

READ AND CONSIDERED
DATE 9/9/22 BY TR

Response to Grand Jury Report Form

Report Title: Affordable Housing: Past, Present and Future
Report Date: June 14, 2022
Response by: Sam Salmon Title: Mayor
Agency/Department Name: Town of Windsor

FINDINGS: F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F7, F10, F11, F12, F13, F14, F16, F17, F19, F20, F21, F22

I (we) agree with the findings numbered: F1, F2, F3, F5, F11, F13, F14, F16, F19, F20, F21, F22, F23, F24

I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: F3, F4, F7, F10, F12, F17

(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed with an explanation of the reasons.)

RECOMMENDATIONS: R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7, R8

- Recommendations numbered: R1, R2, R3, R4, R6, and R7 have been implemented.
(Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)
- Recommendations numbered: R5, and R8 have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.
(Attach a timeframe for the implementation.)
- Recommendations numbered: _____ require(s) further analysis.
(Attach an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. ***This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the Grand Jury report.***)
- Recommendations numbered: _____ will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.
(Attach an explanation.)

Date: 09/12/2022 Signed: Sam Salmon

Number of pages attached: 5

(See attached Civil Grand Jury Response Requirements)

SONOMA COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT 2022

Affordable Housing: Past, Present and Future

Town of Windsor Response to Findings

The Town of Windsor agrees with the findings numbered: F1, F2, F3, F5, F11, F13, F14, F16, F19, F20, F21, F22, F23, and F24.

The Town of Windsor disagrees wholly or partially with the findings numbered: F3, F4, F7, F10, F12, and F17.

F3. Sonoma County and its nine Cities have officially recognized the need for Affordable Housing but not all have fully endorsed the Regional Housing Needs Allocation or met earlier goals.

The Town of Windsor disagrees partially with this finding. The Town and other jurisdictions in Sonoma County have recognized the need for affordable housing and have dedicated resources and staff toward prioritizing affordable housing and addressing the state mandated RHNA across all income categories. While it is true that not all jurisdictions have been successful in meeting the 5th cycle RHNA, this is not due to a resistance of the RHNA by Sonoma County's towns and cities.

F4. Some cities hinder the development of Affordable Housing through designation of new historic districts, increased landscaping requirements, highly restrictive zoning, and exploitation of environmental concerns.

The Town of Windsor disagrees partially with this finding. The Town has consistently supported affordable housing development and works closely with affordable housing developers to identify and eliminate obstacles to development. While overly restrictive regulation may be a strategy that some cities use to hinder affordable housing development, the Town of Windsor does not engage in this process nor is Town staff aware of this practice in other Sonoma County jurisdictions.

F7. There is great variability in the planning and approval processes and procedures for developing Affordable Housing in the County and its Cities, thus complicating and slowing development.

The Town of Windsor partially disagrees with this finding. While there is great variability in the planning and approval processes and procedures among the various jurisdictions in Sonoma County, the variability is a result of the unique circumstances and values that each community has. The variability does not necessarily complicate or slow down development of housing. Each jurisdiction retains local discretion to ensure that the uniqueness and individuality of their community is preserved, enhanced, and stays in line with the community's vision.

F10. Design review and project approval are often slow and very complex, and hinder the development of Affordable Housing.

The Town of Windsor partially disagrees with this finding. While there is potential for the design review process to hinder development, the Town of Windsor has developed several tools to facilitate the development of affordable housing. The Town does not have a separate design review board or committee; the Planning Commission is empowered to conduct design review at the same time that it considers other land use entitlements. The Town offers non-binding concept design review to provide direction to developers before many resources are invested into design. Additionally, the Town has adopted objective design standards and takes advantage of State-mandated ministerial review processes to reduce processing times.

F12. Mitigation fees vary by individual projects and jurisdictions, complicating the building of Affordable Housing.

The Town of Windsor disagrees partially with this finding. It is true that mitigation fees will vary between projects and jurisdictions, but that is because every project has individual and specific impacts, and every jurisdiction has unique infrastructure and service needs. The Town of Windsor has not seen evidence that this variability complicates the building of affordable housing.

F17. Changes to city boundaries by annexation of land within their Spheres of Influence could allow the development of more Affordable Housing but is resisted due to the high costs of additional infrastructure.

The Town of Windsor wholly disagrees with this finding. The cost of infrastructure may be an added challenge for development of these parcels, but the Town is supportive of annexations of land within the Sphere of Influence (SOI) for the purpose of development. A recent annexation facilitated by the Town has resulted in a development proposal that includes on-site affordable housing.

Town of Windsor Response to Recommendations

R1. By December 31, 2022, Permit Sonoma and the nine Cities should begin to streamline their procedures, from preliminary review through the permitting process, related to the development of Affordable Housing. (F7, F10, F11, F13)

This recommendation has been partially implemented. The Town's concept review process is voluntary and non-binding. There is no mandatory preliminary review. The Town does not have a separate design review board or committee; the Planning Commission is empowered to conduct design review at the same time that it considers other land use entitlements. The Town continues to make efforts to increase transparency and education related to the accessory dwelling unit (ADU) permitting process to respond to community feedback and to facilitate ADU construction. This includes partnership and funding for the Napa Sonoma ADU Accelerator program as well as public facing information about resources and the local permitting process. The Town is committed to continuing to find ways to improve efficiency. The Town is currently in the process of developing its 6th Cycle Housing Element which in part identifies governmental constraints and develops programs to address those constraints. Once adopted the Town is committed to implementing those programs and providing annual reporting of the status and resulting affordable housing production toward the increased 6th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Allocation. The Town has provided fact sheets and is presently updating the Zoning Code for consistency with Senate Bills 9 and 10.

R2. By December 31, 2022, Permit Sonoma and the nine Cities should meet to consider standardizing their procedures related to the development of Affordable Housing. (F7, F10, F11, F13)

This recommendation has been partially implemented. Permit Sonoma and the nine Cities held a meeting on July 21, 2022, to discuss ways in which procedures could possibly be standardized. The Town will participate in any necessary additional meetings in addition to the ongoing meetings the Town already participates in with its Sonoma County partners to discuss issues of regional importance and to keep apprised of the challenges and policy initiatives that all jurisdictions are facing. This communication and collaboration occurs on a variety of levels and on a regular schedule, including monthly City Manager meetings, monthly Planning Advisory Committee meetings, quarterly City Attorney meetings, and similar across a variety of departments. The Sonoma County jurisdictions have established a housing ad hoc that meets regularly to discuss specific housing issues and share approaches among jurisdictions. The Town remains committed to the collaboration and partnership with its regional partners as it assists in creating efficiencies and learning from the relevant experiences of other Sonoma County jurisdictions. The Town will participate in any subsequent meeting(s) with Permit Sonoma and the nine Sonoma County cities to discuss the findings and recommendations of the Grand Jury

Report. The degree to which procedures related to the development of affordable housing can be standardized will be dependent on the individual needs of each jurisdiction.

R3. By December 31, 2022, Permit Sonoma and the nine Cities should meet to discuss the coordination of fee reduction standards for Affordable Housing throughout the County. (F11, F12, F14)

This recommendation has been partially implemented. Permit Sonoma and the nine Cities held a meeting on July 21, 2022, and initiated the conversation regarding coordinated fee reduction standards. The Town will participate in any necessary additional meetings in addition to the ongoing meetings the Town already participates in with its Sonoma County partners to discuss issues of regional importance and to keep apprised of the challenges and policy initiatives that all jurisdictions are facing. This communication and collaboration occurs on a variety of levels and on a regular schedule, including monthly City Manager meetings, monthly Planning Advisory Committee meetings, quarterly City Attorney meetings, and similar across a variety of departments. The Sonoma County jurisdictions have established a housing ad hoc that meets regularly to discuss specific housing issues and share approaches among jurisdictions. The Town remains committed to the collaboration and partnership with its regional partners as it assists in creating efficiencies and learning from the relevant experiences of other Sonoma County jurisdictions. The Town will participate in any subsequent meeting(s) with Permit Sonoma and the nine Sonoma County cities to discuss the findings and recommendations of the Grand Jury Report. Because each jurisdiction has unique infrastructure and service needs coordination of fee reduction standards may be challenging.

R4. By December 31, 2022, Permit Sonoma and the nine Cities should identify properties within their jurisdictions and Spheres of Influence that could support the construction of infill housing and accessory dwelling units. (F1, F2, F3, F4, F16, F17)

This recommendation has been implemented. The Town of Windsor and all of the other Sonoma County cities have General Plans that include land use designations for all properties within each cities' Urban Growth Boundary. A residential land use designation indicates that the Town has previously analyzed and identified the property as appropriate to support the construction of residential development. The Town is currently in the process of updating the Housing Element of the General Plan. As part of this process, new opportunities for infill housing and accessory dwelling units are being identified and analyzed.

R5. By December 31, 2022, Permit Sonoma and the nine Cities should identify properties within their jurisdictions and Spheres of Influence that are likely opportunities for rehabilitation or repurposing to increase the availability of Affordable Housing. (F16, F19, F22)

This recommendation has not been implemented but will be implemented in the future. As state and federal funding for rehabilitation becomes available, the Town works with community partners to secure funding and pursue opportunities. In February of 2022, the Town of Windsor

collaborated with Burbank Housing to extend the loan term for the Winter Creek affordable housing development. This action allowed the property manager to qualify for funding to make repairs to the property and also extended the term of guaranteed affordability for the units. The Town is currently in the process of updating the Housing Element of the General Plan. As part of this process, programs and policies will be developed to increase the availability of affordable housing. The Housing Element is expected to be adopted in 2023.

R6. By June 1, 2023, Permit Sonoma and the nine Cities should develop permit ready accessory dwelling unit and junior accessory dwelling unit plans. (F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F7, F10, F11, F13, F21, F22)

This recommendation has been implemented as the Napa Sonoma ADU Center recently launched the Napa Sonoma ADU Standard Plans Program in an effort to accelerate production of ADUs throughout both Napa and Sonoma Counties. The Napa Sonoma ADU Center has collaborated with all nine Sonoma County cities and Permit Sonoma to compile each jurisdiction's ADU regulations, fee structure, and permitting process. Additionally, the organization has compiled a wide range of ADU plans that are offered for a reduced cost through licensing with the architect. The Town of Windsor is contributing financially and in the form of staff time to the ongoing operation of the organization.

R7. By December 31, 2022, Permit Sonoma and the nine Cities should discuss integration of preliminary design review committees with their planning commissions to help expedite the construction of Affordable Housing. (F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F7, F10, F11, F13, F19, F20, F21, F22)

This recommendation has been implemented as the nine cities held a meeting on July 21, 2022, and discussed existing procedures in place in each jurisdiction and how each jurisdiction which had not already done so could integrate these and similar committees/commissions where they exist. The Town of Windsor does not have a separate design review board or committee; the Planning Commission is empowered to conduct design review at the same time that it considers other land use entitlements.

R8. By December 31, 2022, Permit Sonoma and the nine Cities should review their permitting requirements to allow nontraditional options such as manufactured homes, factory built homes, and tiny houses to increase housing supply. (F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F10, F11, F13, F21, F22)

This recommendation has not been implemented but will be implemented in the future. While the Town's current regulations do not prohibit manufactured homes, factory built homes, or tiny houses, there are regulations in the General Plan and the Zoning Code that could present a challenge to these types of development. The Town is currently updating its General Plan and Zoning Code and these updates will include changes, where feasible, to accommodate nontraditional housing options. The updates are expected to occur by or before April of 2023.