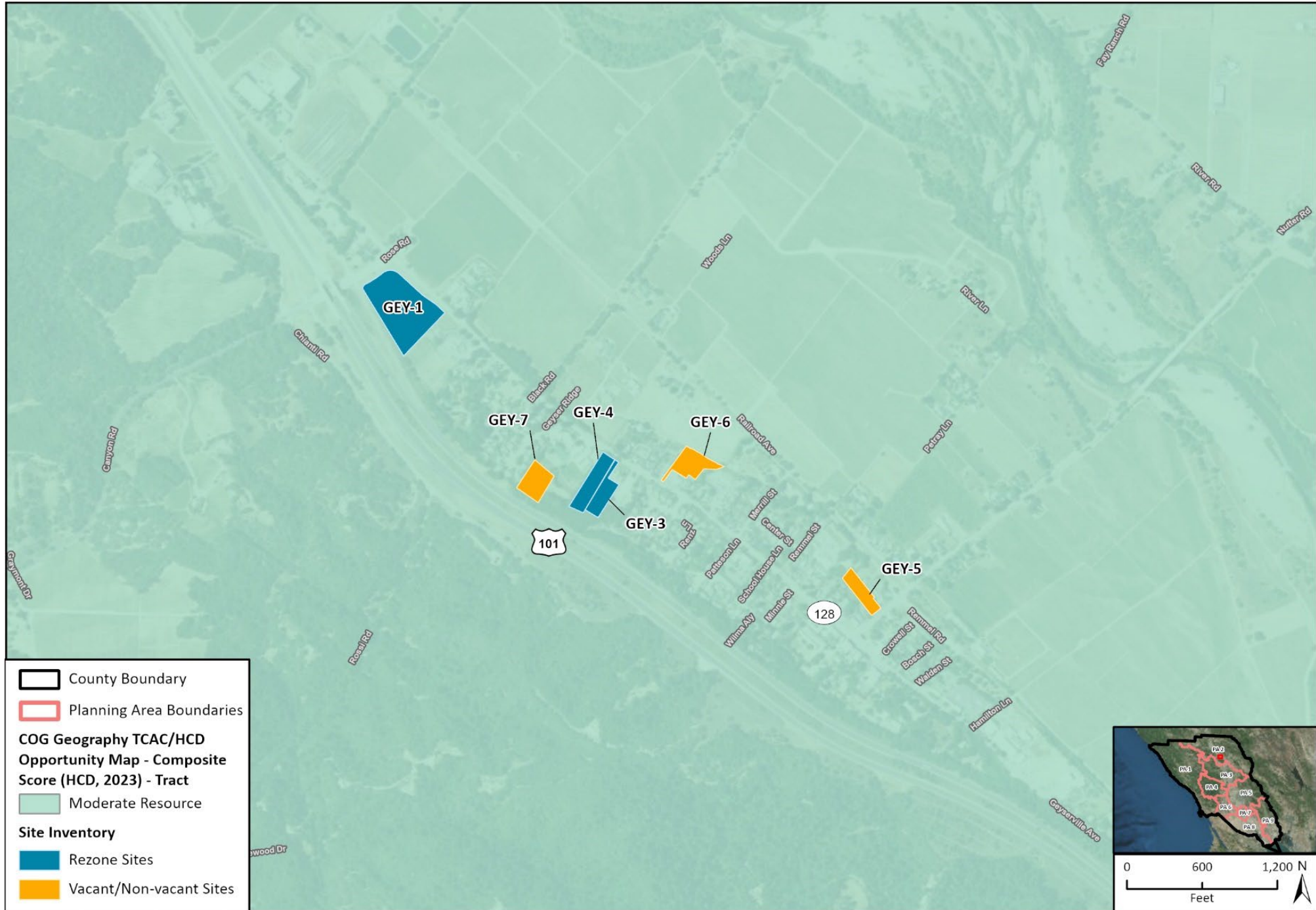
Direct staff to make additional changes to the Housing Element Site Inventory and Programs.

Questions?

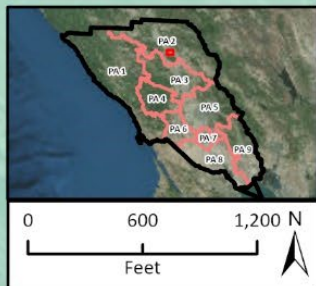
Additional Slide and Graphics

Planning Area 2

Cloverdale N.E. County

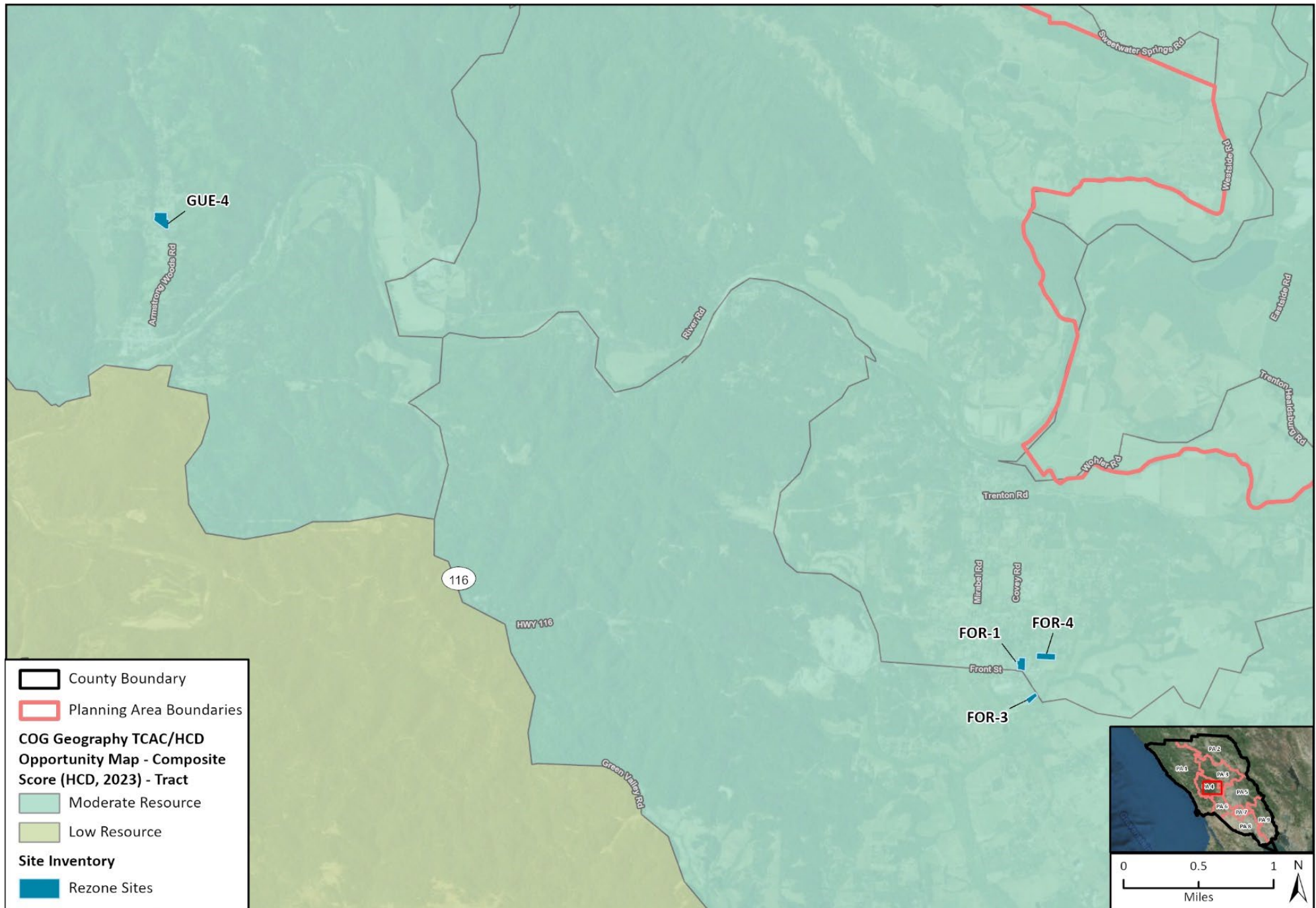


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Planning Area 4

Russian River



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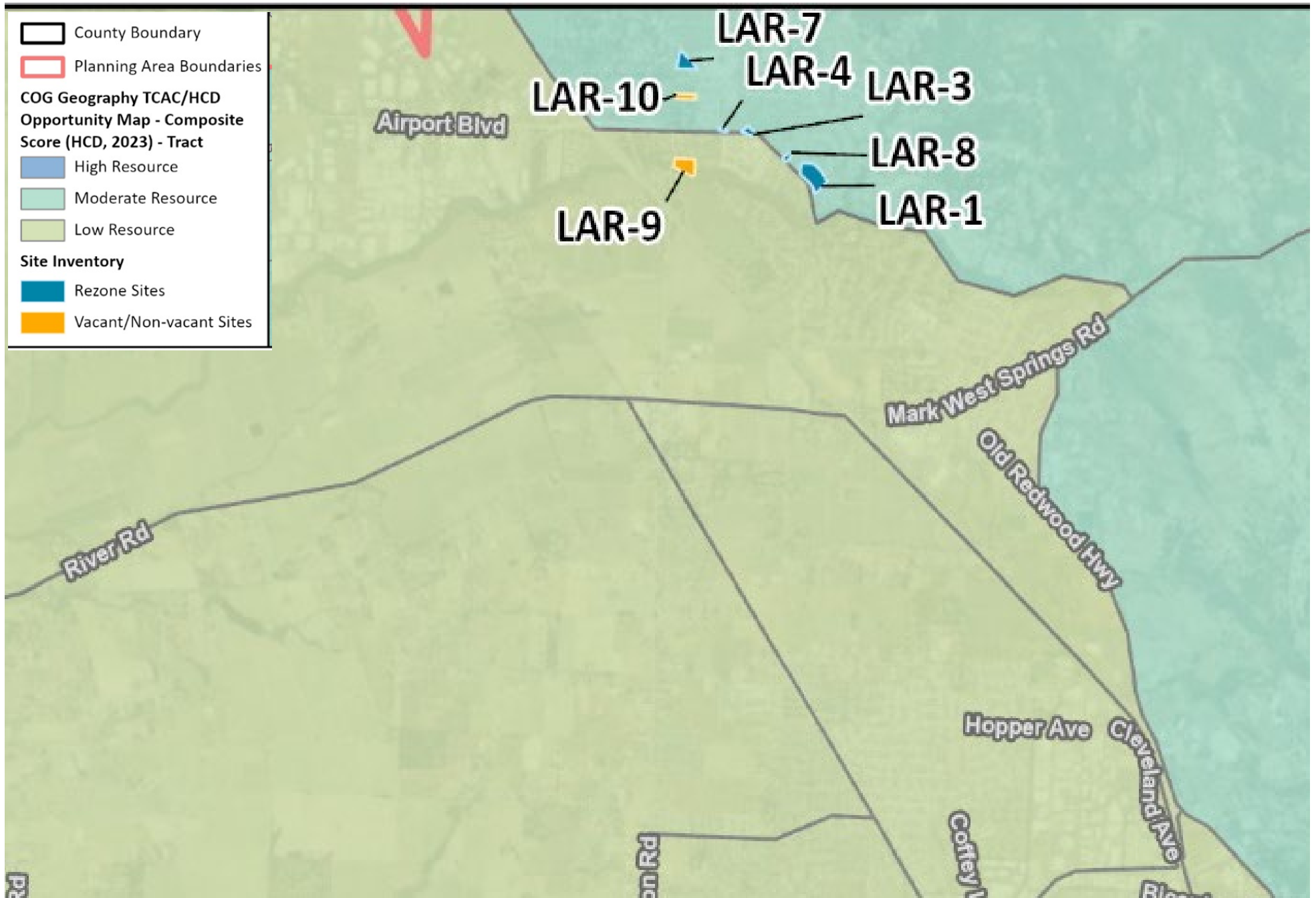
Planning Area 5

Graton



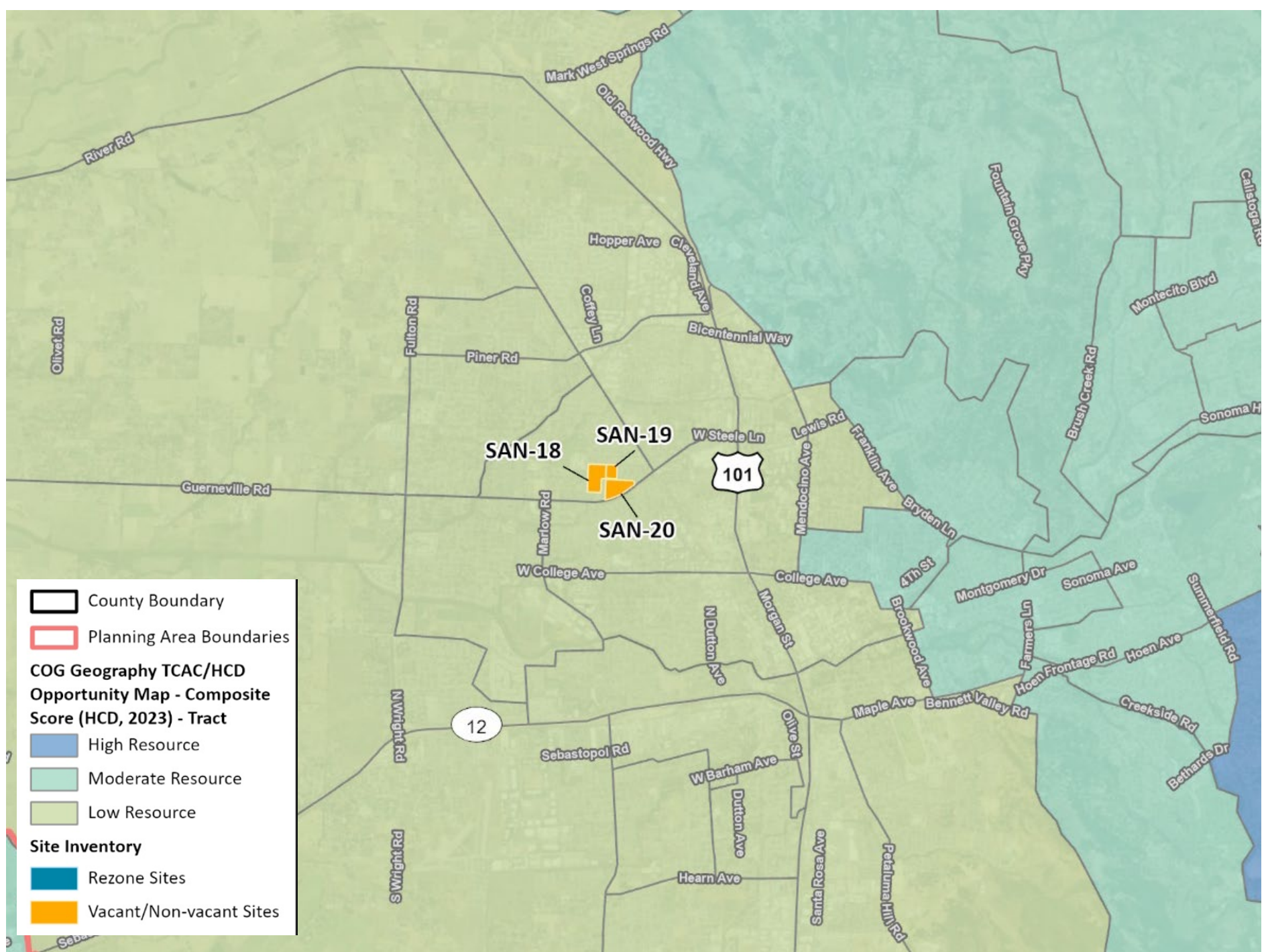
Planning Area 6

Larkfield Area



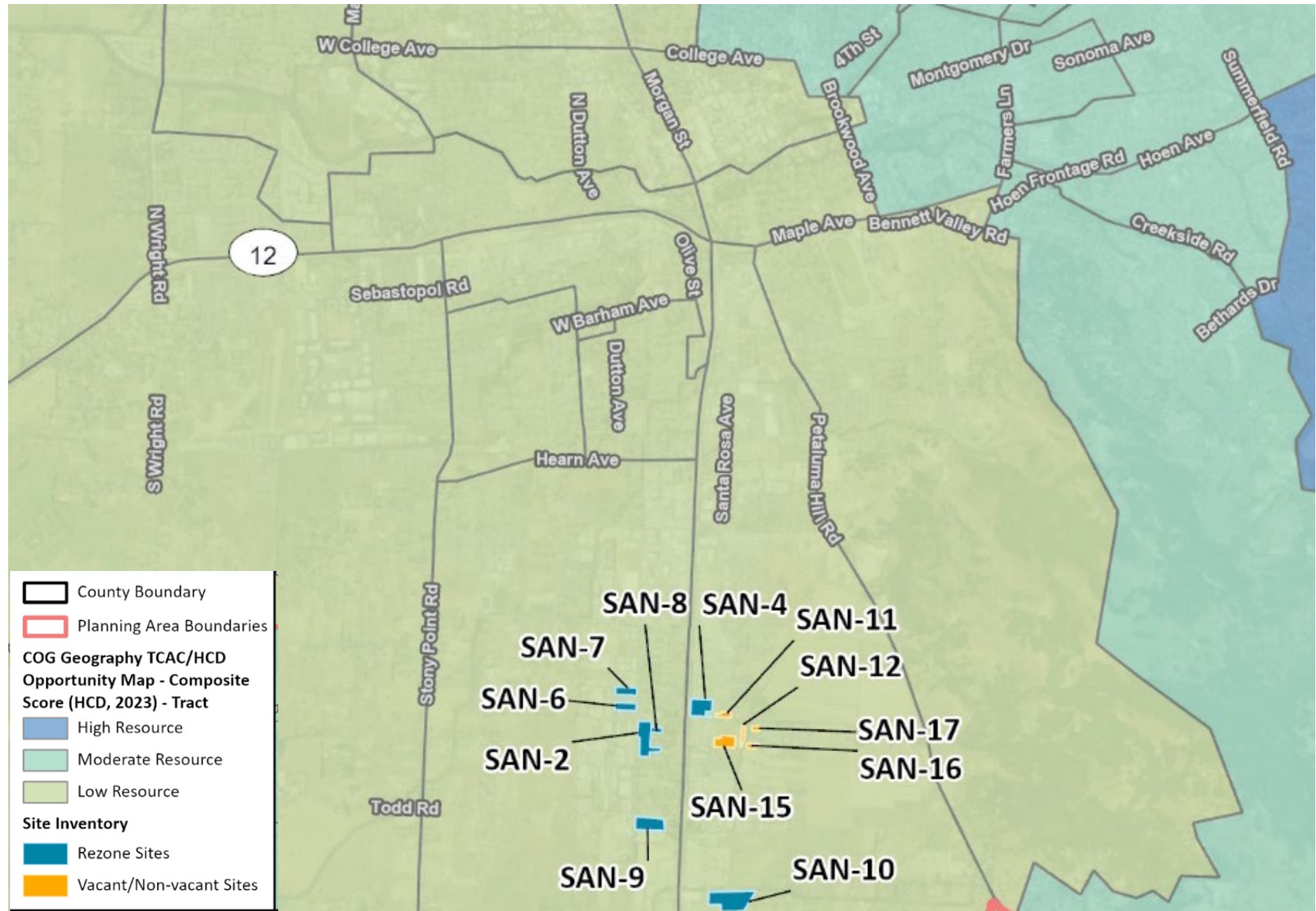
Planning Area 6

North Santa Rosa



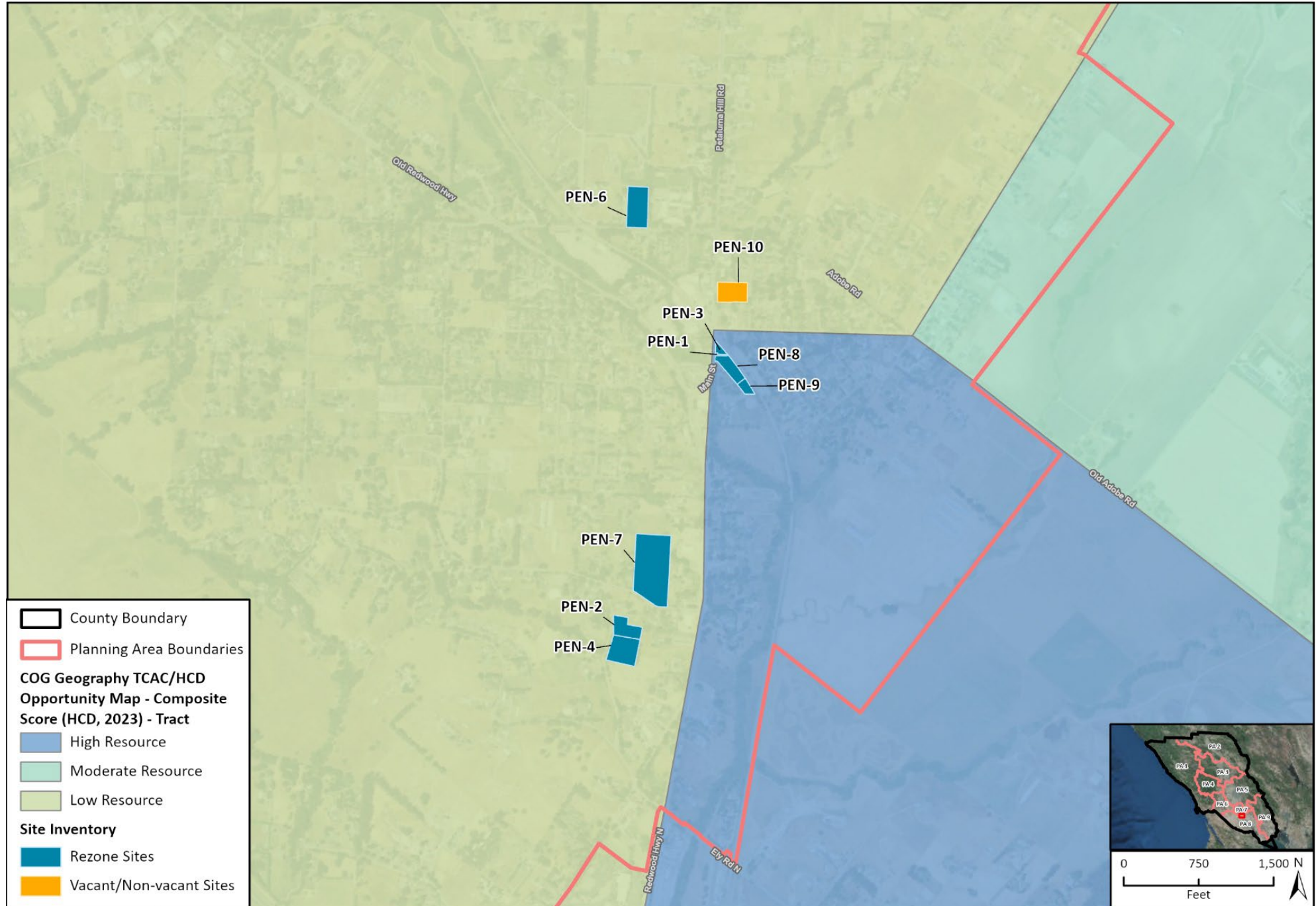
Planning Area 6

South Santa Rosa



Planning Area 7

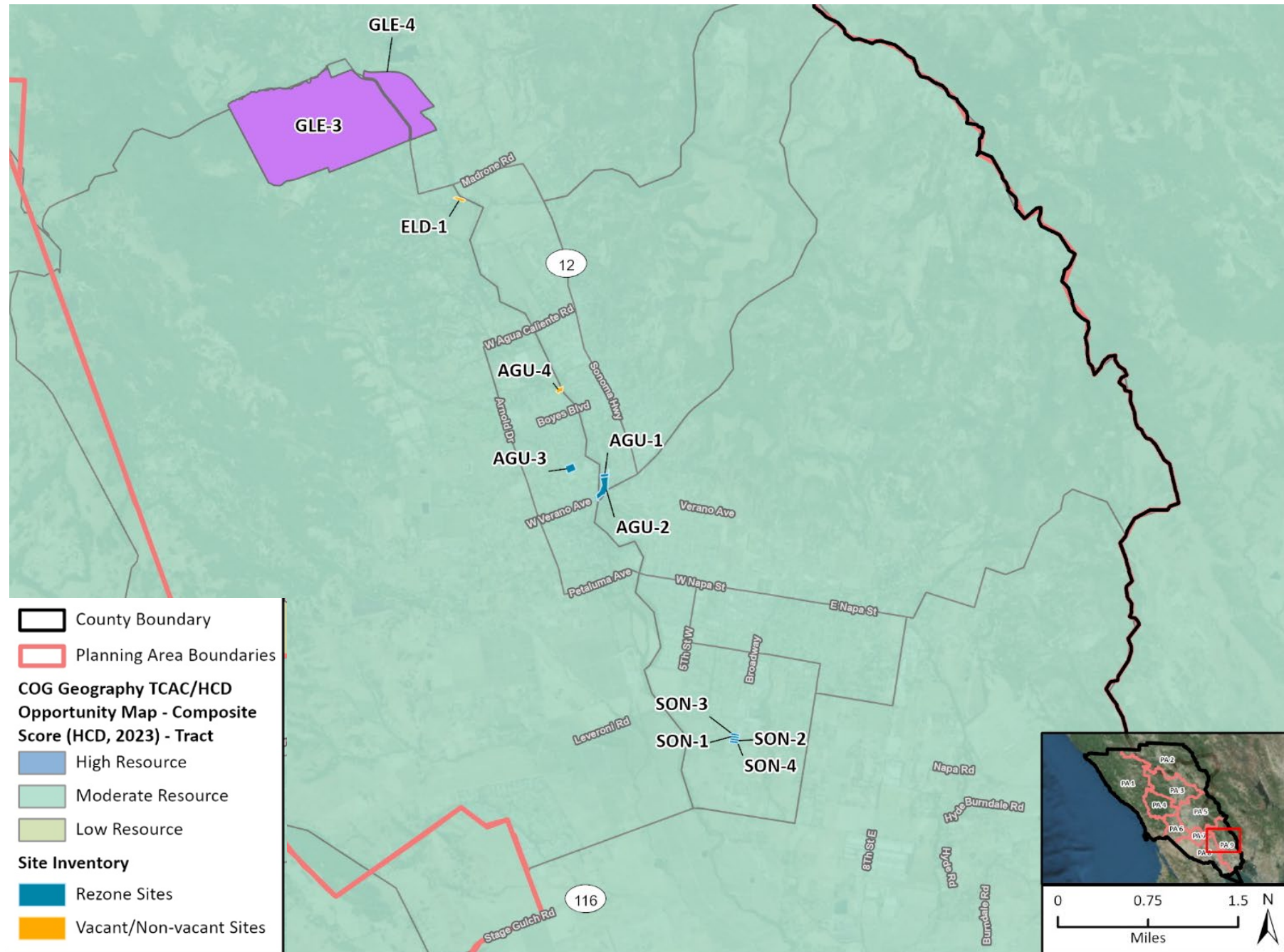
Penngrove



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Planning Area 9

Sonoma Valley



Publication History

Rezoning Sites Environmental Impact Report

- Notice of Preparation – Mar 11, 2020
- Draft EIR published – April 19, 2021

Environmental Impact Report

- Notice of Preparation – June 15, 2022
- Draft EIR published – Dec 28, 2022
- Final EIR published – July 3, 2023

Housing Element

- Public review draft – Nov 11, 2022
- 1st submittal to HCD – Dec 30, 2022
- 2nd submittal to HCD – Mar 13, 2023
- HCD review letter – Mar 30, 2023
- Final draft – June 28, 2023