Regional Early Action Planning Grant Program (REAP)

Eligible Activities Best Practices

This document will be updated periodically with new ideas. Additions will be attached as a new page at the end of the document with the date of the addition.

Eligible Activity: Developing an Improved RHNA Methodology to Further Gov Code Section 65584 (d) Objectives.

Gov Code Section 65584 (d) "affirmatively furthering fair housing" means taking meaningful actions, in addition to combating discrimination, that overcome patterns of segregation and foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to opportunity based on protected characteristics. Specifically, affirmatively furthering fair housing means taking meaningful actions that, taken together, address significant disparities in housing needs and in access to opportunity, replacing segregated living patterns with truly integrated and balanced living patterns, transforming racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity, and fostering and maintaining compliance with civil rights and fair housing laws.

- Analyzing and incorporating Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing and making data available to jurisdictions
- Increasing zoned capacity in jurisdictions with disproportionately high jobs-housing ratio, including an improved balance between the number of low-wage jobs and the number of housing units affordable to low-wage workers in each jurisdiction
- Outreach strategies in addition to conducting a survey to combat segregation and foster inclusive communities free from barriers that would restrict access to opportunity based on protected characteristics
- Education and awareness of fair housing laws and issues to stakeholders (e.g. community, developers, public staff)
- Providing language assistance for limited proficiency in English
- Incorporating and developing policy guide for displacement avoidance plan and affordable housing preservation
- Incorporating climate mitigation strategies (e.g. make housing more energy efficient, adopting renewable energy sources such as solar and wind)
- Incorporating disaster / climate adaptation and encouraging strategies in local land use documents

- Incorporating ways to promote infill development (i.e., promoting higher zoned capacity in areas with low per capita vehicle miles traveled and high access to opportunity, focusing new growth land that has already been developed with urban uses or is substantially surrounded by urban uses and/or incorporating ways to promote transportation-efficient development (i.e., development in places where there are multiple transportation options besides a single occupancy vehicle--transit, bike lanes, sidewalks-- and the density and mix of uses that make these transportation options a viable choice),
- Mapping regional Priority Development Areas or similar
- Implementing a Sustainable Communities Strategies (SCS) consistency program (e.g. Association of Bay Area Government's Resilience Program)
- Promotion of more zoned capacity for housing in jurisdictions with the highest housing costs.
- Local input surveys
- Mini grants to community groups and partnership with grassroots partners and community leaders to support full engagement in RHNA development
- Aligning transportation funding – especially competitive transportation grant programs and investments in transit, streetscape, placemaking, and active transportation – with RHNA plans for housing (i.e., Bay Area's Resolution 3434)
- Incorporating homelessness data to plan for meeting supply of below 30 percent AMI units
- Education and awareness of various tax increment financing tools, promoting use of local tax increment financing tools (i.e., Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs), Community Revitalization and Investment Authorities (CRIAs), Affordable Housing Authorities (AHAs), Infrastructure and Financing Revitalization Districts (IFRDs) and Neighborhood Infill Finance and Transit Improvements (NIFTI) districts. CRIAs have alignment with CalEnviro Screen and affordable housing requirement, see tool comparison.
- Education and awareness on pairing federal Opportunity Zone (OZ) program with state programs (i.e., Strategic Growth Council Transformative Climate Community in Ontario has an affordable housing project funded by state with OZ funding). Opportunity Zones are census tracts that are defined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as "economically-distressed community where new investments, under certain conditions, may be eligible for preferential tax treatment." They were added to the tax code by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act on December 22, 2017. https://opzones.ca.gov/faqs/.

- Incorporating methods to pair federal Opportunity Zone program with affordable housing

Eligible Activity: Suballocations to Jurisdictions

- Developing approaches to insure equitable distribution of funding such as location-based minimums (e.g., at least 20% in a specified county), non-competitive programs coupled with population based or RHNA based award amounts, proactive outreach and technical assistance with under-resourced communities.
- Program criteria for SCS consistency, displacement, affordability, including deeper targeting, climate adaption
- Program criteria for Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing
- COG to develop grant program to support development of compliant Housing Elements and community engagement strategies (i.e., Bay Area's 80k by 2020 challenge grant program, SANDAG's Policy 33)
- Program criteria or other incentives to facilitate pro-housing jurisdictions
- Jurisdictions' specific best practices after a COG develops a grant program:
    - Prepare a form based zoning or overlay zone to provide development standards and zoning that allows future higher-density housing and mixed-use development (may include Environmental Impact Report [EIR])
    - Develop framework for a trust to support the preservation and production of long-term affordable housing for lower-income households
    - Completing CEQA analysis and specific plan EIRs that promote streamlined approvals at the project-level or eliminate the need for project-level specific review.
    - Undertake rezoning efforts to bring local zoned capacity into compliance with HCD requirements for housing element prior to Housing Element due data
    - Objective design and/or development standards to comply with SB35 and other laws to provide more clarity and certainty for applicants.
    - Planning associated with local financial strategies such as a local housing trust fund, fee reductions for infill, TOD, or affordable developments, published fee schedules and fee calculators.

- Intensifying land-use patterns to allow for a variety of housing types (duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, multi-family) and increasing densities on sites identified to accommodate the jurisdictions lower-income RHNA.
- When suballocating funds for comprehensive marketing strategies that the marketing is equitably designed and inclusive of disadvantage communities.
- Feasibility studies to determine the most efficient locations to site housing, such as those with lowest per capita vehicle miles traveled and highest access to jobs and other opportunities.
- Infrastructure planning that prioritizes infill development.
- Establishing a flexible housing subsidy pool.
- Anti-displacement strategies which may be applicable are those eligible pursuant to the program guidelines of other state housing assistance programs such as the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) Program, or policies and programs to implement the provisions of Government Code section 65583 (a)(9) and (c)(6) for preservation of assisted housing developments.
- Examples of priorities that may complement the acceleration of housing production can include consideration of practices that prohibit residential uses in areas zoned for open space, agriculture, areas considered environmentally hazardous (e.g., floodplains or high wildfire severity zone areas), or other sensitive areas.
- Feasibility for a tax increment financing tool that expedites housing development; prepare an Infrastructure Financing Plan for a tax increment financing tool to plan for future housing and housing funding. Such as Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs), Community Revitalization and Investment Authorities (CRIAs), Affordable Housing Authorities (AHAs), Infrastructure and Financing Revitilization Districts (IFRDs) and Neighborhood Infill Finance and Transit Improvements (NIFTI) districts. CRIAs have alignment with CalEnviro Screen and affordable housing requirement. Tool comparison:
- Pairing Federal Opportunity Zone Program for affordable housing development
  - Developing plan to increase affordable housing development in Federal Opportunity Zones.

- Creating toolkit/project pipleline to pair Opportunity Zone funding with state affordable housing programs (such as AHSC project or Infill Infrastructure Grant with an OZ Fund)
- Examples include the Strategic Growth Council Transformative Climate Community in Ontario has an affordable housing project funded by state with OZ funding

Eligible Activity: Technical Assistance, Temporary Staffing or Consultant Needs and Other Actions

- To build capacity develop a planning academy (educate and engage on planning processes) for staff. E.g. City of Sacramento's Citizen's Planning Academy.
- Developing regional toolkits on a variety of housing-specific topics such as objective design and development standards, housing elements, CEQA streamlining, by-right zoning, ADUs, infrastructure planning, housing finance strategies, public engagement, planning adaptation, Opportunity Zones, tax-increment financing tools, and equity and environmental justice.
- Creation of data service menus and analysis templates to support preparation of housing elements
- Assistance with sites inventories to support preparation of the housing elements
- Developing public engagement and educational strategies to build support from local elected officials, stakeholders, and the general public on a variety of housing policies that encourage affordable housing. Strategies can include workshops, campaigns, fact sheets, customizable PowerPoint slide decks, etc.,
- Creating tools to encourage the development of ADUs such as, handbooks, prototype plans and designs that can be customized to a local jurisdiction. Other tools may include web-based ADU calculators, entitlement processing assistance and websites specific to jurisdictions.
- Establishing consulting benches or circuit rider programs that can provide targeted TA on a variety of housing and land use topics in the form of training, workshops, panel discussions, and direct assistance to jurisdictions around specific housing policy areas such as housing elements, ADUs, CEQA, by-right zoning, expediated permit processing, infrastructure, equity and environmental Justice, etc.,

- Toolboxes that include model ordinances, templates, checklists, and handbooks that help jurisdictions comply with land-use and planning laws such as density bonus, ADUs, supportive housing, reasonable accommodation, etc.,
- Developing a peer-to-peer learning environment through facilitating regional convenings and regularly scheduled meetings where local governments can exchange best practices and share resources.
- Establishing relationship and planning housing needs with Continuum of Care
- Outreach to jurisdictions applying for/receiving emergency shelter funds to assist with planning movement from shelter to permanent homes, i.e. site and funding readiness for permanent supportive housing.
- Technical assistance on how to incorporate homelessness data into housing element updates or housing planning.
- Developing toolkits or support for planning of infrastructure financing plans for tax-increment financing tools that support housing, such as Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs), Community Revitalization and Investment Authorities (CRIAs), Affordable Housing Authorities (AHAs), Infrastructure and Financing Revitilization Districts (IFRDs) and Neighborhood Infill Finance and Transit Improvements (NIFTI) districts.
- CRIAs have alignment with CalEnviro Screen and affordable housing requirement. See tool comparison.
- Identifying infill opportunity areas or sites
- Compiling and providing information about regional conservation plans and other resource-area data to preclude time-consuming conflicts related to special-status species and other resource-conservation efforts (i.e., Butte County Association of Government's assistance in General Plan updates)
- Mapping of transportation costs to facilitate assessment of the combined cost of housing and transportation
- Development of a multi-jurisdictional Housing Element and other collaborative processes to assist the preparation and implementation of housing elements
- Convening regional stakeholders to identify solutions to regional housing challenges (e.g., the Committee to House the Bay Area (CASA) process)
- Public surveys, communications planning, development of communications materials (e.g., brochures) or tools (e.g., an online game), or communications purchases (e.g., a radio spot) to support local-government housing outreach
- Establishing a Transfer of Development Rights program

- CEQA streamlining support (i.e., Sacramento Area of Council of Government's (SACOG) assists projects within its region in utilizing the SB 375 CEQA streamlining provisions. SB 375 allows for streamlined review and analysis of residential or mixed-use projects consistent with an SCS; modified review and analysis, through an expedited Sustainable Communities Environmental Assessment (SCEA), for Transit Priority Projects (TPPs) that are consistent with an SCS; and a complete CEQA exemption for TPPs that are consistent with an SCS and meet a specific list of other requirements. In each of these cases, SACOG's MTP/SCS EIR serves as a first-tier environmental document under CEQA. SACOG provides lead agencies with a CEQA streamlining worksheet to determine if projects are consistent with their region's SCS, and to help determine the appropriate CEQA streamlining.)
- Facilitating partnerships between developers, local agencies, transit providers, and State agencies to secure a diverse set of investments in key housing areas, especially to facilitate infill development with many transportation choices
- Supporting efforts to secure other public funds by publicizing grant availability or providing grant-writing or other grant-related technical support for eligible projects

Eligible Activity: Program Administration

Applicants may consult with HCD to identify whether a task is an activity or administration.

- Activity costs:
  - Applicants staff time for implementation of improving RHNA methodology directly related to eligible activity 1
  - Applicants staff time to review suballocation applications from jurisdictions directly related to eligible activity 2
  - Applicants staff time to develop contracts for jurisdictions as part of suballocation directly related to eligible activity 3
- Administrative costs (max 5%):
  - Monitoring and Reporting on allocations and suballocations
  - Prepare REAP application, including staff time to participate in Steering Committee calls/meetings. Preparing invoices and supporting documentation
  - File management