CITY OF SALINAS
COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

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DEPARTMENT: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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TITLE: HOUSING PRODUCTION DASHBOARD UPDATE

<u>RECOMMENDED MOTION</u>:

No action is required. Receive an Administrative Report on Housing Production Dashboard development.

<u>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</u>

Staff has spearheaded a collaborative, cross-departmental effort to develop the Housing Production Dashboard, a digital tool that monitors and reports on housing production within the City. The Dashboard tracks and communicates data reported in the Housing Element Annual Performance Report (HE APR), the regulatory instrument submitted annually to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) in accordance with Government Code §65400. The HE APR documents the City's progress toward meeting its housing goals under the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) obligations.

The Housing Production Dashboard was developed in response to growing calls for local transparency, regional housing compliance, and performance-based tracking systems tied to the City's obligations under the RHNA process. By designing the Dashboard data and user interface to align with the data reported in the HE APR, the Dashboard establishes a real-time analytical framework that strengthens informed decision-making, supports compliance monitoring, and tracks housing production across the City, including the Future Growth Areas (FGAs). As these areas advance toward significant residential development, the Dashboard provides the ability to distinguish between affordable and market-rate housing within these strategic zones. Ultimately, the dashboard functions as both a performance monitor and a policy accountability tool.

Dashboard Development Process

Establishing the Analytical Framework

On August 4, 2025, City staff initiated a cross-departmental collaboration to conceptualize the Housing Production Dashboard and define its operational framework. After evaluating various options, staff determined that the HE APR, which tracks entitled projects, permit issuance, unit completions, and affordability levels, would serve as the foundation for dashboard development. The HE APR provides a standardized, state-mandated method of measuring housing progress and establishes eligibility for State incentives, including funding programs and streamlined permitting under Senate Bill (SB) 35/423, protections under SB 330, and funding opportunities under Assembly Bill (AB) 101.

SB 35 is the housing law designed to streamline the approval process for housing development and SB 423 extends SB 35 to 2036 to provide a ministerial approval pathway. SB 330 was enacted to speed up housing development which locks in the current land use and zoning at the time of submittal so local jurisdictions cannot make changes during the application process. AB 101 is the State's effort to address homelessness and affordable housing shortage.

Because the HE APR evaluates a jurisdiction's effectiveness in implementing its Housing Element and meeting RHNA targets by income category, it was identified as the optimal instrument to ensure data accuracy, regulatory alignment, and policy transparency. The City selected the 2024 HE APR as the initial reference dataset for the Dashboard's beta version.

Data Integration and Technical Implementation

On August 7, 2025, the data integration phase commenced when the Community Development Department (CDD) staff transmitted the 2024 HE APR dataset to the Public Work's GIS Team. Working jointly, the teams mapped the HE APR data fields to the TRAKiT permit tracking software platform, which houses the City's entitlement and permitting records. By August 8, 2025, the team extracted relevant data points and confirmed a strong alignment between TRAKiT records and APR fields, validating the ability to proceed with technical development.

Recognizing the need to capture affordability levels, the teams convened on August 15, 2025, to establish User Defined Fields (UDFs) in TRAKiT. These fields allow permits to be tagged by income levels—Very Low, Low, Moderate, and Above Moderate, in alignment with RHNA reporting requirements. Permits Division staff programmed the UDFs following a schema proposed by GIS to facilitate seamless data extraction and integration.

Prototype Deployment and Initial Testing

A prototype Dashboard was tested on August 22, 2025. This early version featured a geospatial map overlaying housing production data and visualized metrics such as units produced, permits issued, and units completed (via certificates of occupancy). CDD Housing staff manually inputted 2024 HE APR data into TRAKiT to validate operational accuracy and ensure output mirrored State reporting standards. By August 29, 2025, the GIS team confirmed that the new UDFs were functioning as intended.

Data Validation and System Calibration

On September 4, 2025, Housing staff completed manual entry of 331 housing permits and development projects from the 2024 HE APR into TRAKiT. This extensive data migration enabled GIS staff to test their extraction protocols and validate Dashboard accuracy. A systems test on September 23, 2025, revealed a minor discrepancy involving eight completed units, which was quickly resolved through targeted debugging. The Dashboard release schedule follows a phased approach: proof of concept, "Alpha" internal testing, "Beta" external testing, and final 'Production' release to the public.

On October 29, 2025, the GIS and Housing team met to review progress. The GIS team recommended acquiring Microsoft Power BI to support the agreed-upon user interface, with City Information Technology team assistance required for integration. Over a three-week integration period, the teams collaborated to resolve licensing issues, related to ESRI and Power BI, configure backend SQL queries, and test communication between Power BI and TRAKiT.

By November 20, 2025, the Dashboard had reached version four. Power BI enabled graphical enhancements to improve user experience, and queries were programmed to refresh three times daily to ensure current information.

Interdepartmental Collaboration and Project Team

The success of the Housing Production Dashboard reflects coordinated leadership by staff across the Community Development and Public Works departments. Their collaborative approach and technical contributions have been instrumental in ensuring the Dashboard meets regulatory requirements and advances the City's strategic housing goals.

Strategic Significance and Forward-Looking Utility

Upon full deployment, the Dashboard will deliver transformative value to the City's housing strategy. It will:

- Enable real-time, geographically referenced tracking of housing production by affordability level, tenure, and construction status.

- Provide reliable monitoring of Future Growth Areas, which are critical to Salinas's long-term housing capacity and infrastructure planning.
- Elevate transparency and accountability by offering stakeholders, developers, and decision-makers an accessible platform to review housing trends and outcomes.

From a policy perspective, the Dashboard enhances the City's ability to comply with State mandates under RHNA, SB 35/423, SB 330 and AB 101. More broadly, it strengthens the City's position in pursuing State housing funds and eligibility for regulatory streamlining by demonstrating a robust, data-driven approach to housing production monitoring.

Next Steps

The upcoming phase will require a significant analytical and operational effort. Staff will manually compile, reconcile, and enter the full 2025 housing production dataset into TRAKiT to ensure the Dashboard reflects accurate, State-aligned information. Each project must be validated for entitlement status, permit issuance, completion milestones, and income-level categorization, consistent with RHNA and HE APR standards.

This data migration will finalize GIS extraction protocols and confirm the Dashboard's ability to translate raw permitting data into clear, publicly accessible performance metrics. Following verification, the Housing and Land Use Committee will conduct a structured review, and selected external stakeholders will participate in targeted Beta testing to assess usability, clarity, and data integrity. Feeback from these evaluations will guide final refinements before the Dashboard is presented to the City Council for approval of public release. This phase reflects the City's ongoing commitment to accuracy, transparency, and continuous improvement in housing production reporting.

With the development of the dashboard, completion of the Housing Summit, and implementation of the Rental Assistance Program – which partners with the Monterey County Office of Education (MCOE) Connections Program to assist families with school-aged children at risk of homelessness, the Mayor's Ad Hoc Committee has concluded its work.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

Not a Project. The City of Salinas has determined that the proposed administrative report is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378). In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 includes the general rule that CEQA applies only to activities which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment.

CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE §84308 APPLIES:
No.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

The development and implementation of the Housing Dashboard furthers the City Council 2025-2028 Goal of City Services by engaging residents and improving communication with the community.

ATTACHMENTS:

Housing Dashboard Screenshots