City of Santa Clara
The Center of What's Possible

Legislative Advocacy Position

HOUSING

Overview

The lack of affordable housing in the State and region continues to have an increasingly profound impact on the City of Santa Clara. In January 2025, Santa Clara County conducted its biennial Point-in-Time Count and found that there were over 10,711 individuals experiencing homelessness in the County. 83% of those individuals were residents of Santa Clara County when they became homeless. As cities across the state struggle to address the growing affordable housing and homelessness crisis as housing prices continue to soar, housing continues to be a key legislative priority for the State Legislature and regional agencies.

Guiding Principles

The City of Santa Clara's guiding principles for legislative advocacy include and are not limited to:

- Support the League of California Cities and National League of Cities positions on priority bills that benefit Santa Clara.
- Protect local revenue sources and prevent unfunded mandates.
- Protect and/or increase funding for specific programs and services.
- Protect and/or increase local government discretion.
- Advance approved policies such as the City's Statement of Values, the General Plan, or the Climate Action Plan.

Legislative Advocacy Position

The City of Santa Clara is committed to being a leader at the local level in providing affordable housing, as well as making a fair share contribution to the overall need for housing production within Silicon Valley, and will continue to proactively take concrete steps to realize new housing production within the City. Santa Clara is also prepared to participate in broader regional efforts that are collaborative, recognize the unique characteristics of local jurisdictions, and provide opportunities for local representation.

The City is concerned about potential measures imposed at the State or regional level that reduce local control, recognizing that in some instances such measures can be necessary or helpful to advance common goals across multiple jurisdictions, but is also recognizing that such efforts may have unintended consequences, limited effectiveness, or create inequities due to a lack of consideration of localized circumstances.

In an effort to achieve these goals, the City will:

- Advocate for more regional, state and federal resources (e.g., funding, more housing vouchers, legal authority, technical support, streamlining administrative processes) to address local housing needs.

- Support legislation that would establish additional ongoing funding streams for the construction, preservation, and operation of local affordable housing developments and including funding for staff and programs.
- Support legislation and efforts that provide increased access to resources to address the needs of the most vulnerable residents, including families experiencing homelessness, through street outreach and assessment, case management services, mental health care and substance use treatment, capital and operating dollars for shelter, interim and transitional housing, supportive housing, extremely low-income affordable housing, and homelessness prevention services.
- Support legislation and efforts that provide resources for small to medium sized cities, including funding for staffing, to plan and implement strategies that address the impacts of homelessness on public facilities and services.
- Support efforts and funding for the development of sanctioned safe parking sites, including streamlined permitting, site preparation, hygiene services, waste removal services, program operations, case management, security measures, and programs to prevent pollution that may cause public health threats.
- Support efforts to collaborate with the State, County, local jurisdictions, business sector, non-profit, and philanthropic partners to leverage available resources and bring in new funding streams to expand the reach of the interim and supportive housing system.
- Support federal efforts to preserve and strengthen the low-income housing tax credit program and federal tax exemptions for private activity bonds.
- Support legislation preserving and expanding, federal tax exemptions for state and local taxes, including state and local property, sales, and income taxes, and maintaining federal tax exemptions for mortgage interest payments on primary residences.
- Support legislation that provides local jurisdictions with authority over land use decisions and fully incorporates the involvement of local community members and an understanding of the conditions unique to the community.
- Support efforts to streamline California Environmental Quality Act provisions to facilitate the production of affordable housing and reduce delays due to unmerited litigation.
- Support legislation to amend liability insurance requirements, and other regulatory barriers related to the development of condominiums, to reduce delays and facilitate construction of these multifamily housing developments.
- Support legislation that provides homeowners, renters, and businesses with access to affordable private property insurance, including in areas that are subject to natural disasters such as earthquakes or wildfires.
- Support provisions to allow school districts to effectively mitigate the impacts of new development, including the ability to consider increasing the allowable school mitigation fee level.
- Support efforts to increase and index school mitigation fee rates to more realistically reflect current school facility costs.
- Support legislation that aims to increase homeownership, particularly for first-time buyers and workforce housing, through down payment assistance, increasing the ability to borrow money, or through other forms of assistance.
- Support legislation that creates a more equitable Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process that takes into account local factors including existing proportion of deed

restricted affordable housing stock in each City, availability of developable land, and other factors related to developing the regional allocation of housing units.

- Support planning processes that align with state objectives and the City's adopted Housing Element.
- Support legislation that would require the Department of Housing and Community Development to consistently provide timely detailed review and clear, consistent and specific requirements for achieving Housing Element certification and pro-housing designation, to further streamline the local jurisdictions' housing policy review and adoption processes.
- Oppose measures that reduce local control over land use and planning decisions and are punitive in nature towards local government.
- Oppose efforts to reduce local, state, and/or federal funding for affordable housing, rehabilitation of substandard housing, new park facilities, neighborhood improvements, and public services, such as public safety and emergency response.
- Oppose housing, development, and zoning objectives or directives at the regional level that conflict with state requirements and/or do not integrate seamlessly into the state's existing Housing Element review process.
- Monitor legislation related to the zoning and development of housing in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.
- Monitor legislation related to the facilitation/streamlining of housing in Industrial Zoning districts or General Plan designations, which would further reduce local discretion on such projects.