

ACCOUNTABLE DEVELOPMENT COALITION

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Member Organizations:

Housing Advocacy Group
New Economy Working
Solutions
Living Wage Coalition
Sonoma, Mendocino, and
Lake County Building
Trades Council
North Bay Labor Council
International Brotherhood
of Electrical Workers,
Local 551
Progressive Student
Movement
Community Housing
Development
Corporation
Greenbelt Alliance
Concerned Citizens for
Santa Rosa
Sonoma County
Conservation Action
Sonoma County
Transportation and
Land Use Coalition
Leadership Institute for
Ecology and the
Economy
Sonoma County Young
Democrats
Petaluma Tomorrow

Executive Committee:

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Dennis Rosatti
Jack Buckhorn
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Daisy Pistey-Lyhne

Coalition Coordinator:

Jessica Diaz

December 3, 2007

Wayne Goldberg and Lisa Kranz
City of Santa Rosa, Division of Advanced Planning/Public Policy
90 Santa Rosa Avenue
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Re: Housing Element Update

Dear Wayne and Lisa:

The Accountable Development Coalition (ADC) represents a range of community stakeholders, including environmentalists, housing advocates, unions, and social justice groups, all of which have a stake in ensuring that the City's housing policy is responsive to all segments of our community. Below you will find a summary of our comments from the first Housing Element community meeting that took place on Monday, November 26th. We appreciate your review of these recommendations, and look forward to a productive community dialogue over the City's Housing Element update.

The ADC believes that the following principles and considerations should underlie the review and update of the Housing Element and any associated changes to the Housing Allocation Plan:

- **Providing housing affordable to a range of incomes is critical to economic development, especially** in a period of economic downturn. Negative market conditions should not be used as a justification for underproduction of affordable housing. Instead, affordable housing can infuse much-needed economic vitality into a community when the production of market-rate housing may be slower.
- **Creative financing mechanisms and public-private partnerships should be leveraged in order to create mixed-income neighborhoods throughout the City.** Policies should be crafted with the goal not only of maximizing the City's affordable housing stock but also fostering neighborhoods affordable to people of all income levels.
- **An undersupply of affordable housing has a significant impact on vehicle miles traveled.** Forcing the City's workforce to "drive till you qualify" not only decreases the community's quality of life through increased traffic and long commute times, but also represents a significant driver of greenhouse gas emissions.

With these considerations in mind, we urge the City to update its Housing Element and revise its Housing Allocation Plan to incorporate the following policies:

- Eliminate the mixed-use exemption for inclusionary requirements and in-lieu fees, following up on the clear direction from the Planning Commission and City Council during the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan process
- Replace the current acreage-based threshold for inclusionary requirements with a unit-based trigger of 5 units
- Increase the City's inclusionary requirement, to 20% affordable to low- and very low-income households with an additional 20% affordable to moderate-income households
- Address the housing impacts of commercial development through dedication of land and/or air rights to affordable housing developers
- Leverage state incentives for transit-oriented development, state tax credits, matching funds, Proposition 1C and other bond monies for the development of low- and very-low income housing
- Increase the set-aside of redevelopment revenue allocated to affordable housing
- Preserve existing affordable housing, including mobilehome parks
- Expand housing opportunities for seniors and others with special housing needs

We urge staff to include all of these options when scoping studies of the City's housing policy, to ensure that decision makers are equipped to approve substantial changes to the City's Housing Allocation Plan. The ADC will be submitting additional policy proposals and comments in early 2008 as well. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can provide further information on any of these recommendations, and we look forward to working with you during this process.

Sincerely,



Michael Allen, ADC Chair



Jessica Diaz, ADC Coordinator