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E1 Public Participation

This section details the efforts made in City of Porterville to inform the public of the Housing Element update and engage the community in the development of the Housing Element. There was also community engagement conducted at a regional level; these efforts are described in Chapter 1, *Regional Introduction and Community Engagement*.

E1.1 Community Engagement

Each jurisdiction deployed a diverse range of public outreach methods to solicit input from stakeholders and community members including interviews, surveys, a project-specific website, community events, and public meetings. The City of Porterville collaborated with the other participating jurisdictions to compile a list of local stakeholders and organizations that provide affordable housing, market rate housing, homeless and other non-profit services, economic development services, and other community services in Porterville. These entities were included in all notifications associated with the Housing Element update, including the project website, community events, housing survey, and release of the public draft Housing Element. Detailed information on the public engagement program and copies of community engagement materials are provided in Chapter 1, *Regional Introduction and Community Engagement.*

E1.1.1 Public Noticing

In addition to the outreach conducted for the project described in Chapter 1, *Regional Introduction and Community Engagement,* Porterville utilized the following notification methods during the Housing Element update process to engage a diverse array of community members:

- Posts to the City's Facebook and Instagram accounts and the City's website announcing the housing needs survey.
- Hard copies of the survey were placed in City Hall and the library.
- A press release notifying the community about the Housing Element.
- Emails to community organizations to request assistance with sharing the survey.

E1.1.2 City Council Presentation

On March 7, 2023, City staff presented at a City Council meeting that was open to the public. City staff presented an introduction to the Housing Element, the RHNA, state legislation, and the project timeline. No public comments were made at the meeting regarding the Housing Element.

E1.1.3 Community Workshops

Porterville held an in-person workshop on May 23, 2023, to help inform the Housing Element and to introduce new Housing Element goals and requirements to the community. Information on the workshop content is available in Chapter 1, *Regional Introduction and Community Engagement.*

Flyers advertising the workshop were posted on the City's website. Two participants attended the workshop. Participants noted the following issues:

- Housing is needed at all income levels.

- Housing for low-income households is needed countywide.
- It is difficult to find Section 8 housing, even with a voucher.
- Transportation is challenging. There are not a lot of available units near public transit.
- It is important to engage people in city planning and decision making.
- More low-income housing is needed in the city, including for populations with disabilities.

E1.1.4 Stakeholder Interviews

A series of virtual stakeholder interviews were hosted on March 21, March 23, and April 4, 2023, via Zoom. During the stakeholder interviews, there was no discussion of housing issues specific to Porterville. However, many of the issues discussed at a regional level apply to Porterville. Information on the interviews is available in Chapter 1, *Regional Introduction and Community Engagement.*

E1.1.5 Public Comment Survey

The City of Porterville collaborated with TCAG and the other participating jurisdictions on the release of an online survey about housing needs to help inform the Housing Element. Information on the survey and input on a regional level is available in Chapter 1, *Regional Introduction and Community Engagement.*

This section summarizes information collected from survey respondents who noted that they reside in Porterville:

- Respondents selected "quality and size of housing," "affordability," and "close to work and/or school" as most important when looking for housing.
- Overall, respondents selected "cost of quality housing" as the largest barrier to affording desirable housing. Respondents also identified the low supply of housing and lack of rent-restricted housing as barriers to affording housing.
- The most selected urgent housing issues are affordability of desired housing, availability of desired housing, and homelessness.
- The housing assistance programs most beneficial to Porterville residents are rental assistance or housing choice vouchers (HCVs), housing assistance for residents with special needs, and housing rehabilitation assistance. Respondents also cited homebuyer counseling services as beneficial programs to assist with housing needs.
- "Housing with three or more bedrooms" was ranked as most needed followed by "housing with one or two bedrooms."
- Approximately one-third of respondents were interested in developing accessory dwelling units (ADUs) on their existing or future property. No respondents already had an ADU on their property.
- Respondents from all jurisdictions identified a need for supportive housing programs for individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Respondents across jurisdictions expressed the need for median-income housing, "higher end" housing, and non-low-income housing to keep families in the region.

E1.1.6 Response to Community Input

During community outreach, community members identified the following overarching themes regarding housing in the region. Each one is discussed with how it is addressed in the Housing Element.

Need more housing options for both renters and buyers at all income levels.

How addressed: The City will encourage housing development and diversification of the City's housing stock to create additional housing for households of all income levels.

- Housing Plan Program 5 directs the City to encourage the production of ADUs as an affordable housing option by spreading awareness of available ADU resources by updating the City's website and conducting educational campaigns. In addition, the City will prepare a report to identify strategies and implement a pilot program to advocate for ADUs as an affordable housing option for lower- and moderate-income households.
- Housing Plan Program 6 directs the City to amend the Zoning Code to facilitate the development of a variety of housing types. The City will review and revise development standards, including those related to allowed land uses in various zones, parking, and building height. The City will also revise the Zoning Code to allow single-room occupancy housing, streamline the permitting process, and ensure ministerial permitting processes for multifamily and affordable housing development. In addition, the Zoning Code will be amended to comply with state density bonus law and reasonable accommodation requirements and to comply with state law and remove barriers for the development of transitional and supportive housing, emergency shelters and low-barrier navigation centers, employee housing, and residential care facilities.
- Housing Plan Program 7 directs the City to utilize a variety of development tools to expand affordable housing options for households of all income levels, such as density bonuses, development fee reductions and streamlining the application process. The City will contact local non-profit and private developers to facilitate the production of this housing as well as pursue funding opportunities available at the local, regional, state and federal levels. The City will also provide opportunities for public, private and non-profit groups to develop affordable housing by constructing off-site improvements and physical infrastructure as Capital Improvement Projects.

Need for financial assistance for low-income renters and homeowner households.

How addressed: The City will coordinate with local service providers and agencies that operate assistance programs for low-income households to spread awareness of available financial resources.

- Housing Plan Program 10 directs the City to facilitate the development of housing for low-income households in coordination with the Housing Authority of Tulare County (HATC), service providers, and affordable housing developers. The City will spread awareness of the HATC's HCV program and other available assistance programs through the City's website, social media pages, and in-person community events.
- Housing Plan Program 11 directs the City to assist low-income first-time homebuyers with gap financing, down payment, and closing costs as funds are available. The City will also provide homebuyer education classes to low-income families as grant funds are available.
- Housing Plan Program 14 directs the City to increase awareness about existing low-income homebuyer assistance programs by distributing flyers, attending local events, facilitating social media campaigns, and hosting educational workshops.

Need for housing for people with special needs.

How addressed: The City will coordinate with local service providers and agencies that operate assistance programs for low-income households to spread awareness of available financial resources.

- Housing Plan Program 6 directs the City to amend the Zoning Code to allow single-room occupancy housing, to comply with state density bonus law and reasonable accommodation requirements, and to comply with state law and remove barriers for the development of transitional and supportive housing, emergency shelters and low-barrier navigation centers, employee housing, and residential care facilities.
- Housing Plan Program 10 directs the City to work with agencies to provide resources to special needs populations and spread awareness of the HATC's HCV program and other available assistance programs through the City's website, social media pages, and in-person community events. Housing Plan Program 13 directs the City to consider transit services to people with disabilities by evaluating the need to expand services such as service hours of Porterville Transit's ADA Paratransit service.

Need for housing close to transportation, jobs, and services.

How addressed: The City will provide infrastructure to create a safe and accessible environment, attract businesses and investments, contribute to economic growth and ensure equal access to essential services. The Site Inventory has identified several opportunity sites for housing less than one mile from the Porterville Transit Center, along Main Street and Henderson Avenue in Northeast Porterville and in Central Porterville, with access to public transit and commercial services.

- Housing Plan Program 6 directs the City to support adequate housing development on sites to meet the RHNA.

E1.1.7 Public Review of the Draft Housing Element

The draft Housing Element was available for public review for 31 days from June 6 to July 7, 2024. The draft Housing Element was posted on the project website (https://tulareregionalhousingelement.rinconconsultants.com/). The City posted the draft Housing Element on the City's Planning webpage and publicized the availability of the draft through the City's social media platforms. Physical copies of the draft Housing Element were made available at City Hall and the public library. The City also posted a digital display at City Hall to publicize the draft Housing Element. No public comments were received on the draft Housing Element.

E1.1.8 Revised Draft Housing Element

The draft Housing Element was submitted to HCD on July 29, 2024. The draft Housing Element was revised per HCD's comment letter received October 9, 2024.

To inform those revisions, the City continued to conduct public outreach. The City provided information about the Housing Element and solicited feedback at the following events:

- August 2, 2024: The Porterville Unified School District Resource Fair (over 1,000 attendees)
- October 24, 2024: The Central California Family Crisis Center Candlelight Vigil (over 20 attendees)
- November 1, 2024: Porterville College Veterans Resource Fair (over 30 attendees)
- November 20, 2024: Monache Career Fair (over 300 attendees)
- December 6, 2024: Porterville Chamber of Commerce First Friday Coffee (over 100 attendees)

The City also published information on the Housing Element in the City of Porterville December newsletter (864 contacts) and the Kings Tulare Homeless Alliance newsletter (645 contacts).

In December 2024, the City contacted organizations that serve lower-income and special needs groups in the city to find out more information about the housing needs of the populations they serve. The City reached out by email to the following organizations:

- Habitat for Humanity
- Central California Family Crisis Center
- Kings/Tulare Homeless Alliance
- PNC Bank
- Kings View
- Tulare County Community Care Coalition
- Tulare County Parenting Network
- Sequoia Village
- St. James Place
- Villa Siena Apartments
- Date Ave Duplex
- Community Services Employment Training (CSET)
- Tulare County Housing Authority
- WinnResidential

The City received input from WinnResidential and the Central California Family Crisis Center, summarized below:

- There is a need for more affordable housing, more available housing options, and one- and two-bedroom units in Porterville.
- Homelessness and crime are concerns.
- The City could help people meet their housing needs by attracting jobs and providing resources, especially to help lower-income residents, seniors, and single-person households.
- Housing-related barriers include employment opportunities, available and affordable housing, and prior rental and credit history.
- The western side of Porterville has limited available safe and affordable housing.
- Existing residential units have sufficient access to schools, parks, and transportation.
- Lack of higher-paying employment opportunities impacts the ability of residents to afford housing.

Additionally, the City organized a December 10, 2024 discussion with local and regional housing developers as described in Chapter 1, *Regional Introduction and Public Participation*. While the meeting occured at the City's regular quarterly meeting with local developers and building industry representatives, at the December meeting the City facilitated a discussion about conditions in all Tulare County cities. The City contacted approximately 30 housing developers and organizations, and the following attended:

- The Building Industry Association of Tulare/Kings Counties
- Ennis Builders & Realtors, Inc.
- Phil O'Sullivan

Meeting attendees provided the following input:

- Cumulatively, State and local requirements may hinder the ability to develop projects to the maximum density allowed by a city's zoning code. State requirements such as those for trash enclosures may limit buildable space for multifamily projects. Locally, parking requirements for multifamily projects may also limit buildable space. Alternatives to surface parking lots, such as

underground or stacked parking, may present challenges with meeting accessibility compliance standards.

- Current and foreseeable market demand for housing products includes larger (three or more stories) rental housing complexes, and smaller single-family homes and small-lot developments. There is high demand for both rental and for-sale single-family homes, but there is a market for for-sale single-family homes that, compared to traditional development, are made relatively more affordable due to smaller unit size, no garage, and smaller lots.
- Inclusionary zoning policies hinder housing production. If a jurisdiction allows flexibility in its development standards, the building industry can produce innovative housing types that respond to market demand, including housing affordable to lower-income households. Local regulation that adds cost or does not provide flexibility will make development too costly.

The City revised the Housing Element in response to the input received during the engagement events. In discussions with the development community specific to Porterville, it was recommended that the City allows for small-lot development and smaller-sized housing. In the first draft of the Housing Element, the City proposed to prohibit all single-family development in multifamily (RM) zoning districts, as directed under Housing Plan Program 6. Program 6 has been revised to prohibit single-family uses in the RM-3 zone but to permit small-lot single-family subdivisions in the RM-1 and RM-2 zones. The provision to allow small-lot subdivisions on RM-1 and RM-2 zoned sites ensures that any single-family development on these sites would attain a density consistent with typical multifamily residential development and would provide flexibility for developers. Small-lot subdivisions requiring a tentative map would continue to be subject to discretionary review (as required by law) by the City Council.

Additionally, to further support affordable housing development, the City added several actions in Housing Plan Program 10 to streamline and support the development of housing for lower-income and special housing needs groups, including farmworkers.

To address the input that additional resources are needed for lower-income residents to access higher-paying employment, the City added the following action to Program 1 in the Housing Plan: Collaborate with TCaT and/or TCAG on the 2023 Tulare County Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan to identify ways to bridge the transit service gap for seniors, people with disabilities, and low-income people. As part of Housing Plan Program 13, the City will coordinate annually with the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) of Tulare County to carry out the WIB's Local Plan, including identified workforce priorities that will benefit the residents of Porterville.

The First Revised Draft Housing Element was available for public review from March 4 to March 11, 2025. The draft was then submitted to HCD for its review on March 12, 2025.

E1.1.9 Second Revised Draft Housing Element

The City revised the Housing Element to respond to HCD's review and made the draft available for public review from August 19 to August 26, 2025. The City received one non-substantive comment on the Facebook post notifying followers that the draft was available. The draft was submitted to HCD for review again on August 27, 2025. HCD completed its review October 21, 2025, and found the draft in substantial compliance with all statutory requirements.

One comment was received from Greg Woodard outside of the public review period. This comment was addressed in the Third Revised Draft.

E1.1.10 Third Revised Draft

The City made revisions to the draft Housing Element to respond to public comments (summarized in Table 1, below) on the Second Revised Draft and made a Third Revised Draft Housing Element available for public review from [date] to [date].

Table 1 Public Comments – Summary and Responses

Commenter & ID	Comment	Response
Woodard-1	Multifamily Housing: States that single family dwellings are permitted by right in all zones except one and in addition RM-3 has a minimum of 10 units required per net acre, which will be updated with the development ordinance update to 20 units per net acre. The conclusion states that allowing single-family residences by right in multifamily zones potentially constrains the development of multifamily housing. Comment: At what point has density been a problem for multifamily developers, if anything RM-3 zones on small lots and in existing neighborhoods have been a constraint to build anything because of the minimum of 10 units per acre. Porterville has added more LIHTC projects than any other community, probably even Visalia that is double our population. To increase the minimum units to 20 per acre would not only be considered a constraint but might also even be considered a taking by many property owners as the market is the determining factor for the demand of this kind of product. The market demand is driven by population and job growth, there has only been one fair market multifamily project built that achieved any kind of density within the last 10 years, the ability to increase occupancy in any new multifamily project is going to be determined by the income level of the perspective tenants not how dense the zoning is.	HCD has established "default densities" for all jurisdictions based on size. Porterville's default density is 20 dwelling units per acre. While the default density is not a mandated minimum density, adopting it as a minimum density provides a streamlined option for local governments to meet the density requirement for lower-income development and facilitates the development of housing to meet the City's state-mandated RHNA obligations. In 2019, the RM-3 zoning district was modified to establish a minimum density of 20 dwelling units per acre. Since then, as a result of a clerical error, not a policy decision, the minimum density was reverted to 10 units per acre. Therefore, the change to reestablish the minimum density of 20 dwelling units per acre is not a new policy decision, and is required to ensure the City can meet its obligations under state law to make land available for development.
Woodard-2	**Residential Development Fees**: Park Impact fee/unit single-family at $988 States single family development fees in Porterville are comparable to similar size cities in the same county. Fees for a single-family unit range from $17,000 to $20,000 in Porterville and are $18,677 in Tulare. Comment: Although the new park fees were adopted in January of 2026 they were under development and review to be established during the housing element preparation. No mention of the possible park fee increases which will now go from a per unit to a per square foot fee. Based on the average of a 1500 ft² house the new park fee will increase from $988 to almost $5,000. That fee alone puts us well over other communities and although Visalia is not included in this table the comparison of the number of permits	The City prepared a park impact fee study in 2024[1],which was based on the inventory and needs assessment contained in the Parks and Leisure Master Plan. The City's goal is to provide 4.45 acres per 1,000 persons and park impact fees are meant to fund park improvements and expansion to accommodate population growth. The equitable provision of parks is part of the City's obligation under state environmental justice and affirmatively furthering fair housing laws. The Housing Element analyzed park fees current at the time the draft was prepared, but as a result of this comment, the City revised the analysis in Chapter E3, Constraints. See Section E3.3.4, Planning and Development Fees, for updated analysis.

[1] City of Porterville, 2024. Park and Leisure Master Plan Impact Fee Study.

	from Porterville to even Tulare is substantially lower, Visalia was over 400 building permits.	
	Multifamily projected units - as part of the housing element you have included 60 acres that I own that is in a RM - 3 zone and Hillside overlay. With a hillside ordinance that overlays this zoning how do you anticipate development to occur in any density that exceeds the hillside overlay? My 60 acres would require a minimum of 600 units and the hillside overlay would allow maybe up to 120 units. I might add that whenever I agreed during the general plan update to allow some of my properties to be up zoned I was assured by Brad Dunlap that it would not prohibit me from building single-family but give me more flexibility. However, subsequent to that time the 10 unit minimum per acre that was placed on my Rm-3 property without my knowledge or notification and is the most prohibitive zoning that I'm aware of in the county. I have attempted several conversations with various developers that were interested in multifamily development but immediately lost interest once they discovered it was in the hillside overlay zone. The easiest and simplest solution is to eliminate this category of overlay all together.	The Hillside Zone Overlay District and its density limitations will be evaluated as part of the Development Ordinance update. See Program 6 for related action. For-sale housing is not prohibited in the RM-3 zone. The density change to the RM-3 zone relates to density only, not the type or tenure of new housing. Higher density condominium style housing can be for sale, and at higher densities is likely to be lower cost than single-family, low-density development.
	Hillside Overlay: I think it goes without saying that since the inception of our General Plan 2030, about 18 years ago, that the Hillside overlay requirements are prohibitive. That is evidenced by NOT ONE project being approved under the ordinance. As a landowner of approximately 100 acres in the overlay zone I have had multiple conversations with interested developers that refused to go any further than reviewing the preliminary requirements necessary to even achieve a tentative subdivision map. Those preliminary requirements are equivalent to doing engineering work that is usually only required upon submitting improvement plans to develop a subdivision, not get a tentative map. The other constraint is the transportation master plan that calls for major parkways to be developed along the hillside going to areas no longer considered viable and/or controlled by parties that don't desire any development, a "parkway to nowhere" if you will. The cost alone just to set aside the land without even completing those master plan improvements is a major constraint and unsustainable by current fees structure. So, besides mitigating the master transportation plans and or eliminating the hillside overlay all together I have listed a few ideas below that would be more conducive if the overlay is kept in place. **Recommendations:** 1. Exempt development from the hillside overlay requirements in the overlay zone that is up to a average of 10% slope. The ordinance calls for residential streets to be installed with up to a 10% slope so it is reasonable to believe that residential	For-sale housing is not prohibited in the RM-3 zone. The density change to the RM-3 zone relates to density only, not the type or tenure of new housing. Higher density condominium style housing can be for sale, and at higher densities is likely to be lower cost than single-family, low-density development. The Hillside Zone Overlay District and its density limitations will be evaluated as part of the Development Ordinance update. See Program 6 for related action. The commenter references a transportation master plan. The City cannot identify what specific plan the commenter is referring to. An analysis of regional transportation plans are outside the scope of the Housing Element, and other City plans such as the Circulation Element do not pose a constraint to housing development.

	development can occur on streets with an acceptable average slope of 10%. 2. Eliminate any requirements to prove average slope beyond using the cities GIS data and verifying that data with an occasional elevation shot instead of one per foot as call for in the overlay ordinance.	