



STAFF REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE: Regular Meeting of November 17, 2021

SUBMITTED BY: Zoe Merideth, Senior Planner 

APPROVED BY: Forrest Ebbs, Community Development Director 

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation Scoping Meeting for the City of Antioch
6th Cycle Housing Element Update

RECOMMENDED ACTION

It is recommended that the Planning Commission take the following action:

1. Receive public comments on the Notice of Preparation (NOP) of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the City of Antioch 6th Cycle Housing Element Update.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City of Antioch will be the Lead Agency to prepare an EIR for the City of Antioch 6th Cycle Housing Element Update (herein after referred to as the “proposed project”) in compliance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Additionally, this Housing Element update triggers the update of the Environmental Hazards element and Environmental Justice (EJ) policies. The proposed project will be a citywide project.

California state law requires the City to update the chapter or “element” of its General Plan regarding housing by January 31, 2023, while making any changes to other elements of the General Plan needed to maintain internal consistency, and undertaking related changes to the City’s zoning ordinance. The Housing Element was last updated in 2015 and covers the “5th Cycle” housing element planning period from 2015 through 2023. Because this period is drawing to a close, State law [Government Code Section 65588] requires the City to update its Housing Element and provides a deadline of January 31, 2023. In accordance with State law, the planning period, also known as the “6th Cycle”, for the updated Housing Element will extend from January 31, 2023 to January 31, 2031.

Housing Element

The Key Components of the housing element are:

- **Housing Needs Assessment:** Examine demographic, employment, and housing trends and conditions and identify existing and projected housing needs of the community, with attention paid to special housing needs (e.g., large families, persons with disabilities).
- **Evaluation of Past Performance:** Review the prior Housing Element to measure progress in implementing policies and programs.
- **Housing Sites Inventory:** Identify locations of available sites for housing development or redevelopment to ensure there is enough land zoned for housing to meet the future need at all income levels.
- **Community Engagement:** Implement a robust community engagement program, reaching out to all economic segments of the community plus traditionally underrepresented groups.
- **Constraints Analysis:** Analyze and recommend remedies for existing and potential governmental and nongovernmental barriers to housing development.
- **Policies and Programs:** Establish policies and programs to be carried out during the 2023-2031 planning period to fulfill the identified housing needs.

Through the Housing Element update process, the City is required to demonstrate that it has the regulatory and land use policies to accommodate its assigned Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). The Housing Element is required to demonstrate potential sites where housing can be accommodated to meet all the income levels of a jurisdiction's RHNA. The draft RHNA for the City are shown in the table below.

INCOME LEVEL	AMOUNT
Very-Low-Income (0-50 percent of AMI) *	792
Low-income (50-80 percent of AMI)	456
Moderate-income (80-120 percent of AMI)	493
Above moderate-income (120 percent or more of AMI)	1,275
TOTAL	3,016

*Area Median Income

Environmental Hazards

The goal of the Environmental Hazards Element (previously known as the Safety Element) is to reduce the negative impacts caused by natural phenomena such as fires, floods, droughts, earthquakes, and landslides. This goal is achieved by identifying policies and programs that reduce the risks faced by residents. Since 2012, there have been several updates to Environmental Hazards Element requirements to include climate change vulnerability and adaptation and greater attention to wildfire and evacuation routes. Jurisdictions are required to complete a vulnerability assessment, develop adaptation and resilience goals, policies, and objectives, and develop a set of feasible implementation measures addressing climate change adaptation and resiliency (SB 379, 2015). Jurisdictions must review and update these portions of the Environmental Hazards Element upon each revision of the housing element or local hazard mitigation plan (LHMP), but not less than once every eight years. (SB 1035, 2018).

Environmental Justice

In 2016, SB 1000 passed which required cities and counties that have disadvantaged communities to incorporate EJ policies into their General Plan. The City meets both criteria for an EJ update as it is home to disadvantaged communities and is currently adopting or revising two or more elements concurrently. Local jurisdictions may choose to create a stand alone EJ element or integrate policies within the General Plan. The City plans to take the latter approach and integrate the policies into the General Plan. The term “disadvantaged communities” is defined as a low-income area that is disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation. Additionally, within this context “low-income area” is defined as an area with household incomes at or below 80 percent of the statewide median income or with household incomes at or below the threshold designated as low income by HCD’s list of state income limits adopted pursuant to Section 50093 of the Health and Safety Code. (Gov. Code, § 65302, subd. (h)(4)(C)). The requirements for the EJ policies are:

- Gov. Code § 65302(h)(1): Identify disadvantaged communities within the area covered by the General Plan.
- Gov. Code § 65302(h)(1)(A): Identify objectives and policies to reduce exposure to pollution including improving air quality in disadvantaged communities.
- Gov. Code § 65302 (h)(1)(A): Identify objectives and policies to promote public facilities in disadvantaged communities.
- Gov. Code § 65302(h)(1)(A): Identify objectives and policies to promote food access in disadvantaged communities.
- Gov. Code § 65302(h)(1)(A): Identify objectives and policies to promote safe and sanitary homes in disadvantaged communities.

- Gov. Code § 65302(h)(1)(A): Identify objectives and policies to promote physical activity in disadvantaged communities.
- Gov. Code § 65302(h)(1)(A): Identify objectives and policies to reduce any unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities not otherwise addressed above.
- Gov. Code § 65302(h)(1)(B): Identify objectives and policies to promote civic engagement in the public decision-making process in disadvantaged communities.
- Gov. Code § 65302(h)(1)(C): Identify objectives and policies that prioritize improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities.

DISCUSSION

The City of Antioch is the Lead Agency for the preparation of the EIR for the proposed project. CEQA requires the preparation of a NOP for the purpose of soliciting comments on the scope of the EIR. CEQA requires the NOP be distributed for a 30-day public review period, which began on November 8, 2021, and ends on December 8, 2021. Written comments may be submitted to the City by 5:00 on December 8, 2021, and may be sent to the attention of Zoe Merideth, Senior Planner, at P.O. Box 5007, Antioch, CA, 94531-5007 or zmerideth@antiochca.gov.

In addition, CEQA requires a public scoping meeting to record verbal comments on the scope of the EIR. The purpose of the scoping meeting is not to debate or discuss the merits of the project, but to receive input on the scope of the EIR. Discussion by the Planning Commission or an action from the Planning Commission is not needed at this time.

ATTACHMENT

A. NOP for the 6th Cycle Housing Element Update

ATTACHMENT A

NOP for the 6th Cycle Housing Element Update



Notice of Preparation

The City of Antioch will be the Lead Agency to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the City of Antioch 6th Cycle Housing Element Update (herein after referred to as the “proposed project”) in compliance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Additionally, this Housing Element update triggers the update of the Environmental Hazards element and Environmental Justice (EJ) policies. Pursuant to CEQA, the Lead Agency (City of Antioch) must issue a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to inform trustee and local agencies, as well as the public, that an EIR is being prepared, and to seek input on the scope and content of the EIR. Any agencies with jurisdiction over the proposed action will need to use the EIR prepared by the City when considering their own approval action and should comment on information germane to the agency’s statutory responsibilities. The EIR will evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project and recommend mitigation measures for any significant impact, as required. No Initial Study has been prepared. Please send comments on the scope of the EIR to the address shown at the end of this Notice. Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date, but not later than 30 days after the commencement of the comment period noted above.

Project Location

The City of Antioch is located in the East Bay region of the San Francisco Bay Area within Contra Costa County, California along the San Joaquin-Sacramento River Delta (38°00’18”N 121°48’21”W). The City was incorporated in 1872 and encompasses approximately 30 square miles with a population of about 111,000. The City Boundaries and regional location of Antioch are shown in **Figure 1-1** and **Figure 1-2**. The city limits are the geographic extent for the environmental analysis included in the EIR for the proposed project.

The City primarily has a residential land use that includes approximately 36,417 residential dwelling units with its Downtown Area and City Hall located near the northern portion of the city near the river. The City has its own Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) station. This BART station puts Antioch residents a 1-hour ride from San Francisco and 45-minute ride from Oakland. In addition to the BART station, the City also maintains parks within the City limits and is home to a portion of Contra Loma Regional Park which is maintained by the East Bay Regional Park District.

California State 4 (SR-4) passes through the city diagonally in an east-west direction. SR-4 is a major regional freeway that connects Antioch to the rest of the San Francisco Bay Area on the west and connects the City to the Sierra foothills on the east. Additionally, the California State 160 (SR-160) begins in the Northeastern portion of Antioch and connects the city to the Sacramento area.



Housing Element Background

California state law requires the City to update the chapter or “element” of its General Plan regarding housing by January 31, 2023, while making any changes to other elements of the General Plan needed to maintain internal consistency, and undertaking related changes to the City’s zoning ordinance. The Housing Element was last updated in 2015 and covers the “5th Cycle” housing element planning period from 2015 through 2023. Because this period is drawing to a close, State law [Government Code Section 65588] requires the City to update its Housing Element and provides a deadline of January 31, 2023. In accordance with State law, the planning period, also known as the “6th Cycle”, for the updated Housing Element will extend from January 31, 2023 to January 31, 2031.

Key Components of Housing Element

Through the Housing Element update process, the City is required to demonstrate that it has the regulatory and land use policies to accommodate its assigned Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). Local governments are not required to build the housing. Rather, the actual development of housing is anticipated to be constructed by developers. However, the Housing Element is required to demonstrate potential sites where housing can be accommodated to meet all the income levels of a jurisdiction’s RHNA. Identification of potential sites and related site housing capacity does not guarantee that construction will occur on that site. If there are insufficient sites and capacity to meet the RHNA allocation, the Housing Element is required to identify a rezoning program to accommodate the required capacity. If the City does not identify capacity for its RHNA allocation, the City could be deemed out of compliance and risk losing important sources of funding currently provided by the State as well as facing legal challenges.

The Key Components of the housing element are:

1. **Housing Needs Assessment:** Examine demographic, employment, and housing trends and conditions and identify existing and projected housing needs of the community, with attention paid to special housing needs (e.g., large families, persons with disabilities).
2. **Evaluation of Past Performance:** Review the prior Housing Element to measure progress in implementing policies and programs.
3. **Housing Sites Inventory:** Identify locations of available sites for housing development or redevelopment to ensure there is enough land zoned for housing to meet the future need at all income levels.
4. **Community Engagement:** Implement a robust community engagement program, reaching out to all economic segments of the community plus traditionally underrepresented groups.
5. **Constraints Analysis:** Analyze and recommend remedies for existing and potential governmental and nongovernmental barriers to housing development.
6. **Policies and Programs:** Establish policies and programs to be carried out during the 2023-2031 planning period to fulfill the identified housing needs.

Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)

In addition to including goals, policies, and implementation strategies regarding housing, housing elements must include a list of housing sites that can accommodate the amount of housing units assigned to the City by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). This assignment is referred to as a RHNA.

Along with the amount of RHNA units assigned to the City, the City needs to provide a buffer (extra housing sites) to ensure there is capacity to ensure an ongoing supply of sites for housing during the eight-year-cycle of the Housing Element. Without the buffer, the City could be obliged to identify new sites and amend the Housing Element prior to the end of the cycle if an identified site were developed with a non-housing project or developed at a density less than that anticipated in the Housing Element.

The need for a substantial buffer is even more important during this cycle because of new rules in the Housing Accountability Act's "no net loss" provisions. SB 166 (2017) requires that the land inventory and site identification programs in the Housing Element always include sufficient sites to accommodate the unmet RHNA. This means that if a site identified in the Element as having the potential for housing development to accommodate the lower-income portion of the RHNA is actually developed for a higher income level, the locality must either: 1) identify and rezone, if necessary, an adequate substitute site; or 2) demonstrate that the land inventory already contains an adequate substitute site. An adequate buffer will be critical to ensuring that the City remains compliant with the requirements.

Table 1 shows the Draft RHNA for the City of Antioch across the four income categories.

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Key Components of Environmental Justice Policies

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- Gov. Code § 65302(h)(1)(C): Identify objectives and policies that prioritize improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities.

One of the first steps within the EJ update process will be to review existing policies and programs pertinent to EJ in the City. This is done through a policy review process where the outcomes of those policies and programs are measured to determine if they were effective in achieving their goal. Additionally, community partners will be engaged to help identify existing gaps within the existing policy framework.

Potential Environmental Effects of Updates

The environmental analyses and technical sections presented in the Draft EIR will describe the existing conditions in the City. Relevant federal, State, and local laws and regulations, including the current City of Antioch General Plan goals and policies, will be summarized.

The methods of analysis and any assumptions that are important to understand the conclusions of the analysis will be described, along with the standards of significance used to determine impacts of the project. The standards for determining impact significance will be based on existing State and federal rules, regulations, and laws, City ordinances and policies, and past practices. The standards will be used to determine whether an impact is significant and for the effectiveness of recommended mitigation. Feasible mitigation measures will be identified for each significant impact. The description of mitigation measures will identify the specific actions to be taken, the timing of the action, and the parties responsible for implementation of the measure.

At this time, it is anticipated that the following issues/technical sections will be addressed in the EIR:

- Aesthetics/Light and Glare
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology/Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise and Vibration
- Population and Housing
- Public Services and Recreation
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Wildfire

Public Scoping Meeting

The City of Antioch is hosting a public scoping meeting during the NOP public comment period on November 17th, 2021, during a regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting beginning 6:30pm via teleconference (Zoom webinar). Information to participate in the meeting is listed below:

Meeting Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89868075046>

Or One tap mobile:

US: +14086380968,,89868075046# or +16699006833,,89868075046#

Or Telephone: Dial (for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 408 638 0968 or +1 669 900 6833 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799 or
+1 646 876 9923 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799

Webinar ID: 898 6807 5046

International numbers available: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89868075046>

As an alternative, the City will also stream video and audio of the public scoping meeting at the following webpage; however, the link below does not provide the ability to comment during the meeting: antiochca.gov/pcmeetings

Submitting Comments

This Notice of Preparation is scheduled to be released on November 8th, 2021. Comments regarding the scope of the EIR analysis are invited from all interested parties to ensure the full range of project issues of interest are addressed. Written comments (emails are acceptable) concerning the EIR for the proposed project should be directed to Zoe Merideth, Senior Planner (contact information below) no later than 5 pm on December 8, 2021. All comments will be

City of Antioch Housing Element Update

considered during preparation of the Draft EIR, which will be circulated for public review, and comments received on the Draft EIR will also be considered and responded to prior to preparation of a Final EIR and consideration and approval of the housing element update.

If you have any questions regarding the proposed Housing Element Update or the EIR process, please contact Zoe Merideth at the contact information listed below.

Zoe Merideth
Senior Planner
City of Antioch
P.O. Box 5007
Antioch, CA 94531-5007
Main: 925-779-6159/ Direct: 925-779-6122
zmerideth@antiochca.gov

Attachments:

Figure 1-1, Regional Location

Figure 1-2, Project Vicinity

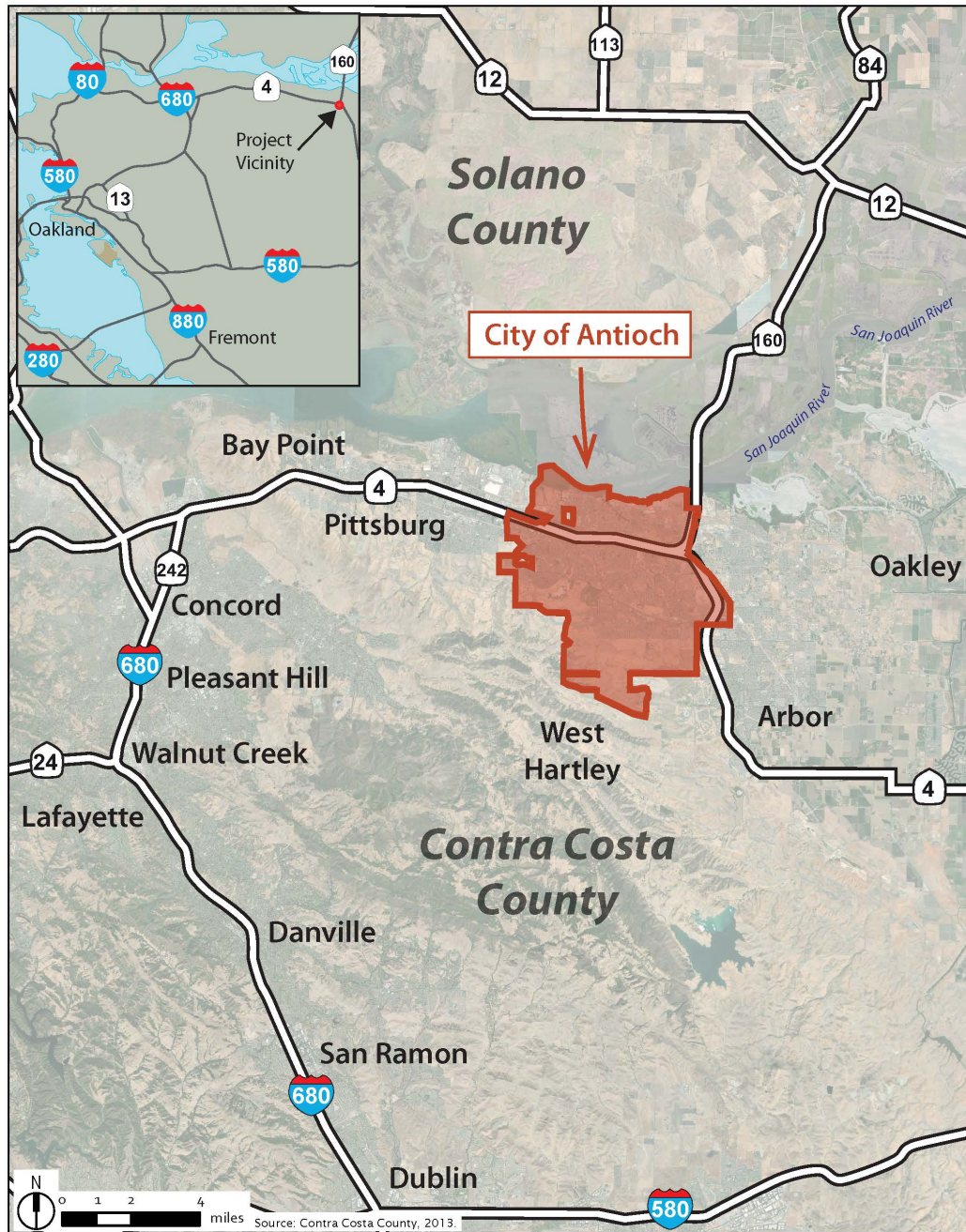


Figure 1-1
Regional Location
Antioch 6th Cycle Housing Element Update

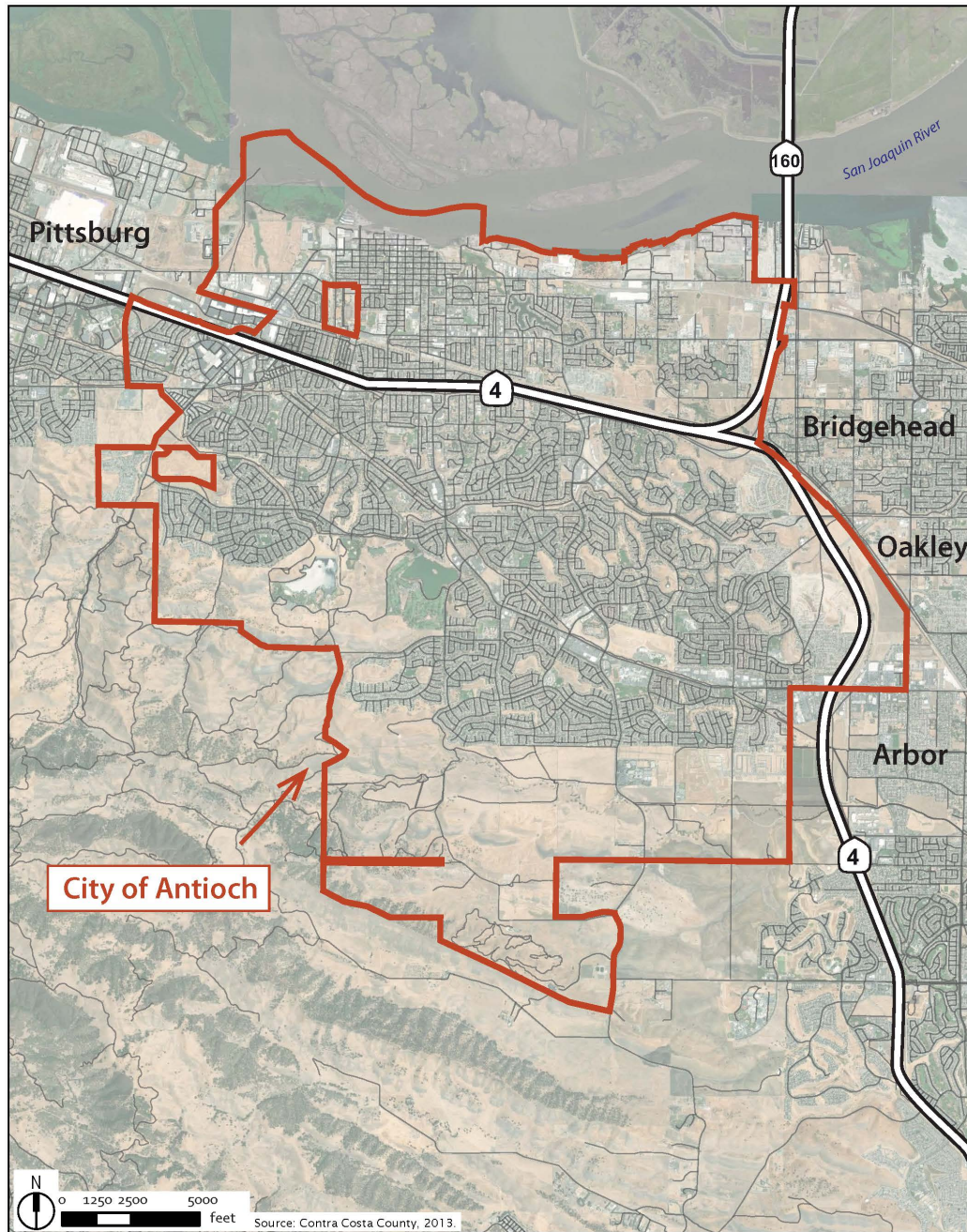


Figure 1-2
Project Vicinity
Antioch 6th Cycle Housing Element Update