
July 8, 2021

Agenda Item 11.a.

**Community Engagement Assistance for
Cities and Counties on Housing Element Updates**

Subject: Report on ABAG's Regional Housing Technical Assistance Community Engagement Program – Overview of Resources and Assistance to help Cities and Counties Conduct Authentic and Equitable Public Engagement on Housing Element Updates

Background: The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) has launched the Regional Housing Technical Assistance (RHTA) program using state Regional Early Action Planning grant funds. RHTA's goal is to assist local jurisdictions in adopting compliant Housing Elements and increase housing opportunities in their communities. To encourage authentic and productive public conversations about housing, ABAG is creating communications and public engagement tools and resources that can be customized for local needs.

Report

Communications and Public Engagement Assistance

Staff is taking a three-part approach: 1) Communications assistance to advance local housing policies, 2) Best practices and resources for local engagement, including with those communities most impacted by the housing crisis, and 3) Direct support for local engagement.

Recent and Upcoming Products

Over the spring, staff conducted two well-attended webinars for local planners on public engagement – one covering best practices on talking about housing issues with the public, the second covering tools and techniques for online public engagement. The webinars were recorded and the videos as well as accompanying materials are available on the ABAG website. By July, a revamped RHTA web page will also include a public engagement tool kit with plain-language primers, templates, best practices, and more. An editable two-page primer on "what is a Housing Element" as well as a timeline that local staff can use and adapt when talking to their communities are examples of early products in this category, and are included as Attachments B and C. On-call consultant expertise will be available by fall to help cities, towns and counties with communications and messaging, innovative techniques for reaching segments of the community

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that have not traditionally participated in housing discussions, and language translations and interpretation, among other products.

Issues:

None

Recommended Action:

Information

Attachments:

A. Presentation

B. "What is a Housing Element?"

C. "Housing Element Timeline"

Reviewed:



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