



Madera County Housing Element Update

Task Force Meeting

MEETING SUMMARY

July 25, 2014, from 3:00pm to 5:00pm

On Friday, July 25, 2014, the County held the first of two Task Force Meetings on the Housing Element Update. The purpose of the meeting was to hear from Task Force members on the housing issues facing Madera County and what can be done to address the issues. There were five Task Force members, three County staff, and a consultant from Mintier Harnish in attendance at the meeting. Following a presentation by the consultant, the Task Force members were asked to respond to the following questions:

1. What members of the community are most in need of housing and services?
2. What housing issues would you like to see addressed in Madera County?
3. What are the barriers to providing adequate housing in Madera County?
4. What can be done to address these issues and barriers?

The following is a summary of the discussion:

- Farmworker housing is the predominate need in Madera County. It's difficult for farmworkers to find adequate housing in the unincorporated areas. Most farmworkers that have entered into affordable housing in the County are coming from overcrowded, dilapidated units.
 - Along Gateway to D street, and Cleveland to the River, there are a lot of people living in small units and overcrowded conditions. This area also tends to be more expensive; people are getting overcharged.
 - The densities called for in State law (20 units per acre) aren't appropriate for most communities in the county and the infrastructure can't support it.
 - Parksdale Self-Help affordable project is about 10-11 units per acre. This is fairly high density for the county.
 - Most areas of the county don't have the sewer infrastructure to handle development at higher densities, and it's not possible to develop on septic at this density. Lack of sewer infrastructure is the biggest impediment to multifamily housing development.
 - It's not just the unincorporated County that has infrastructure constraints. Chowchilla is also struggling to provide adequate water and sewer infrastructure.
 - There's also an infrastructure constraint related to natural gas in the unincorporated areas. A lot of the rural county is on propane. In order to accommodate growth in the Gunner, Riverstone,
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and other areas in the eastern county, PG&E will need to expand transmission lines through the eastern county. PG&E now requires a 50-foot buffer around transmission lines.

- The County should plan for affordable housing in new development areas and require new development areas to provide affordable units (i.e., inclusionary requirements) because they will include new retail and service uses that require workers. If housing in new development areas is not affordable to these workers, they will be driving more to serve these areas, which will have impacts on roads and vehicle emissions. Requirements could include setting aside land and working with non-profits to build affordable housing
- *In response to the suggestion of inclusionary requirements:* But if the county does that, there will have to be incentives, because the infrastructure investments needed to develop in these areas will be so costly.
- New development will have impacts on roadways.
 - Avenue 9 will need to be expanded in order to accommodate new development.
 - *County staff response:* The County has changed identification to a limited expressway, which limits access. There are also road improvements planned. Gunner has agreed to pay increased transportation fees to fund improvements on Avenue 9.
 - Circulation in the Rio Mesa area needs additional points of access.
 - *County staff response:* The County is talking to developers and the California Department of Transportation to build Rio Mesa Blvd to provide additional access.
- The obvious answer to how to solve housing issues is simple: “More money.”