

**UNOFFICIAL MINUTES  
OF THE  
SALINAS PLANNING COMMISSION  
November 15, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 3:31 p.m. in the City Council Chamber Rotunda.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL**

**WELCOME AND STAFF INTRODUCTIONS**

**PRESENT:** Chairperson Gonzalez, and Commissioners, Meeks, Manzo, Donohue, and Ramos

**ABSENT:** Commissioners McKelvey Daye and Purnell

**STAFF:** Community Development Director, Lisa Brinton; Planning Manager, Courtney Grossman; Planning Manager, Grant Leonard; Senior Planner, Jonathan Moore; and Administrative Aide, Desteny Villa

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

Chairperson Gonzalez opened for public comment at 3:32 p.m.

No public comment was made.

Chairperson Gonzalez closed for public comment at 3:32 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:** October 18, 2023

Upon motion by Commissioner Donohue, and a second by Commissioner Meeks, the minutes of October 18, 2023, were approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

**AYES:** Chairperson Gonzalez, and Commissioners Meeks, Manzo, Donohue, and Ramos

**NOES:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

**ABSENT:** Commissioners McKelvey Daye and Purnell

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

None

## **CONSIDERATIONS**

None

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

### **Recommendation to Adopt the 2023-2031 Housing Element (General Plan Amendment 2023-002)**

Planning Manager, Grant Leonard, presented a PowerPoint presentation, which is on file at the Community Development Department.

Commissioner Manzo inquired about reconciliation between the current and new general plan.

Mr. Leonard informed that the city is currently operating under the 2002 general plan and scheduled to adopt the 2040 Vision Salinas general plan by Summer 2024, which is consistent to the current general plan and includes the Housing Element.

Commissioner Manzo inquired about race and ethnicity and the composition of integration and segregation and the data comparison from the City of Seaside.

Mr. Leonard indicated that he is not aware of the City of Seaside data will look into the statistics and will follow up with an answer.

Commissioner Manzo inquired about meeting notes around community meetings that highlight community land trust as a potential option for meeting the needs of housing and whether there is sufficient foundation being implemented in the housing element.

Mr. Leonard informed that the City plans to approach this matter with community partners and residents by supporting the potential foundation and foresees this as a long-term goal.

Commissioner Manzo inquired about the possibility of updating the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance that is in compliance with the current economic landscape.

Mr. Leonard informed that the City is currently working with an economic analysis firm to update the background study of the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance.

Commissioner Manzo inquired about the timeline of the updated Inclusionary Housing Ordinance.

Lisa Brinton, Community Development Director, informed that this update is expected to be finalized sometime in 2024, but does not have an exact date.

Commissioner Manzo requested clarification around preserving 39% affordable housing stock at risk of conversion.

Mr. Leonard clarified that affordable housing is affordable by deed restriction, which is developed with a clause attached and recorded by the County. Towards the expiration date, the deed restriction is tracked, and the City continues to work with the property owner who receives state or federal funds such as the Housing Authority, to extend the funding that will convert into perpetuity.

Commissioner Manzo inquired about a time frame of implementing the inspection program around the rental registry.

Mr. Leonard informed that the City Housing Department is in the early phase of taking rental registration.

Ms. Brinton informed that the current focus is the rental registration program and the City is currently working on compliance. The City is currently prioritizing legal and financial resources that will be offered to the community before implementing an inspection program.

Commissioner Meeks inquired about the determination factor of affordable housing.

Mr. Leonard informed that the city refers to the legal definition to determine affordability.

Commissioner Meeks inquired about the intention to promote rehabilitation of affordable housing.

Mr. Leonard informed about the Community Development Block Grant program, which is a grant and loan program that funds home renovations for qualifying Salinas residents.

Commissioner Meeks inquired about Code Enforcements responsibilities within Salinas neighborhoods.

Mr. Leonard informed that Code Enforcement is currently understaffed and operates by a complaint-based system where concerned residents may submit complaints.

Commissioner Meeks inquired about particular areas in Salinas that are facing reversed patterns of discrimination.

Mr. Leonard informed that areas like Chinatown, Alisal and certain areas around Downtown are facing income segregation and racial discrimination and the goal is to implement the Alisal Vibrancy Plan, which will reverse the disparities these areas are facing.

Commissioner Ramos inquired about the plans for the future housing development and current housing developments.

Mr. Leonard informed that there are plans for growth within the future growth area for the West Area Specific Plan and the Central Area Specific Plan. City staff is currently leading a third growth area known as the East Area Specific Plan.

Commissioner Ramos inquired about the potential traffic congestion in the future growth areas.

Mr. Leonard informed that traffic circulation is important within the City Maintenance of the roads is provided by Public Works. Advanced Planning is working through the General Plan Update under the traffic circulation which focuses on how to accommodate more growth and how to solve the traffic congestion the city is currently facing.

Commissioner Ramos inquired about employment rates reflecting affordable housing.

Mr. Leonard noted that the income categories are updated every year by the federal government Department of Housing and Urban Development and the state's Housing and Community Development Department and take an average of the incomes throughout the area to determine who would qualify.

Commissioner Ramos inquired about the percentage to be affordable.

Mr. Leonard informed that a percentage of every major development will be deed restricted. He also informed that through the future growth, it is expected to see the existing housing stock more affordable.

Chairperson Gonzalez inquired about the list of themes added into the Housing Element Staff report and whether City Council will be provided with this material.

Mr. Leonard informed that City Council will receive the information from the Housing Element staff report.

Chairperson Gonzalez inquired about the inclusionary housing process timeline what this process will look like in 2024.

Ms. Brinton informed that the City will give a presentation at the next Planning Commission meeting around updates on the inclusionary housing 2024 timeline.

Chairperson Gonzalez inquired about housing goal one and some examples of diverse housing types.

Mr. Leonard informed that the size is the type of housing units such as small units, single and multi-family units and Accessory Dwelling Units.

Chairperson Gonzalez inquired about a potential strategy to prevent displacement and the partnership between the City and community groups.

Mr. Leonard informed that there is a state law that requires all city and county jurisdictions to list surplus land that is available for housing as well as several programs and actions related to identifying grant funding and working with developer partners like Moon Gate Chinatown.

Chairperson Gonzalez inquired about whether the city will make capacity available for collecting data on identifying key indicators to understand tenant displacement and housing insecurity.

Mr. Leonard informed that there are existing data sources the city has implemented, but with the rental registry as a source of data, it is expected to have a greater source outcome.

Chairperson Gonzalez inquired about whether the cost of housing be more than 30% of an individual's income.

Mr. Leonard confirmed that housing rent will stay within the 30% income range.

Ms. Brinton clarified that the 30% income range is within the deed restricted affordable properties.

Chairperson Gonzalez inquired as to whether the city is looking into other options to ensure housing stability rather than deed restricted affordable housing.

Mr. Leonard informed that the city is encouraging developers to build smaller multifamily units and apartments as well as having a variety of housing stock to decrease the rent cost.

Ms. Brinton clarified that live work units, townhomes, condominiums, etc., are considered lower cost units.

Chairperson Gonzalez inquired about potential programs such as farm worker and first-time home buyers.

Mr. Leonard informed that the City has two policies related to farm worker housing and will provide an update as to whether there is a specific home ownership program and/ or policy for farm workers.

Chairperson Gonzalez inquired about how the City is approaching potential displacement for current residents while implementing the proposed benefits.

Mr. Leonard clarified that the Alisal Vibrancy Plan and Chinatown Revitalization Plan are not intended to gentrify the community of Salinas, but to approach the projects through community engagement rather than push out community residents.

Eloise Shim, community resident, addressed the rental registry in the City of Monterey and inquired about the number of landlords that have complied with rental registry since implemented.

Mr. Leonard informed that he is not aware of the details of the City of Monterey's program.

Upon motion by Commissioner Manzo to approve a resolution recommending that the City Council adopt the 2023-2031 Housing Element, and a second by Commissioner Meeks, the motion carried by the following vote:

AYES: Chairperson Gonzalez, and Commissioners Meeks, Manzo, Donohue, and Ramos

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Commissioners McKelvey Daye and Purnell

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**General Plan Steering Committee Updates**

Chairperson Gonzalez informed that the committee reviewed land use which focused economic development implications.

Commissioner Donohue informed that the committee focused on public safety.

Chairperson Gonzalez informed that the committee looked at a diversity of ways to address public safety.

**FOLLOW UP REPORTS**

None

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Mr. Grossman informed that PUD 2022-001 involving a new Raising Canes restaurant will be presented at the next Planning Commission meeting scheduled on December 6, 2023.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chairperson Gonzalez reviewed for quorum for December 6, 2023, and adjourned the meeting at 4:19 p.m.

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ROSA GONZALEZ  
Chairperson

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COURTNEY GROSSMAN  
Executive Secretary

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JOHN MEEKS  
Vice Chairperson

**SALINAS PLANNING COMMISSION  
RESOLUTION NO. 2023-12**

RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPT THE 2023-2031 HOUSING ELEMENT (GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT 2023-002), AUTHORIZE STAFF TO SUBMIT THE 2023-2031 HOUSING ELEMENT TO THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (HCD) FOR CERTIFICATION, AND AUTHORIZE STAFF TO MAKE NON-POLICY REVISIONS TO THE HOUSING ELEMENT IN RESPONSE TO FUTURE HCD COMMENTS.

**WHEREAS**, the Housing Element is a required chapter of the City of Salinas' (City) General Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the City adopted the current 2015-2023 Housing Element in 2015; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2015-2023 Housing-Element expires in December 2023 and the City is statutorily required to adopt an updated 2023-2031 Housing Element by December 15, 2023; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has conducted extensive community outreach and detailed technical analyses to prepare a Draft 2023-2031 Housing Element that adheres to State regulatory requirements and reflects the City's commitment to supporting housing development and programs that equitably serve all residents of the City; and

**WHEREAS**, the Housing Element update process includes the preparation of a draft 2023-2031 Housing Element, a mandatory 30-day public review period, followed by a 10-business day City response to comment period, and a 90-day review period by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD); and

**WHEREAS**, the City made the Draft 2023-2031 Housing Element available for public review from May 12 through June 20, 2023, and revised the Draft based on public comment received before submitting the Draft 2023-2031 Housing Element to HCD on July 6th; and

**WHEREAS**, the City received initial comments from HCD in August and issued a revised Draft 2023-2031 Housing Element for public from September 27, 2023 through October 4, 2023; and

**WHEREAS**, the City received an official comment letter HCD in October and revised the Draft 2023-2031 Housing Element to incorporate the recommendations from HCD; and

**WHEREAS**, the City published the Final 2023-2031 Housing Element for public review on November 9, 2023; and

**WHEREAS**, The environmental impacts of this project are being analyzed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and because the number of housing units proposed in the 2023-2031 Housing Element falls within buildout analyzed under previous General Plan environmental review, it was determined that the necessary CEQA analysis will be completed through an addendum to the 2017 Economic Development Element Environmental Impact Report, and said addendum will be considered by the City Council with the 2023-2031 Housing Element on December 5, 2023.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Salinas Planning Commission recommends that the Salinas City Council adopt the 2023-2031 Housing Element (General Plan

amendment 2023-002), authorize staff to submit the 2023-2031 Housing Element to the State of California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for certification, and authorize staff to make non-policy revisions to the housing element in response to future HCD comments; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Planning Commission adopts the following findings as the basis for its determination, and that the foregoing recitations are true and correct, and are included herein by reference as findings:

Environmental Analysis

- 1. Planning Commission finds that the environmental impacts of this project are being analyzed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) through an addendum to the 2017 Economic Development Element Environmental Impact Report.**

Because the number of housing units proposed in the 2023-2031 Housing Element falls within buildout analyzed under previous General Plan environmental review, it was determined that the necessary CEQA analysis will be completed through an addendum to the 2017 Economic Development Element Environmental Impact Report. This addendum will be considered by the City Council with the 2023-2031 Housing Element on December 5, 2023.

General Plan Amendment:

- 1. Planning Commission finds that the proposed Amendment is in conformance with the Salinas General Plan.**

The proposed Amendment will update the City's General Plan Housing Element to comply with the Salinas General Plan and allow the City to adopt local policy options to meet the documented housing needs. The 2023-2031 Housing Element provides a detailed analysis of the City's demographic, economic, and housing characteristics and it also provides an evaluation of the city's progress in implementing past policy and action programs relating to housing needs. The document demonstrates that the City can accommodate its "fair share" of housing as established by the Regional Housing Needs Allocation, distributed by income levels for the planning period of December 31, 2023 through December 31, 2031.

- 2. Planning Commission finds that the public necessity, convenience and general welfare permit the adoption of the proposed amendment.**

The proposed Amendment advances the public necessity, convenience and general welfare by identifying the housing needs of residents of all income levels and specific groups such as seniors, disabled persons, and the homeless. The Amendment will allow the city to adopt local policy options to address these documented housing needs and thus provide potential housing opportunities for City residents. The Draft City of Salinas 2023-2031 Housing Element, once adopted by the City Council and certified by the State, will be in conformance with State law. A certified Housing Element is vitally important in assisting



the City and other not-for profit entities seeking public funding to leverage the much needed provision of affordable housing.

**PASSED AND APPROVED** this 15<sup>th</sup> day of November 2023, by the following vote:

AYES: Chairperson Gonzalez, and Commissioners Meeks, Manzo, Donohue, and Ramos

NOES: None

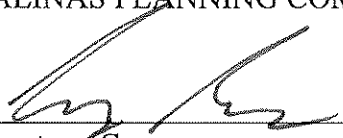
ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Commissioners McKelvey Daye and Purnell

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a Resolution of the Planning Commission of the City of Salinas, that said Resolution was passed and approved by the affirmative and majority vote of said Planning Commission at a meeting held on November 15, 2023, and that said Resolution has not been modified, amended, or rescinded, and is now in full force and effect.

SALINAS PLANNING COMMISSION

Date: 11/28/23

  
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Courtney Grossman  
Secretary

