



VIA EMAIL TO: HousingElement@CityofGoleta.org

**Planning and Environmental Review**

City of Goleta  
130 Cremona Drive  
Goleta, CA 93117

**RE: Redline of City's Housing Element 2023-2031 Released on March 9, 2023 for Seven-day Public Comment Period**

Dear Planning and Environmental Review Department,

We submit the following comments on the City's Housing Element, including the redline posted on March 9, 2023 by City staff for a 7-day comment period.

First, we note that the City's Housing Element (including the redline draft) is not substantially compliant with Housing Element law. We have seen and agree with the comments submitted to HCD and the City by Beth Collins at Brownstein on March 9, 2023 and March 14, 2023, and adopt all those comments by reference. Furthermore, we have reviewed the comments provided by HCD on an earlier draft of the Housing Element and note that HCD's comments have not yet been fully addressed by the City's current draft of the Housing Element.

Most importantly, the City's Housing Element relies too much on "underutilized sites" which will not realistically be developed with new housing units over the next planning period due to the extensive restrictions on redevelopment, many of which are detailed in the comment letters referred to above, that exist for the vast majority of these sites. Furthermore, many of the sites targeted for redevelopment (such as the sites along the Calle Real commercial corridor such as Fairview Plaza Center at 6040 through 6044 Calle Real and shopping center at 5677 through 5955 Calle Real) have active retail uses, and the City has not demonstrated that there is any meaningful commitment from the land owners to redevelop these sites. City-"Staff initiated discussion for potential of mixed-use on the site" at the Fairview Plaza site is not a "project" in any meaningful sense, and does not show substantial evidence of planned discontinuation of

current uses. The current retail uses of these sites include multiple grocery stores, and structures that are less than 25 years old. The commercial corridor along Calle Real is the main commercial development in the City of Goleta north of the 101 freeway and includes Trader Joes, Albertsons and Sprouts, the only grocery stores north of the 101 freeway.

Additionally, we have done further research into two project sites cited in the Brownstein letter as candidates for inclusion on the City's vacant sites list – the Shelby and Kenwood projects sites. These sites, which are approximately 12 and 10 acres respectively, are surrounded by urban uses (see aerial map attached to this letter). Neither of these sites have been in active agricultural use for at least a decade. Both of these sites are within walking distance to schools. They are ideal locations for housing.

Second, we expect that City staff will modify the Housing Element after receiving public comment. We also expect that those modifications will then be returned to the City Council for formal adoption, as is required by the Government Code. (See Gov. Code §§ 65356 [General Plan may only be amended by resolution adopted by the affirmative vote of not less than a majority of the total membership of the legislative body] 65585 [“[i]f the department finds that the draft element or draft amendment does not substantially comply with this article,” the “legislative body” must either change the draft element or adopt the draft element without changes.])

In sum, the City's Housing Element that the City Council adopted on January 17, 2023 is not in substantial compliance with Housing Element law, and the redline that City staff prepared, which is currently undergoing public comment, also fails to comply with Housing Element law. We hope that the City carefully considers the comments submitted and thoroughly revises its Housing Element to ensure that sufficient housing will be developed in the City over the next planning cycle.

Please let us know if you have any questions or would like to discuss the issues raised in this letter or the attachments.

Sincerely



Sonja Trauss  
Executive Director  
YIMBY Law



**YIMBY  
LAW**

Sue the Suburbs.  
yimbylaw.org