



Dear City of Sonoma City Council and Planning Commission,

The revised draft Housing Element that the City submitted to HCD, that City Council will vote on January 31, incorporated many of our requests. We are sincerely pleased to see these changes, because they signal that you are aware how big and urgent the problem is. There are still areas where the HCD draft falls short, so we ask you to make the following additional changes.

Why this is so important

Sonoma is losing its families and young people, which is ominous for our quality of life and local economy. Housing cost is a major cause, if not the overriding cause, of these losses. Very high housing costs are keeping away new families, younger people, and workers.

Speed up certain programs that prevent displacement

Programs that prevent displacement from permanently damaging our communities and workforce should be on a faster timeline that reflects our housing crisis. We have current capacity to help the City move these priorities forward, and we are fundraising to increase our capacity. Specifically, please revise the timeframe of the following objectives:

1. Review options for just cause eviction protections and rent stabilization by December 2023 and adopt policy by December 2024. (Program 11)
2. Complete the rental registry by December 2023 (Program 13)
3. Hold workshop for Affordable Housing Overlay zones by July 2024 and implement by July 2025 (Program 19)

Thank you for considering these requests. Our understanding of AFFH, Sonoma’s housing market, and state law show us that these requests are needed, feasible, and aligned with both Sonoma’s best interests and its legal requirements. Sonoma residents—those who live here now, and those who we hope will live here in the future—deserve a safe, accessible, affordable place to call home, with a range of choices free of barriers to fair housing.

Signed,

[Sonoma Valley Collaborative](#). Caitlin Cornwall, Project Director

Members include: Boys & Girls Club of Sonoma Valley Teen Program, Disability Services & Legal Center, Friends in Sonoma Helping, Golden State Manufactured-Home Owners League, Greenbelt Alliance, Hanna Institute, Impact100 Sonoma, La Luz Center, Midstate Construction, SHARE Sonoma County, Sierra Club, Sonoma Community Center, Sonoma Overnight Support, Sonoma Police Department, Sonoma Valley Chamber of Commerce, Sonoma Valley Climate Coalition, Sonoma Valley Community Health Center, Sonoma Valley Education Foundation, Sonoma Valley Hospital, Sonoma Valley Housing Group, Sonoma Valley Interfaith Ministerial Association, Sonoma Valley Mentoring Alliance, Sonoma Valley Museum of Art, Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Alliance, Transition Sonoma Valley, Valley Bar + Bottle, Vintage House Sonoma, Winery Sixteen 600.

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