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PARTICIPATION

This Housing Element has been shaped by community feedback throughout all phases of its development. A variety of in-person and digital tools were used to solicit input, including surveys, community meetings, and interviews. This Chapter describes the community participation activities conducted during the development of the Draft Housing Element and the adoption of the Final Housing Element.

A. DEVELOPMENT OF THE DRAFT HOUSING ELEMENT

To avoid meeting fatigue and avoid duplicating efforts where appropriate, it was important to draw from prior planning efforts. As part of the Contra Costa County Consortium, Antioch was involved with the County's adoption of the 2020-2025 Consolidated Plan in May 2020 and the 2020-2025 Analysis of Impediments/Assessment to Fair Housing Choice in June 2019. Both these efforts included robust community engagement, including stakeholder meetings; six community meetings, including one in Antioch in June 2018; four meetings with housing choice voucher participants and public housing residents, including one in Antioch in August 2018; and a survey that garnered 297 responses. The Housing Element drew from these prior plans and their community engagement results as a starting point.

Community engagement specific to the Housing Element update reached a wide range of stakeholders, including City staff from other departments, residents, employees, housing advocates, developers, service agencies, and other organizations addressing housing and special needs. Key stakeholders, agencies, and organizations were contacted individually for input to ensure that the Housing Element accurately reflects a broad spectrum of the community and prioritizes needs appropriately. In addition, a dedicated website hosted by the City was used throughout the entirety of the project. The page was updated with public-facing materials on a rolling basis and included information on the project schedule, upcoming outreach opportunities, and drafts of deliverables available for public review and comment. Key documents were translated into Spanish and the City's built-in web translation tool can be used to translate all web content into Spanish, Chinese, and Filipino.

See *Appendix E, Public Engagement Input* for more information on the public participation process. Engagement was carried out in three phases, as described below.

B. PHASE 1 — INTRODUCE PROJECT

The first phase of the engagement process sought to introduce to the community what a Housing Element is and what it seeks to accomplish. Materials were also publicized to explain the Environmental Hazards Element Update and Environmental Justice (EJ) requirements triggered by the Housing Element Update. This phase sought to empower the community with the vocabulary and knowledge to provide meaningful input throughout the update process. Interviews were conducted with three community-based organizations (CBOs) who were consulted to identify the best methods to engage the populations they serve.

WHAT WE HEARD — PHASE 1 INTRODUCTION PROJECT

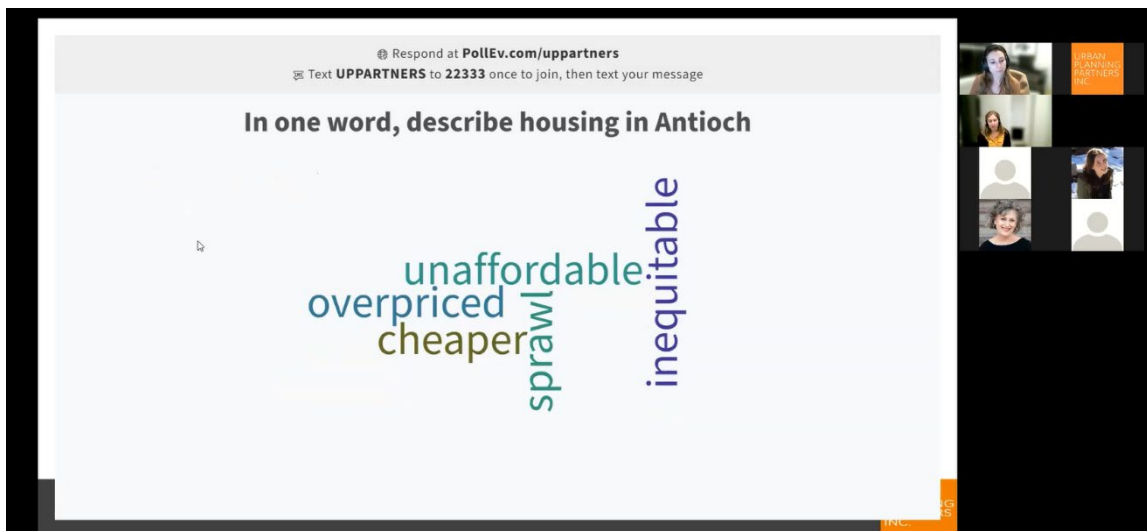
- Regional groups in East Contra Costa County identified Antioch as one of the highest need areas.
- Affordability and habitability/safety are consistently cited as the top concerns related to housing in Antioch, especially related to people with disabilities, low-income families with children, and Antioch’s unhoused population.

C. PHASE 2 — UNDERSTAND EXISTING CONDITIONS

In the second phase, the focus was on soliciting community and stakeholder input on housing constraints, resources, opportunities, and housing needs, including needs for special populations. The City conducted four interviews, two housing groups (one with housing and homelessness organizations and one with Spanish-speaking residents), and a community meeting to understand constraints and opportunities for residential development. By establishing a strong on-the-ground understanding of Antioch’s existing conditions, the City was able to pragmatically propose feasible solutions. This on-the-ground understanding was informed by talking to City staff, community leaders, CBOs, and residents.

WHAT WE HEARD — PHASE 2 UNDERSTAND EXISTING CONDITIONS

- There is a lack of affordable housing with adequate amenities, including access to transit, safety features, case management for fair housing on-site, and childcare.
- CBOs and residents see a need for more tenant protections, including discrimination and harassment protection, just cause policies, and rent control.
- There are barriers for low-income homeowners to access rehabilitation funding.
- Potential development is highly dependent on the quality of existing infrastructure and environmental constraints.



D. PHASE 3 — EXPLORE AND REFINE SOLUTIONS

The final phase of engagement was used to formulate realistic and community-supported solutions to address housing challenges in the community. Working sessions with City staff and stakeholders, two public meetings (one in English and one bilingual English/Spanish), and an online survey in English and Spanish were all part of this phase. The survey garnered 35 responses across both languages, as detailed in *Appendix E, Public Engagement Input*.

In addition, the Public Review draft was widely publicized for public comment, included via emails to project followers and stakeholders, and posted on the project website. The Public Review draft was available for the 30-day public comment period between May 12, 2022 and June 11, 2022, consistent with Assembly Bill (AB) 215 requirements.

**WHAT WE HEARD—PHASE 3
EXPLORE AND REFINE SOLUTIONS**

- Residents are concerned about being priced out of their homes.
- Residents are concerned about tenant harassment and unlawful housing discrimination.
- Residents are interested in city-assisted down payment programs to allow for more opportunities for homeownership.

E. AFFIRMATIVELY FURTHERING FAIR HOUSING (AFFH)

Changes in Housing Element Law since the last cycle require the careful consideration of populations who have historically been excluded from planning processes and deliberate and proactive actions to remove barriers to participation. Consistent with the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) guidance, the following best practices were utilized to include public participation from all economic segments of the community.

What's Changing in Our General Plan?



Antioch's General Plan is a long term vision that guides growth and reflects community priorities and values. It is divided by topics (called "elements") that include land use, circulation, housing, and environmental hazards. As community priorities change and in accordance with State law, the City must periodically update these elements.

This year, Antioch is updating the **Housing Element** and **Environmental Hazards Element** and will be incorporating new **Environmental Justice** policies into the General Plan.

HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE

The Housing Element is part of the City's General Plan and lays out a blueprint for how the City will meet its housing goals. At its core, a Housing Element is an opportunity for community members and policy makers to address local housing challenges and find solutions. It contains detailed information on local housing needs, existing resources and constraints, and an inventory of sites that are suitable for new housing.

Why is Antioch updating its Housing Element?

Under State law, each jurisdiction in California must update their Housing Element every eight years. The Housing Element must demonstrate how the jurisdiction will accommodate a certain number of dwelling units anticipated by the State (known as the Regional Housing Needs Allocation, or RHNA). The RHNA also stipulates how many units are needed at different levels of affordability to meet the community demand.

The updated Housing Element must be approved by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), but should ultimately reflect the vision and priorities of the community. If the Housing Element is not updated and certified, jurisdictions may be ineligible for certain grants; fined; subject to litigation; and/or lose the right to deny certain projects.

Topics in the Environmental Hazards Element

- Geology and Seismicity
- Flooding
- Fire
- Noise
- Hazardous Materials
- Disaster Response

ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS UPDATE

California communities are often exposed to natural and man-made hazards, which jurisdictions must identify and try to mitigate. The Environmental Hazards Element implements policies to minimize the risks these hazards might pose to community members' physical safety, property, and business.

Why is Antioch updating its Environmental Hazards Element?

Under recent State law, the Environmental Hazards Element (referred to in State law as a "safety element") must incorporate climate adaptation and resiliency strategies. Climate impacts include wildfire, flooding, and extreme heat, among others. As environmental trends change, the City must make sure that the Environmental Hazards Element contains accurate data, community input, and policies.

Key Features in a Housing Element

- Goals, policies, objectives, resources, and constraints that support housing across all income levels
- Analysis of special housing needs and existing affordable housing
- Inventory of sites suitable and available for new housing
- Strategies to affirmatively further fair housing

Antioch's RHNA is 3,016 units (59% of units below market rate)

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE POLICIES

The City of Antioch is incorporating new policies into the General Plan that will seek to advance the principles of **Environmental Justice (EJ)** and achieve the following goals:

- All community members receive the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards.
- There is equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.

The new policies will address environmental and health hazards that disproportionately burden certain areas and communities in the city (referred to as "disadvantaged communities"). Although the term "disadvantaged community" is not preferred by EJ communities, it is commonly used in State policy and will thus be used in this guide.

The EJ policies will also include engagement strategies to ensure that community members have meaningful and effective opportunities to participate in future policy and planning decisions, and prioritize the development of programs and improvements that address local needs.

Why is Antioch creating Environmental Justice policies?

Disadvantaged communities bear the brunt of environmental impacts and health hazards, often as a result of policy and planning decisions. Under State law, a jurisdiction must incorporate EJ policies into the General Plan when two or more elements are being revised, and if there are disadvantaged communities within that jurisdiction. Because the City of Antioch is updating both the Housing and Environmental Hazards Element, the City must comply with this requirement.

What does "Environmental Justice" mean?

"The fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies."

Gov. Code § 65040.12

Key Topics Addressed by Environmental Justice Policies

- Exposure to pollution
- Availability of public facilities
- Food access
- Safe and sanitary homes
- Physical activity
- Any unique or compounded health risks
- Opportunities for civic engagement
- Improvements and programs to address community needs

General Plan Updates Timeline



8. PARTICIPATION

Consultations with CBOs were held to determine the methods, locations, messaging, and hours most conducive to engaging historically excluded communities, including low-income households and those with disabilities. A summary of the methods is as follows:

- Public meetings scheduled outside of working hours.
- Closed captioning and on-call tech support provided at virtual public meetings.
- Robust and diverse meeting publicity implemented digitally and in person.
- Interviews, focus groups, and a community meeting conducted completely in Spanish to make participants feel more comfortable sharing their stories, ideas, and perceptions in their native language.
- Publication of a Housing Guide one pager (shown above) explaining terms to avoid jargon and make information more accessible.
- Partnership with First Five to conduct Spanish-language meeting with their members in a format comfortable and familiar to participants.
- Use of stipends and incentives to remove barriers to participation among lower-income households.

F. SUMMARY OF OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

This section summarizes key outreach activities. See *Appendix E, Public Engagement Input* for more information.

1. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The 2020-2025 Consolidated Plan for the Contra Costa County Consortium included a needs assessment that evaluated disproportionate housing needs. The plan was informed by feedback from local and regional stakeholders, such as residents and organizations involved in affordable housing, fair housing, homeless programs, and other community development activities. The process ensured outreach and opportunities for the involvement of affected persons including lower-income persons and families, persons living in lower-income areas, people of color, non-English speaking persons, and persons with disabilities. The Consortium also sought input from other public and private agencies that provide emergency housing for those who are homeless, assisted housing for special needs populations, transitional housing, health services, mental health services, social services, infrastructure needs, as well as those agencies who provide fair housing and tenant/landlord services and ensure compliance with Civil Rights laws and regulations.

2. STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS

See Table 8-1 for information on stakeholder interviews and focus groups conducted as part of the Housing Element update.

On February 19, 2022, InterEthnica and Urban Planning Partners led a focus group for Spanish speakers. The purpose of the meeting was to outline Housing Element and EJ Element updates and to gain feedback from participants regarding their experience in Antioch. Many of the participants spoke of the rising cost of housing and stated that access to safe affordable housing was one of the most important issues facing them and others in Antioch. Additionally, participants discussed the lack of youth services within the city. In total, seven community members participated in the focus group.

TABLE 8-1 STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS

Organization	Interview Date	Interview Topic(s)
Independent Living Resources	October 20, 2021	Housing needs, engagement best practices
Antioch First 5 Center	October 25, 2021	Housing needs, engagement best practices
ECHO Fair Housing	October 25, 2021	Fair housing, engagement best practices
AMCAL Multi-Housing Inc.	December 3, 2021	Developer perspective: housing constraints and opportunities, economic feasibility, city's processes, potential policies
CBO Focus Group including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ECHO Fair Housing ▪ Shelter Inc ▪ Contra Costa Senior Legal Services ▪ Bay Area Legal Aid (BALA) ▪ Habitat for Humanity East Bay/Silicon Valley ▪ Saint Vincent de Paul Most Holy Rosary Conference ▪ East Bay Housing Organizations (EBHO) 	December 13, 2021	Fair housing, housing needs, segregation, housing choice
CityVentures	December 22, 2021	Developer perspective: housing constraints and economic feasibility, potential policies
Spanish Speakers Focus Group	February 19, 2022	Housing needs, fair housing, and environmental justice
Contra Costa Health Services	April 5, 2022	Environmental justice and climate change
Antioch First 5	April 19, 2022	Environmental justice and engagement best practices
Contra Costa Health Services	April 25, 2022	Environmental justice and community health

Source: Urban Planning Partners and InterEthnica, 2021-2022.

3. CITY-WIDE COMMUNITY MEETINGS

The City of Antioch, along with the consultant team, Urban Planning Partners, held three community meetings throughout the Housing Element update process. The first Community Engagement Meeting was on February 17, 2022. The purpose of the meeting was to outline the Housing Element updates, discuss the incorporation of EJ policies, and to gain feedback from the community on their vision for the city. The meeting was held virtually and utilized breakout rooms and a live poll to gather community feedback. The brief presentation about the contents and goals of the Housing Element update and EJ policies, including the findings to date about related trends and needs and a draft of the site inventory, was followed by a breakout room discussion to receive feedback. Following the discussion, groups reconvened to share what each group discussed and receive any additional ideas. There were 19 community members who participated virtually in addition to 12 representatives of housing-related nonprofit organizations and City staff observers.

The second community meeting was held on April 13, 2022. The purpose of the workshop was to gain feedback from the community on goals identified within the Housing Element update. The meeting was held virtually and utilized live polls and discussion to gather community feedback. The presentation contained information about the contents and goals of the Housing Element update, alongside an update on EJ findings. The presentation was followed by a discussion. During the discussion, community members shared their personal stories regarding housing in Antioch and provided feedback regarding the five goals

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of the Housing Element update. Ten community members participated virtually in addition to six representatives of housing related nonprofits and City staff observers.

On May 4, 2022, a bilingual English-Spanish virtual community meeting was held in partnership with First Five. First Five is a trusted community organization in the Latinx community and has been active in identifying housing issues for its members and advocating for solutions. At its peak, 21 people attended the meeting. This workshop was designed to ensure voices of the Latinx community were heard and the content and format of the April meeting was refined in collaboration with First Five with this in mind. Whiteboard exercises were used at the beginning and end of the meeting to collect feedback on housing needs in Antioch and to get feedback on draft goals and programs. After a brief presentation, robust discussion followed primarily centered on fair housing concerns and potential solution.

4. POLICY SURVEY

Following the community meeting, a survey was publicized by the City and distributed to community members and organizations, with the intent to reach more members of the community than were represented during the meeting. The questionnaire included questions on which housing policies and strategies residents were most interested in, including strategies for promoting new housing development, increasing housing affordability, and addressing fair housing concerns. Participants were asked to rate potential strategies by their level of support for each one.

SURVEY RESULTS: KEY FINDINGS

- Respondents are interested in a variety of housing types, especially housing for seniors, interim/transitional housing for people looking to transition from homelessness and reserving multi-family units for low-income residents.
- Antioch needs more of both rental and ownership units.
- Respondents hope for more programs that help people experiencing homelessness and financial assistance programs for people who cannot afford housing.
- There is a need for more affordable housing near transit and jobs and better infrastructure in underserved neighborhoods.
- Respondents are concerned about tenant harassment and unlawful housing discrimination.

5. STUDY SESSIONS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

Study sessions occurred with the Planning Commission and City Council on Wednesday, October 6, 2021, and Tuesday, October 26, 2021, respectively, to introduce the project and the community engagement strategy. Commissioners were particularly interested in Antioch's EJ neighborhoods and understanding the metrics behind that determination. Councilmembers were supportive of efforts to meet people where they are to ensure engagement efforts reach Antioch's diverse community.

A Planning Commission study session focused on EJ was held on November 17, 2021. The Planning Commission was interested in the effect that the EJ designation would have on the businesses within the identified areas. Commissioners wanted to ensure that proper engagement was being conducted to reach seniors and immigrant communities.

PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT HOUSING ELEMENT

The Public Review Draft Housing Element was available for public review and comment for 30 days between May 16, 2022, and June 15, 2022. Consistent with AB 215, the availability of the Draft Housing Element was publicized online and all project followers were emailed. The Planning Commission received a presentation on the Public Review Draft Housing Element on May 18, 2022. City Council received a presentation on and discussed the Public Review Draft Housing Element at Study Sessions held on June 14, 2022, and June 28, 2022.

PLANNING COMMISSION STUDY SESSIONS

At the Planning Commission Study Session for the Public Review Draft Housing Element held on May 18, 2022, comments from the public, which included several members of First 5 Contra Costa's East County Regional Group, focused on the need for tenant protections inclusive but not limited to rent control measures and just cause and anti-harassment ordinances. These protections, according to the public, are necessary to prevent the displacement of renters in Antioch who are experiencing substantial rent increases, harassment from landlords, and cost burden. Following public comment, Planning Commissioners inquired on what protections the City currently has in place for renters, and whether the various protections mentioned during public comment could be utilized to satisfy HCD AFFH requirements of the Housing Element. Several Commissioners supported the additional exploration and analysis of tenant protections by staff. Other Commissioners expressed concern that such tenant protections were not long-term solutions to housing supply and affordability in the community but supported additional analysis and exploration into the protections. Planning Commission approved the Public Review Draft Housing Element to be reviewed by City Council but did request an additional Study Session to be scheduled with Planning Commissioners for June 1, 2022.

A second Planning Commission Study Session for the Public Review Draft Housing Element was held on June 1, 2022, at the request of Planning Commissioners. No members of the public signed up to speak at this Study Session. At this Study Session Commissioners requested clarification on a number of miscellaneous items throughout the Public Review Draft, including the distribution of affordable housing sites throughout the city, in relation to EJ areas identified within the Element, and what housing measures the City presently has in place. Commissioners expressed a desire to explore more tenant and community right to own provisions, rent-deposit alternatives, down-payment assistance programs and universal income programs – especially for households in EJ areas. No action was taken by Commissioners at this Study Session.

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSIONS

At the City Council Study Session for the Public Review Draft Housing Element held on June 14, 2022, many residents and members of community benefit organizations (CBOs), including but not limited to First 5 Contra Costa's East County Regional Group, Monument Impact, and ACCE offered public comment on the Public Review Housing Element Draft. Speakers from the public requested that the Public Review Draft Housing Element, specifically proposed *Program 5.1.9. Tenant Protections*, be revised to include more robust and proactive tenant protection measures. Speakers emphasized the prevalence of steep rental increases and instances of extreme cost-burden by households throughout the city, as well as instances of landlord harassment including unjustified threats of eviction, and general neglect of maintenance requests and property upkeep. Speakers requested additional protections, beyond, and more inclusive than, those offered by the State's AB 1482 including the exploration and adoption of rent control measures, and anti-harassment and just cause ordinances. Additionally, public comment was received which requested that the Public Review Draft Housing Element, specifically proposed *Policy 2.1.10, Inclusionary Housing*, be revised to include more comprehensive language regarding the City of Antioch's commitment to initiate a feasibility study for an inclusionary housing ordinance.

Following Public Comment, the Mayor and City Council members discussed providing a recommendation to staff to explore the tenant protection measures mentioned by the Public for inclusion within the Draft Housing Element. As part of discussion many Council Members expressed disapproval for the city's rapidly rising rents, and the cost burdening and displacement of Antioch residents, but did state they would need to see ordinance language prior to supporting any tenant protection measures. Staff advised Council Members that staff can analyze tenant protection measures mentioned by the public, and revise policy language within the Housing Element to address public comments. Staff further advised that while

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staff can provide revised policy language within the Draft Housing Element regarding tenant protections, the City cannot adopt these protections through the Housing Element update process. Such tenant protections would have to be developed, informed through public input, and subsequently heard and adopted by City Council, separate from the Housing Element process. The meeting adjourned with City Council authorizing staff to revise policy language within the Draft Housing Element related to tenant protections and inclusionary housing, for further discussion at a City Council Study Session to be held on June 28, 2022.

Based on the public comments heard at the June 14, 2022, Study Session, staff revised the Draft Housing Element to include additional language within proposed policies regarding Tenant Protections and Inclusionary Housing. These revised policies are contained within *Chapter 7, Housing Goals, Policies, and Programs* and were presented at the June 28, 2022, City Council Study Session.

At the City Council Study Session on June 28, 2022, several residents and members of community benefit organizations (CBOs), including but not limited to First 5 Contra Costa's East County Regional Group, ACCE and Monument Impact, offered public comment on the Public Review Housing Element Draft. Public comments echoed what was heard at the June 14, 2022, Session with many members of the public expressing concern regarding skyrocketing rents, threats of eviction from landlords, and neglect of properties by landlords at various rental properties across the city. While many members of the public supported the revised policy language within the Draft Housing Element regarding tenant protections, they also expressed a desire and need for an accelerated timeline for adoption of these tenant protections. Following public comment, the mayor addressed the Meeting Chambers and advised that the public's sentiments were heard and understood, and that the City was looking into how to expedite the drafting, review and adoption of tenant protection measures, sooner than the timelines mentioned in the Draft Housing Element. The mayor reiterated that it is the City's intent to explore these tenant protection measures, and that future policy language proposed would be brought before the City Council for consideration. The Study Session adjourned with a vote to transmit the Public Draft Housing Element to HCD for review.

Note: In September 2022, the City of Antioch adopted a Rent Stabilization Ordinance, as discussed within *Program 5.1.8. Tenant Protections*. This Ordinance has been codified within Section 11-1 of the City's Municipal Code.

It is anticipated that the Final Housing Element will be heard for adoption by the Planning Commission and City Council at public hearings in January 2023.