



Study Session: Zoning Code Update Visioning & Required Housing Law Changes

Salinas Planning Commission – December 3, 2025

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Agenda

- PlaceWorks Introduction
- Zoning Code Update Introduction
- Best Practice Jurisdictions
- Zoning Code Update Visioning
- What is a Housing Element?
- Code Updates to Implement the Housing Element

PlaceWorks

- 100 percent employee-owned planning, design, and environmental consulting firm
- Serves public- and private-sector clients for comprehensive planning, urban design, landscape architecture, environmental analysis, and GIS
- 140 staff in six offices across California

Project Team

- **Charlie Knox**, Principal-in-Charge
- **Amy Sinsheimer**, Project Manager
- **Erika Lindstrom**, Assistant Project Manager
- **Cynthia Walsh**, zoning advisor
- **Alan Loomis**, form-based coding and design standards
- **Greg Goodfellow**, design standards

Zoning Code Update Project Phases

- Phase 1:  Fall 2025 Winter/Spring 2026
 - Phase 1: Address Housing Element implementation and other City priorities
- Phase 2:  Fall 2025 Fall 2026
 - Phase 2: Bring General Plan Place Types and Zoning Code into Alignment
- Phase 3:  Fall 2025 Fall 2027
 - Phase 3: Additional Zoning Code Amendments

Why a Zoning Code Update

- Implement changes in California law
- Implement the 2023-2031 Housing Element, and Visión Salinas 2040 General Plan Update once adopted
- Streamline development processes that align with community preferences
- Create a Zoning Code that is user-friendly for the public and staff

Zoning Code Update Overview

- The Zoning Code – Chapter 37 of Municipal Code
 - Regulates how private property can be developed and used
 - Primary Implementation tool of the General Plan
- The Zoning Code is Not:
 - Building Code
 - Other chapters of Municipal Code

Municipal Code

Charter + 37 Chapters

Most related to Planning commission:

- Ch. 3 Commissions, Committees, and boards
- Ch. 5 Article VII. - Cannabis
- Ch. 31 Subdivision
- Ch. 37 Zoning

Examples of other Chapters related to development process:

- Ch. 9 Buildings
- Ch. 17 Housing
- Ch. 29 Stormwater Management
- Ch. 30 Streets and Sidewalks
- Ch. 35 Trees and Shrubs
- Ch. 36 Industrial Waste, Wastewater

Visioning

Questions for Planning Commissioners:

1. What are the current challenges with the Zoning code?
2. What would you like to see out of this Zoning Code update?
3. Other questions about the Zoning Code Update?



Questions

What is a Housing Element?



- Required element of the General Plan
- State-mandated update schedule
- Reviewed and certified by State (HCD) for compliance with State law
- Plan for accommodating a jurisdiction's "fair share" of the regional housing need
- 6th Cycle Planning Period: December 15, 2023 – December 15, 2031
- Adopted December 5, 2023

What is a Housing Element?

Housing Needs Assessment

Demographic Trends

Housing Market Trends

Special Needs Groups

Assessment of Fair Housing

Outreach

Fair Housing Issues

Site Inventory Analysis

Contributing Factors

Constraints to Housing Development

Governmental and Non-Governmental

Market Trends

Environmental

Infrastructure

Resources and Sites Inventory

Zoning and Capacity

Inventory of Sites

ADUs and Rezones

Policies and Programs

Review of Previous Housing Element Implementation

Identify 2023- 2031 Programs

Housing Crisis and Policy Trends



- Statewide housing affordability crisis
- Multi-year, multi-law effort to increase housing production
 - SB 2, SB 30, SB 35, SB 330, etc.
- Common themes:
 - Streamline review processes
 - Increase allowed density
 - Promote ADUs
 - Develop Objective Design Standards
 - Reduce associated housing costs - parking requirements, fees, etc.
 - Overall reduction in local control in favor of statewide standards
 - New requirements for local Housing Elements

Housing Element Implementation - ADUs

Program 4: Accessory Dwelling Units

d. Extend existing ordinance amending Chapter 9 of the Salinas Municipal Code (Building) to exempt accessory dwelling units from Development Impact Fees for an additional 5 years.

e. Complete ADU/JADU ordinance update by May 2024, to incorporate state requirements and any other relevant legislation.

City Action:

- Extend ADU impact fee exemption for additional 5 years.
- Allow ADUs in zones where single family, multi-family, and mixed-use residential development are allowed, as consistent with 2025 State law.

Applicable Government Code Section: Government Code Sections 66310 – 66342

Housing Purpose: Allow additional housing types and options for property owners to add units.

Housing Element Implementation – CUP Findings

Program 6: General Plan, Zoning Code, and Approval Process Updates

City Action:

f. Amend CUP requirements in zoning code to remove subjective required finding (Sec. 37-60.520.(b)) on nonimpacts to the surrounding neighborhood/properties for housing projects and mixed-use projects that include housing.

Remove subjective findings for housing projects including mixed-use housing projects.

Applicable Government Code Section: Government Code Section 65589.5

Housing Purpose: Allow for more objective development review.

Housing Element Implementation – Definition of Family

Program 6: General Plan, Zoning Code, and Approval Process Updates

City Action:

g. Change the zoning code definition of family (in Sec. 37-10.300) to remove language that may exclude unrelated individuals from living together. Remove phrase “based on personal relationships”.

Update definition of “family” in the zoning code to comply with State law.

Applicable Government Code Section: Government Code Section 65008

Housing Purpose: Remove potential housing discrimination.

Housing Element Implementation – Covered Parking

Program 6: General Plan, Zoning Code, and Approval Process Updates

City Action:

h. Amend zoning code to remove garage and covered parking requirements.

Remove garage and covered parking requirements for single family dwellings, condominiums, and mobilehome parks.

Applicable Government Code Section: Government Code Section 65589.5

Housing Purpose: Remove potential constraints to the construction of housing.

Housing Element Implementation – Employee Housing

Program 6: General Plan, Zoning Code, and Approval Process Updates

i. Amend zoning code to make Employee Housing, Small Project, a Permitted-by-right (P) use in the R-M-3.6 and R-M-2.9 residential zones.

City Action:

Allow *Employee Housing, Small Project*, as a by-right use in the R-M-3.6 and R-M-2.9 zoning districts.

Applicable Government Code Section: Health and Safety Code 17021.5

Housing Purpose: Allow for employee housing development.

Housing Element Implementation – Emergency Shelters

Program 6: General Plan, Zoning Code, and Approval Process Updates

City Action:

j. Amend Emergency Shelter section (Sec. 37-50.305) to meet all requirements pursuant to AB 2339, including eliminating the restrictions on the number of beds, expanding the definition, ensuring proximity to services, bringing parking and distance requirements into compliance with AB 139, making Emergency Shelters, Type A, a permitted use (no discretionary action) in the Mixed-Use District.

- Eliminate the restriction on the number of beds
- Update the definition to include *other interim interventions, including but not limited to, navigation centers, bridge housing, and respite or recuperative care*
- Update parking standards to *one parking space for each staff member, provided that parking requirements for emergency shelters do not exceed those required for other residential or commercial uses within the same zone.*
- Allow *Emergency Shelters* as a permitted use in the Mixed-Use District.

Applicable Government Code Section: Government Code Section 65583(a)(4)

Housing Purpose: Allow for the development of emergency shelters by removing potential constraints.

Housing Element Implementation – Supportive Housing

Program 6: General Plan, Zoning Code, and Approval Process Updates

k. Streamline approval process to comply with AB 2162 (2018) for Supportive Housing (as defined in the California Health and Safety Code Section 50675.14) in zones where multifamily and mixed uses are permitted, treat as use by right, with no minimum parking requirements if the development is located within ½ mile of a public transit stop.

City Action:

- Allow *Supportive Housing* as a by-right use in the R-M-3.6, R-M-2.9, R-H-2.1, R-H-1.8, CO/R, CO, CR, CT, MAF, and MX zoning districts.
- Remove minimum parking requirements within ½ mile of a major transit stops for commercial and residential development.

Applicable Government Code Section: Government Code Section 65651 (a) and Government Code 65863.2

Housing Purpose: Allow for the development of supportive housing in more zones, remove potential parking constraints to allow for the development of commercial and/or residential developments

Housing Element Implementation – SB 35

Program 6: General Plan, Zoning Code, and Approval Process Updates

I. Establish a written policy to ensure streamlined ministerial review of eligible affordable housing projects as provided by SB 35 (2017) and Government Code, Section 65913.4.

City Action:

Adopt a local SB 35 streamlined ministerial review process for eligible affordable housing projects.

Applicable Government Code Section: Government Code Section 65913.4

Housing Purpose: Allow for a streamlined approval process for the development of affordable housing.

Housing Element Implementation – Low Barrier Nav. Center

Program 6: General Plan, Zoning Code, and Approval Process Updates

City Action:

m. Amend the zoning code to comply with AB 101 (2019) to allow Low Barrier Navigation Centers, as defined in Government Code Section 65660, by right in areas zoned for mixed use and nonresidential zones permitting multifamily uses if it meets specified requirements, including:

- i. Access to permanent housing.
- ii. Use of a coordinated entry system (Homeless Management Information System).
- iii. Use of Housing First according to Welfare and Institutions Code section 8255 (Government Code Section 65662).

Allow *Low Barrier Navigation Centers* as a by-right use in the CO/R, CO, CR, CT, MAF, and MX zoning districts.

Applicable Government Code Section: Government Code Section 65660

Housing Purpose: Allow for the development of low barrier navigation centers in more zones.

Housing Element Implementation – Residential Care

Program 6: General Plan, Zoning Code, and Approval Process Updates

City Action:

n. The City will modify or replace the CUP requirements for 7 or more residential care facilities to ensure objective standards to promote approval certainty and permit the uses similar to other residential uses of the same type in the same zone.

Modify or remove the Conditional Use Permit requirement for residential care facilities of seven or more persons.

Applicable Government Code Section: Government Code Section 65583(a)(5)

Housing Purpose: Remove potential constraints on the development of residential care facilities.

Housing Element Implementation – Reasonable Accommodation

Program 14. Housing and Services for Persons with Disabilities

City Action:

e. Amend Municipal Code Chapter 15 Housing to remove subjective findings from Article IV – Reasonable Accommodation for Persons with Disabilities.

Remove subjective approval findings to streamline housing choices for persons with disabilities.

Applicable Government Code Section: Government Code Section 65583(c)(3)

Housing Purpose: Streamline housing modification needs for persons with disabilities.

Next Steps

PlaceWorks will start preparing text changes for housing compliance amendments

Broader engagement will launch in early 2026

Staff will present the Draft Public Engagement Plan to Council (12/2)

Staff will return to Planning Commission on other Phase One items in early 2026

Questions