

CHAPTER SEVEN
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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The City of Fresno engaged the public in the development of the Housing Element at all steps of the process. To assist in obtaining valuable citizen information, the City developed a Housing Priority Needs Questionnaire. The questionnaire provided staff and the City-contracted consultant (Quad Knopf Inc.) with information regarding the public's perceived housing needs (Appendix H). The questionnaire was provided in English, Spanish and Hmong at sites throughout the City and included a description of the Housing Element development process.

City staff also periodically posted public notices regarding Housing Element updates the local newspaper (FresnoBee), local Spanish publications (Vida en el Valle), at City Hall, local libraries, community centers and grocery stores.

The City's Planning and Development Department established a City Council-approved Housing Element Advisory Committee to assist in providing valuable public input into the development of the Housing Element. City staff, along with the consultant, met with the Committee five times during the development of the document. Staff also presented and vetted the document with several other City committees including the Mayor's 10 x 10 Blue Ribbon Committee on Affordable Housing and Council District Committees. The City's Housing and Community Development Commission were asked to provide input and comments on the draft Housing Element; staff met with the Housing and Community Development Commission five times. Additionally the Fresno County Airports Land Use Commission and the City of Fresno's Planning Commission reviewed and approved the Housing Element. The Fresno City Council met two times to provide direction on the development process, review, open a public review period, and approve the Housing Element.

The City, along with other local jurisdictions, solicited public participation through a joint local public television broadcast in March 2008. The draft 2008-2013 Housing Element was noticed for public comments at the May 13, 2008 City Council public hearing. Citizens were advised that the City would receive comments until June 1, 2008. The City received public comments throughout the development process and through the public comment period. Several comments were also received after the public comment period concluded, and were incorporated into the document.

Public comments received are included in the Housing Element at Appendix C, along with staff responses. Additionally, several public comments provided staff with the opportunity to enhance the Housing Element narrative and add programs, policies, data, analysis and research. These changes were incorporated into the Housing Element document as submitted to the State of California Department of Housing and Community Development in June 2008.

The City plans to maintain the Housing Element Advisory Committee to monitor the implementation of the Housing Element goals, programs and policies and most importantly provide recommendations to City staff on how to continually improve the housing development process. Following is detailed information on the several aspects of the citizen participation process.

Public Broadcast

In accordance with the State Housing Element law, the City of Fresno kicked off the public participation process, in conjunction with several smaller surrounding cities, by hosting a panel session on Housing Element topics. Comcast aired the panel discussion on local public television providing general viewers with information about the creation of the Housing Element and the updates required. At the end of the broadcast, viewers were encouraged to provide comments to their respective City Housing Element representatives. Comcast aired the broadcast a total of 30 times from January 2008 to March 2008.

Council of Fresno County Governments (COG)

City staff met several times with the County of Fresno Council of County Governments (CFCOG) and the other smaller cities, and the County of Fresno staff to discuss the Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) developed by CFCOG. The discussions led to the City of Fresno accepting 293 units from the Fresno-Clovis Metropolitan Area (FCMA) and the City of Clovis accepting 203 units from the FCMA. The final RHNA for the City of Fresno and surrounding areas is detailed in Chapter 3, Table 3-1.

Housing Quality Survey

Quad Knopf Consulting completed a housing quality survey on over 27,000 housing units. The results and methodology are attached as Appendix B.

Citizens Advisory Committee

On November 27, 2007, the City adopted a Citizens Participation Plan (Appendix C) and appointed a Citizens Advisory Committee (Appendix D) to assist in the development of the Housing Element. The Advisory Committee consists of representatives from various housing organizations, businesses, civic and community groups as follows:

Jeff Roberts – Granville Homes
Jess Negrete – Central CA Legal Services
Jose Luis Barraza – Center for Independent Living
Tony Miranda – Habitat for Humanity Fresno County
Katherine Aguilar-Perez – Forest City Development
Keith Bergthold – City of Fresno Planning and Development
Stephanie Espinosa – Central Valley California Apartment Association
Kevin Hamilton – Sequoia Community Health Centers
Allysun Williams – California State University Fresno
Betty Higdon – Fresno Housing Alliance
Vidal Medina – Center for Independent Living
Tricia Hoover – Advanced Insulation, Inc.
Daniel Hawkins – The Daniel Company
Joe Burke – Burke Construction Services
Robert Lutes – Community Housing Development Organization
Carol Casey – ADA Advisory Council

Josie Mena – City of Fresno Housing and Community Development Division
Thomas Davis – AMCAL Multi-Housing, Incorporated
Cara Pierce – By Design Financial Solutions

All of the above members represent groups of individuals from various housing and resident income segments of the community.

The City's Planning and Development Department staff initiated the citizen participation process through discussions with the Advisory Committee members and the City's Housing Element Consultant, Quad Knopf. At the first meeting, Quad Knopf provided committee members with extensive background information about the Housing Element and the steps necessary for its development. Committee members were requested to evaluate the 2002-2007 Housing Element accomplishments, identify current housing needs, available resources, constraints, and assist in the development of community goals, policies and actions for the 2008-2013 Housing Element.

The committee met a total of 4 times during December 2007 through May 2008. Meeting minutes are included as Appendix F.

Council District Meetings

City staff extended its outreach efforts by holding a total of seven community meetings, one in each of the Council Districts, to inform the public about the Housing Element and to generate comments on the housing needs of the community. Agendas and Minutes are in PowerPoint presentation and handouts are attached as Appendix G.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire, attached as Appendix H, was developed by the City's Planning and Development Department and was distributed at community meetings, Housing and Community Development Commission meetings, made available at the Fresno County Library, City Hall, community centers, and grocery stores. The questionnaire provided staff and the City-contracted consultant with information regarding the public's perceived housing needs and was provided in English and Spanish. The questionnaire was also posted on the City's website. Responses from the questionnaire were compiled and are also attached as Appendix H.

The questionnaire was also distributed at various Hmong meetings and functions. The City's Hmong liaison assisted Hmong community members with completing the questionnaire.

Housing and Community Development Commission Meetings

City staff provided Housing Element information at regularly scheduled Housing and Community Development Commission meetings. Much like the Advisory Committee, the Housing and Community Development Commission members serve as representatives of various housing and resident income segments. As community leaders, Committee members were encouraged to relay information about the Housing Element to neighbors, friends, businesses, and community organizations. Committee members were also asked to inform others of the

questionnaire.

Regular Public Meetings

Quad Knopf presented Housing Element information at two public meetings, one at the City's Planning Commission and one at the Fresno City Council meeting. These two meetings were public hearings and are matter of public record.

Intergovernmental Coordination

City staff has made every effort to assure intergovernmental coordination in the development of data and programs contained in the Housing Element. The Housing Element Update was reviewed by City departments, County of Fresno, Fresno Redevelopment Agency, Mayor's 10 X 10 Affordable Housing Committee, the Housing and Community Development Commission, Fresno City Council, City and County Housing Authority, City of Clovis, State Department of Housing and Community Development, Council of Fresno County Governments, the ADA Advisory Committee, various other housing organizations throughout Fresno, and the City of Fresno Planning Commission.

Environmental Review

A Finding of Conformity with Master Environmental Impact Report 10130 of the 2025 Fresno General Plan was completed by the City consultant, Quad Knopf Consulting. The City published the Finding of Conformity as required for the Housing Element project (EA No. 08-12) on May 2, 2008. City staff also submitted the Finding of Conformity to the State Office of Planning and Research Clearinghouse for review. The Finding of Conformity was also filed with County of Fresno Clerk's office on May 2, 2008.

Performance Evaluation

In accordance with the California Government Code Section 65580 through 65589, the City of Fresno's Advisory Committee evaluated the effectiveness of the previous housing goals. The evaluation led to the deletion of some of the programs, revisions and language clarification to others, and the addition of new programs as needed. Program accomplishments from the 2002-2007 Housing Element are included in Chapter Five of the 2008-2013 Housing Element. The prior year accomplishments and current planning period programs and policies were submitted to the State Office of Housing and Community Development for review and comment.

Adoption

The update to the Housing Element constitutes an amendment to the General Plan and thus requires the Planning Commission and City Council to make a finding of conformity. Upon a finding of conformity, City Council makes a subsequent adoption of the Housing Element plan. It is anticipated that the 2008-2013 will be adopted by City Council on or before June 30, 2008.

Provision for Update

State of California Housing Element law requires an update to housing elements every five years. The 2008-2013 Housing Element will fulfill the State's update requirement. On May 13, 2008, the Fresno City Council held a public meeting to consider adoption of the updated Housing Element and receive written and oral testimony from staff and the public.

On March 26, 2008, the draft Housing Element was submitted to the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for review and comment. On May 23, 2008, HCD advised the City that certain revisions were necessary to comply with State Housing Element law. The City addressed the States concerns and comments and then resubmitted the Housing Element on June 24, 2008.

The City of Fresno recognizes that the draft Housing Element is the product of a private-public partnership, and that it addresses all legislation pertaining to the Housing Element, and identifies programs and policies aimed at solving relevant housing problems.

Fresno City Council adopted the Housing Element based on the following:

1. Modifications recommended by the Housing Element Advisory Committee and staff are consistent with the goals and objectives of the General Plan and implements suitable planning principles and programs to meet the housing needs of the community.
2. Council determined that the Housing Element content complies with State Housing Element law.
3. There is no evidence on record that the Housing Element will have a significance impact on the environment and hereby approves the Finding of Conformity with Master Environmental Impact Report 10130 of the 2025 Fresno General Plan (EA No. EA-08-12) dated May 2, 2008.

The law also requires an annual update on the accomplishments of Housing Element goals. In December of 2007, the City submitted to the State a final annual update of accomplishments on the 2002-2007 Housing Element goals. Items included in the update are as follows:

- Evaluation of the effectiveness of the housing programs in relation to the quantified objectives.
- Program revisions and changes in parties responsible for implementation
- Discontinued/new programs
- Number of single-family and multi-family permits pulled for the year
- A list of other affordable housing projects not included as a goal

Once the 2008-2013 Housing Element is updated, the first annual progress report due to the State will be December 2009.