

# 2013-2021 HOUSING ELEMENT

## *OVERVIEW*



**City of Calexico**

**2013-2021 Housing Element of the General Plan  
Section 2-Overview  
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## SECTION 2 - OVERVIEW

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The Section 2 Overview presents information on:

- Housing Element Public Participation Effort
- Challenges To Addressing the Community's Housing Needs
- Brief Housing Element Summary

### A. HOUSING ELEMENT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION EFFORT

A housing element must:

Include a diligent effort by the local government to achieve public participation of all economic segments of the community in the development of the housing element

Community participation formed the foundation for the 2007 comprehensive update of the Calexico General Plan. The General Plan Update included numerous meetings, workshops, and public hearings. During the preparation of the prior Housing Element, which was adopted in April 2010, additional public participation efforts were accomplished. During the development of the 2013 Housing Element Update, public participation efforts included:

- Housing Needs Survey
- Community Stakeholder Outreach
- Planning Commission Public Workshop
- Public Review of the Draft Housing Element
- Planning Commission and City Council Public Hearings

#### 1. Housing Needs Survey

A Housing Needs Survey comprised of eight questions was posted on the City's website in both the English and Spanish languages. The public was notified of the opportunity to complete the survey through announcements in a local newspaper. The purpose of the Survey was to garner insights on the respondents housing needs and their opinions on the community's housing needs.

As of September 18, 2013, the number of completed surveys was insufficient for the purpose of analysis. The City will continue to have the Housing Needs Survey posted on the Housing Division's webpage through the month of December 2013. The Housing Division will tabulate the survey results at the end of October, November and December and inform both the Planning Commission and City Council of the results.

#### 2. Community Stakeholder Outreach

An essential part of the public participation effort was outreach to community stakeholders. Interviews were conducted with several organizations that represent the interests of low income families, the elderly, and special needs households. A summary is presented below and on the next two pages of the housing needs and resources identified as part of the outreach effort.

**Campesinos Unidos, Inc.** (serves the rural poor)

- Rental assistance is considered a growing and significant problem.
- Campesinos Unidos, Inc. provides emergency rental assistance up to three months.

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- Campesinos Unidos, Inc. provides energy bill assistance to get up to date and reconnect; a growing problem.
- Growing need for energy efficient homes because many homes are old.
- Most families do not want regular apartments because they prefer garden style single story homes which have a minimum upkeep and a small garden area.

### **Calexico Senior Center**

Staff at the Calexico Senior Center described the following needs:

- Seniors want showers instead of tubs.
- Need for solar panels and insulation.
- Need for small homes with low maintenance yards, not apartments.
- The elderly age-in-place as they have limited opportunities to move.

### **Neighborhood House of Calexico, Inc.**

Emergency Shelter: Neighborhood House Shelter is an emergency 30-day stay temporary shelter for women and children. The Shelter is for women who:

- Have been evicted by landlord or are homeless
- Are low-income
- Are clean and sober for at least 6 months
- Are able to live in a group environment with other women and children
- Are willing to work with a case manager in meeting personal objectives

Transitional Housing: Neighborhood House Transitional Housing (NHTH) is transitional housing for homeless women and children. The program offers housing, counseling, support group, case management, assistance, food, clothing, referrals and advocacy with community services.

In 2012, the Neighborhood House Shelter/Transitional Housing served 165 unduplicated persons and 4,678 shelter nights were provided.

### **Area Agency on Aging**

Staff at the Area Agency on Aging described the following needs:

- People are reluctant to apply for home modifications and repairs because they do not want to take on more debt.
- The Agency has limited funds to assist with emergency turn-on/turn-off of utilities.
- The Agency provides three months of rental assistance and then refers the clients to the County or a city. About 20 households are assisted each month.
- There seems to be a steady increase in the numbers of elderly requesting assistance.
- The types of housing most needed include:
  - ✓ Energy efficient
  - ✓ Handicapped accessible (as the elderly get older grab bars and walk-in showers are important)
  - ✓ Garden homes with minimal upkeep would enable more seniors to age in place

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### **Department of Developmental Services (DDS) – San Diego Regional Center**

- Service coordinators from the Regional Center meet with individuals who are requesting assistance to diagnose and assess eligibility and help plan, access, coordinate and monitor the services and supports that are needed because of a developmental disability.
- 227 developmentally disabled persons living in Calexico are served by the Regional Center.

### **Women Haven – the Center for Family Solutions and Domestic Violence Shelter**

- Operates two emergency shelters for women and women with children. The shelters have a capacity of 12 people and 15 to 18 people. The maximum stay is 60 days, although extensions may be granted.
- Operates 13 transitional housing units with a maximum stay of two years. Funding is from two sources: EHAP and HUD vouchers. The voucher holders usually select El Centro as a place to reside because of available services.

### **Calexico Chamber of Commerce**

- Encourages mixed use development in the Downtown. Nice, new living units above or behind commercial/professional uses would be an enticement for young people to stay "home" in Calexico and thereby support the development of additional economic development.
- JOBS! That is the number 1 issue for the area. There are many retail positions, but the young people graduating from local colleges or trade schools must leave the area to find work. Few are lucky enough to find positions with government agencies.
- The accepted boundaries of "downtown" are the International Border on the South (First Street); Fifth Street on the North; Both sides of Imperial Avenue on the West; and Mary Avenue on the East.

## **3. Planning Commission Public Workshop**

The Planning Commission conducted a Public Workshop on September 5, 2013. The Planning Commission was informed of the Draft Housing Element and the importance of compliance with Article 10.6 of the Government Code. The PowerPoint presentation focused on Section 3 - Housing Program. The Planning Commission asked questions regarding single room occupancy housing, whether property owners have taken advantage of the 20-30 dwelling units per acre zone, if the City had enough sites to meet its regional share and other similar questions. The Planning Commission authorized staff to transmit the Draft Housing Element to the State Department of Housing and Community Development.

## **4. Public Review of the Draft Housing Element**

The Draft Housing Element will be posted on the City's website. A notice published in a local newspaper will inform the public in both English and Spanish of the opportunity to review and to provide comments on the Draft Housing Element. The review and comment period will commence when the Draft Housing Element is transmitted to HCD and end just before the public hearing before the City Council. The Housing Manager and Planning Division will notify community stakeholders that comments on the Draft Housing Element are welcomed.

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### 5. Planning Commission and City Council Public Hearings

The Public Hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council will offer another opportunity for the public to comment on the Draft Housing Element. Community stakeholders will be notified by the Housing Manager and Planning Division of the opportunity to comment on the Housing Element at the scheduled public hearings.

## B. CHALLENGES TO ADDRESSING THE COMMUNITY'S HOUSING NEEDS

At the beginning of the prior planning period – July 1, 2008 – Calexico was in a much better position to address the community's housing needs. Years before the prior planning period began; the City had established a Redevelopment Agency and had accumulated financial resources in the Low and Moderate Income Housing Fund. Additionally, the Housing Authority of the City of Calexico was maintaining its Section 8 rental assistance vouchers. Now five years later as the City enters the new planning period it faces the challenge of diminishing resources.

### 1. Reduced Funding for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program

Sequestration – automatic Federal spending cuts – impacts the resources the Housing Authority of the City of Calexico has to administer and make housing assistance payments under the provisions of the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. HUD has warned:

About 125,000 individuals and families, including elderly and disabled individuals, could lose assistance provided through the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program and be at risk of becoming homeless. The HCV program, which is administered by state and local public housing agencies (PHAs), provides crucial assistance to families and individuals in renting private apartment units. There may be even more families affected by these sequestration cuts to the extent that PHAs are forced to absorb annual funding losses in less than a full twelve month time frame. In addition, since sequestration will also cut PHA administrative fees for the HCV program, numerous PHAs may find continued operation of the program financially untenable and thus stop operating the program entirely, which will harm even more families and individuals, including homeless veterans.

Source: Written Testimony of Secretary Shaun Donovan, Hearing before the Senate Committee on Appropriations on *The Impacts of Sequestration*, Thursday February 14, 2013

### 2. Reduced Federal CDBG and HOME Funding

Additionally, over the recent years, the amount of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds available to local communities has been dwindling. Although Calexico is not a CDBG entitlement jurisdiction, it receives CDBG funds from the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

Calexico is not a participating jurisdiction under the HOME Partnerships Program and, therefore, does not have a dedicated source of affordable housing funds. The City periodically applies to HCD for HOME funds and has been awarded such funds in recent years.

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### 3. Loss of the Redevelopment Agency's Low and Moderate Income Housing Fund

Pursuant to State law, the Redevelopment Agency was forced to dissolve in February 2012. Hence, the City lost the opportunity to expend the Agency's Low and Moderate Income Housing Fund on affordable housing developments.

### 4. California Homes and Jobs Act

The California Homes and Jobs Act of 2013 would place a fee of \$75 on the recordation of real estate related documents — excluding home sales — raising \$500 million annually for state investment in affordable home production and leveraging an additional \$2.78 billion in federal, local, and bank investment in homes and jobs for Californians. If enacted, monies generated by the fee would be placed in a Trust Fund that would support the –

...development, acquisition, rehabilitation, and preservation of housing affordable to low- and moderate income households, including, but not limited, to emergency shelters, transitional and permanent rental housing, including necessary service and operating subsidies; foreclosure mitigation; and homeownership opportunities.

If the California Homes and Jobs Act of 2013 is enacted, it may be possible that resources could become available so a developer could seek funding for an affordable housing development to be located in Calexico. Efforts are to be made, according to the Act, "to promote a geographically balanced distribution of funds."

The California Homes and Jobs Act passed both the Assembly Housing and Community Development and Assembly Labor and Employment Committees. After the August 30, 2013 Assembly Appropriations hearing, SB 391 remains on track for passage in 2014. Bill author Senator Mark DeSaulnier reported that the California Homes and Jobs Act will remain on the Assembly Appropriations Committee's calendar while work is done to strengthen the bill, then move forward early in the new year. Because this is the first year of a two-year session, bills introduced in 2013 have until the end of the 2014 session to pass both houses

## C. HOUSING ELEMENT SUMMARY

Since the City adopted the current Housing Element in April 2010, only one major change has been made to the statute. That change requires an analysis of the needs of developmentally disabled persons. As noted above, resources to address housing needs have dwindled leaving the City in a much poorer position than it was five years. Table 2-1 on page 2-7 shows the individual programs that will be undertaken to meet the seven program mandates of the State housing element law.

Key highlights include:

- Sites to Accommodate the City's Share of the Regional Housing Need: The City has designated sufficient sites to accommodate the need for new construction. Included among these sites are those included in approved apartments, subdivisions, planned development, and Specific Plan areas.

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- Providing for a Variety of Housing Types: Zoning Ordinance amendments will be drafted to facilitate single room occupancy housing, employee housing, transitional housing and supportive housing. These amendments will contribute to achieving housing diversity while also meeting State law requirements.
- Cost Burdened Renters: – The Housing Authority of the City of Calexico will continue to offer rental assistance through the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. This program helps about 227 lower income families to reduce their monthly rental costs. Given the status of HUD funding, no significant funding increases are anticipated in the years ahead. In fact, because of the sequestration cuts, there may be a decrease in the number of poor families who can obtain rental assistance.
- Housing Rehabilitation: As in most communities with an older housing stock, rehabilitation is an evident need. The City for many years has supported housing rehabilitation initiatives with CDBG funds, when available. The Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program is included among the individual programs to be implemented during the 2013-2021 planning period. It will be implemented in the future as funding becomes available.
- Promote Fair Housing: The City will continue to expand its contribution to achieving fair housing by obtaining technical assistance from an experienced fair housing provider. The City also plans to disseminate fair housing information on its website and other venues to the general public, apartment managers, real estate industry and developers.

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**Table 2-1**  
**City of Calexico**  
**2013-2021 Housing Element**  
**Housing Program Outline**  
**List of Specific Individual Programs by Program Category**

Program Category	Specific Individual Program
<b>Category 1 – Identify Housing Sites to Accommodate the City’s Share of the Regional Housing Need</b>	1. Land Use Element/Project Implementation
	2. Infill Housing Incentives Program
	3. No Net Loss Program
	4. Zoning Ordinance Amendments to Provide a Variety of Housing Types
<b>Category 2 – Assist in the Development of Lower Income and Moderate Income Housing</b>	5. Calexico Housing Authority Rental Assistance for Cost Burdened Lower Income Households
	6. City of Calexico HOME-Funded Tenant Based Rental Assistance
	7. Affordable Rental Housing Construction Program
	8. First Time Homebuyer Assistance Program
	9. Outreach Program for Persons with Disabilities
	10. Extremely Low Income Housing Program
	11. Affordable Housing Developer Partnership Program
<b>Category 3 – Remove Governmental Constraints to the Maintenance, Improvement and Development of Housing</b>	12. Zoning Ordinance Amendments to Remove Governmental Constraints on Housing for Persons with Disabilities
	13. Zoning Ordinance Amendments to Remove Governmental Constraints on Housing Affordability
<b>Category 4 – Conserve and Improve the Existing Stock of Affordable Housing</b>	14. Housing Code Enforcement Program
	15. Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program
<b>Category 5 – Promote Housing Opportunities for All Persons</b>	16. Fair Housing Services Program
	17. Fair Housing Information Program
<b>Category 6 – Preserve Assisted Housing at Risk of Conversion to Market Rate Housing</b>	18. Affordable Housing Preservation Program
<b>Category 7 – Promote Energy Conservation</b>	19. Energy Conservation Program