

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: JANDON BRISCOE, CITY PLANNER TRAINEE
AMY LYLE, SUPERVISING PLANNER
SUBJECT: PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
PROHOUSING DESIGNATION PROGRAM

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Planning and Economic Development Department that the Council, by resolution, authorize the Director of the Planning and Economic Development Department or the Director's Designee to: (1) submit a Prohousing Designation Program application to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and, if the application is approved by HCD, (2) execute all documents deemed necessary or appropriate to participate in the Prohousing Designation Program.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staff is developing an application to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for a Prohousing Designation. Currently staff is requesting that Council authorize the submittal of the application to HCD. Although there is no legal requirement for the Prohousing Designation, the Designation provides jurisdictions with incentives in the form of additional points and other preferences in several of the State's competitive grant funding programs, including the Affordable Housing & Sustainable Communities (AHSC) and Infill Infrastructure Grant (IIG) programs. The State continues to explore the addition of incentives for additional funding programs.

The application includes a self-scoring worksheet that provides between one and three points for each prohousing policy. Additional points can be awarded for "enhancement factors" for policies that further implement specified Statewide goals. To earn the Prohousing Designation, a jurisdiction must achieve a minimum score of 30 points.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

Not applicable

ANALYSIS

HCD began accepting Prohousing applications from all cities and counties in the State on June 30, 2021. As of December 27, 2022, seven jurisdictions have received the designation. Locally, the City of Healdsburg and the County of Sonoma have applied.

There are four scoring categories to evaluate jurisdictions under the Prohousing Designation:

- Category 1: Favorable Zoning and Land Use (18 possible points). Examples include allowing duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes by right in single-unit dwelling zones, going beyond the State Density Bonus Law, going beyond State law for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), eliminating off-street parking requirements, and allowing residential land uses in non-residential zones.
- Category 2: Acceleration of Housing Production Timelines (19 possible points). Examples include ministerial approval processes for a variety of housing types, streamlined environmental review processes, streamlined permitting processes, and reduced plan check times.
- Category 3: Reduction of Construction and Development Cost (11 possible points). Examples include deferred, reduced, or waived impact fees and pre-approved plans for ADUs and missing middle housing types.
- Category 4: Providing Financial Subsidies (21 possible points). Examples include participating with a local housing trust fund, offering surplus City-owned land for affordable housing development, and prioritization of local general funds for affordable housing.

In order to receive a Prohousing Designation, a jurisdiction must receive a minimum of 30 points out of a possible 138 points on a self-scoring worksheet that provides between one and three points for each Prohousing policy or activity. Jurisdictions must also score at least one point in the four categories listed above. Prohousing local policies include, but are not limited to policies that: reduce parking requirements for sites zoned for residential development, allow by right residential and mixed use development, reduce barriers for accessory dwelling units, reduce permit processing time, create objective development standards, reduce development impact fees, permit missing middle housing uses, and reduce transportation-related infrastructure costs, to name a few. Policies can be a mix of enacted and proposed.

Staff has done a preliminary assessment of existing General Plan Housing Element policies and the draft 6th cycle Housing Element policies, with assistance from the Napa-Sonoma Housing Collaborate and Generation Housing. Staff has calculated that the City of Santa Rosa is likely to receive 44 points under the four prohousing categories.

Santa Rosa's application for Prohousing Designation is consistent with the 2022 City Council's Goal of "Delivering Housing For All."

HCD has 60 days from the time the application is submitted to issue preliminary findings to the City. The City has 15 days to provide a written response to HCD. HCD then has 60 days to issue a final determination of the designation as a Prohousing Jurisdiction.

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Assuming that the application is submitted in by February 1, 2023, and that the City applies and is approved, the City of Santa Rosa could foreseeably be designated as a Prohousing Jurisdiction this year.

FISCAL IMPACT

No impact.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Adoption of the resolution contemplates the receipt of a State designation of Prohousing and is not a project pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines 15378(b)(4) (the creation of government funding mechanisms). In the alternative, the action is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15061(b)(3) (Common Sense Exemption) because it can be seen with certainty that this application will have no possibility for causing a significant direct or indirect effect on the environment. Future projects that utilize grant funding will be reviewed consistent with the CEQA.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Resolution

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