

City of Solvang Housing Element Update

Community Workshop #2: Public Input

On Wednesday, May 11, the City of Solvang held a Community Workshop to discuss the Housing Element Update and potential housing opportunity sites. The workshop included an introduction to the Housing Element and the Regional Housing Needs Allocation, a walkthrough of five vacant sites for consideration, and opportunities for the public to provide comments.

Public Comments

- Site 1 may have an HOA requirement.
- Traffic is an issue. Too many 4-way stops. The corridor is a thoroughfare for traffic moving through the community, and drivers use side streets when traffic backs up. Intersections are dangerous.
- The area is a high visibility gateway to the city.
- There are compatibility concerns with the adjacent housing.
- Sites should not be ruled out early in the process.
- Proposed sites back to single family homes.
- Access onto Alamo Pintado is constrained and problematic.
- Site 3 has privacy landscaping and is sited opposite the hospital emergency room.
- Site 4 is hilly, with steep slopes, and sits well above the roadway below. The northern end of the site sits approximately 60 feet above the elevation at the southern boundary.
- Site 5 is located at a busy intersection; parcel may have an easement on part, reducing the available acreage.
- Parking is impacted in the area, including into adjacent neighborhoods.
- With the lack of vacant parcels in the city, these sites should not be disregarded.
- The City should consider underutilized commercial and industrial parcels and additional residential sites for pointed rezones, including small sites.
- Sites are near new shopping centers and cottages, which impact traffic and parking.
- Developers will dictate improvements and feasibility.
- There are watershed management issues around the five sites. Sheet flow from Site 3 was reported to flow into roadways leaving debris.
- Current residents should be considered.
- The Community Design Element identifies a scenic vista that includes these parcels within the boundary. The City also has policy language that discourages development above the grade of the roadway to protect skyline views. These are constraints to multifamily housing types at the proposed sites.
- Excessive grading is needed.
- For comparison, Alisal Oaks has a 40-foot elevation change and 80 units exist there.
- Mixed-use development should be considered.