

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

DIVISION OF HOUSING POLICY DEVELOPMENT

651 Bannon Street, Suite 400

Sacramento, CA 95811

(916) 263-2911 / FAX (916) 263-7453

www.hcd.ca.gov



December 3, 2025

John Conley, City Manager
City of Vista
200 Civic Center Drive
Vista, CA 92084

RE: City of Vista's 6th Cycle Housing Element Programs – Letter of Inquiry

Dear John Conley:

The purpose of this letter is to inquire about the status of the City of Vista's (City) 6th Cycle Housing Element Implementation Programs pursuant to Government Code section 65585, subdivision (i). The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) sent the City a letter on September 7, 2022 finding the City's housing element in substantial compliance with Housing Element Law.¹ This was based on, among other reasons, the City's responsibility to complete Programs according to timeline commitments.

As the commitment date has passed for the programs listed below, HCD requests that the City confirm whether the following programs have been completed and provide the accompanying documentation (e.g., ordinances, resolutions, zoning codes, etc.) or provide an update on the status, detailed steps for remaining program actions and the current timeline for completion.

- Program 16 (Zoning Ordinance) was due by April 30, 2023: The housing element stated that the City will review parking standards to determine if changes are necessary to further facilitate housing development. The Annual Progress Report (APR) from 2024 did not include this program or status on the review and potential amendment of parking regulations in Municipal Code Chapter 18.54.
- Program 19 (Flexibility in Development Standards) was due by April 30, 2023: The housing element determined that parking requirements for multi-family developments may pose constraints and considered a sliding scale for parking requirements for residential projects based on unit type by April 30, 2024 (pg. 3-7). The Annual Progress Report (APR) from 2024 did not include this program or status on the analysis and consideration of a sliding scale for parking requirements for residential projects based on unit type.

¹ Gov. Code, § 65580 et seq.

Consequences of Failure to Implement Programs

Government Code section 65585, subdivision (i), grants HCD authority to review any action or failure to act by a local government that it determines is inconsistent with an adopted housing element or Housing Element Law. This includes failure to implement program actions included in the housing element. Failure to implement actions in Programs 16 and 19 by the statutory deadline means the City's housing element will no longer substantially comply with Housing Element Law, and HCD may revoke its finding of substantial compliance.

Various consequences may apply if the City does not have a housing element in compliance with Housing Element Law, including ineligibility or delay in receiving certain state funds, referral to the California Office of the Attorney General, court-imposed financial penalties, the loss of local land use authority to a court-appointed agent, and the application of the "builder's remedy."²

Conclusion

Housing elements are essential to developing a blueprint for growth and are a vital tool to address California's prolonged housing crisis. Accordingly, state law has established clear disincentives for local jurisdictions that fail to comply with Housing Element Law. To ensure the City continues to meet the 6th cycle update requirements for a substantially compliant housing element, the City must submit any adopted ordinances or resolutions to HCD for review or documentation that demonstrates that housing element program commits have been met.³

HCD understands the City has many commitments and recognizes the challenges of implementation. HCD will consider any written response before taking further action authorized by Government Code section 65585, subdivision (i), including issuance of a Corrective Action Letter and removal of HCD's finding of housing element compliance.

Please provide a written response to this inquiry by January 2, 2026. If you have any questions or would like to discuss the content of this letter, please contact Andrea Grant of our staff at andrea.grant@hcd.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Melinda Coy
Proactive Housing Accountability Chief
Division of Housing Policy Development

² Gov. Code, §§ 65585, subds. (i)(1)(C), (j), (l)(1); 65589.5, subd. (d)(6) and (h)(11).

³ Gov. Code, § 65585.