



# CARPENTERS UNION LOCAL 217 SAN MATEO COUNTY

May 20, 2022

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City of San Mateo  
City Council  
330 West 20<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
San Mateo, CA 94403  
Via Email: [citycouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:citycouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)

Re: Item 1: San Mateo Housing Element

Mayor Bonilla, Deputy Mayor Papan, Honorable Councilmembers:

Please accept these comments on the above referenced Housing Element Update on behalf of the members of Carpenters Local 217, which represents working men and women in San Mateo. We appreciate the opportunity and look forward to working together on this important endeavor.

To meet the urgent need for housing units outlined in the State's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), as well as the policy goals outlined in the San Mateo Housing Element and larger General Plan, it is vital that San Mateo support efforts to build the local construction workforce. We commend the Housing Element's identifying of sites with the capacity to develop 156% of the City's RHNA, as the members of Local 217 who reside in San Mateo are intimately familiar with the region's housing crisis. Local 217 has long been at the forefront of training the next generation of construction workers, opening pathways to the industry for diverse and traditionally underserved populations, and embracing new technologies and delivery methods to expedite the construction of much needed housing.

The San Mateo Housing Element noted in its required constraints analysis that the lack of a local construction labor force "leads to project delays as workers are either unavailable or lost to more profitable projects." If anything, this undersells the severity of the labor shortage in residential construction. Neither the county nor the city of San Mateo have enough skilled, highly productive residential construction workers to build the 47,000+ units that all of the cities in San Mateo County are supposed to produce over an 8 year time period. The City of San Mateo alone is aiming to build nearly 10,000 of these units. Fewer than 500 San Mateo residents are employed building housing. Five hundred construction workers cannot build 10,000 units of housing in eight years.

To support the policy goals of the Housing Element and overcome identified constraints, Local 217 is requesting that the City add local hire and apprenticeship requirements to the General Plan and Housing Element for all residential construction projects larger than 10 units. The standards Local 217 is proposing in this comment letter would help to ensure greater benefits for the broader community, help ensure that construction labor needs are met, and guarantee that new residential development projects within the City are making needed investments in the region's skilled construction industry workforce.

## **The City Should Bar Issuance of Building Permits Unless Each Future Residential Development of 10 units or Above has a Viable Apprenticeship Program and Local Hiring Requirements**

The Carpenters propose the following additions to the Municipal Code of San Mateo for any residential project larger than 10 units

### Permitting requirements in the Municipal Code of San Mateo

A person, firm, corporation, or other entity applying for a building permit under the relevant section of the Municipal Code of San Mateo, California shall be required to comply with the apprenticeship, healthcare, and local hire requirements of the Housing Element and General Plan. Failure to comply with the requirements set forth in this section shall be deemed a violation of this article.

#### Apprenticeship:

For every apprenticeable craft, each general contractor and each subcontractor (at every tier for the project) will sign a certified statement under penalty of perjury that it participates in a Joint Apprenticeship Program Approved by the State of California, Division of Apprenticeship Standards **OR** in an apprenticeship program approved by the State of California Division of Apprenticeship Standards that has a graduation rate of 50% or higher and has graduated at least thirty (30) apprentices each consecutive year for the five (5) years immediately preceding submission of the pre-qualification documents. The contractor or subcontractor will also maintain at least the ratio of apprentices required by California Labor Code section 1777.5.

#### Local Hire Policy:

Contractor will be required to provide documentation that the contractor will hire a minimum of twenty-five percent (25%) of staff for any job classification with more than four (4) employees employed whose primary residence, which is not a post office box, is, and has been, within the Counties of San Mateo or Santa Clara within 180 days of the expected date of issuance of the Notice to Proceed for the project.

While there has been a remarkable economic expansion in San Mateo since 2010, rising inequality and displacement adds to the City's affordability crisis and threatens to undermine the region's strong economy. The San Mateo Housing Element calls for a greenhouse gas reduction program and sustainable development, and notes that the City's jobs/housing imbalance continues to grow. Policies that require the utilization of apprentices and a local construction workforce, in tandem with programs currently operational by Local 217 outlined below, will help right that imbalance and ensure that this project helps the City meet the goals of the San Mateo General Plan.

Local 217 has implemented many programs that will enable the City to meet the General Plan and Housing Element goals. These programs include a robust Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee, vigorous utilization of apprentices in San Mateo, healthcare coverage for all members and their families, and innovation within the construction industry.

Joint Apprenticeship Training Committees (JATC's), such as the Carpenters Training Committee for Northern California (CTCNC), are a proven method of career training built around a strong partnership between employers, training programs and the government. This tripartite system is financially beneficial not only for the apprentice, but is a major benefit for the employer and the overall economy of San Mateo. The CTCNC monitors current market conditions and adjusts the workflow of apprentices to meet the needs of the community, heading off any shortage of skilled workers. History has demonstrated that strong utilization of apprentices throughout the private sector helped California builders produce millions of units of housing.

CTCNC recruitment strategies include robust diversity and inclusionary outreach programs, such as pre-apprenticeship, with proven results in representative workplaces and strong local economies. It is imperative that our underserved populations have supportive and effective pathways to viable construction careers, while ensuring that employers are able to find and develop the best and brightest talent needed to thrive in a competitive economy.

Employer-paid health insurance plans for our members and their families provides preventative services to stay healthy and prevent serious illness. Timely care reduces the fiscal burden for our members and their families, and significantly reduces the utilization of safety-net programs administered by San Mateo and San Mateo County.

Embracing new technologies and delivery systems will have a significant impact on the construction industry, particularly the residential sector. Increasing housing delivery methods reduces project durations and provides San Mateo residents housing sooner. Local 217 is at the forefront of ensuring that new construction technologies deliver those benefits while also creating work opportunities for those already in the trades as well as those looking to begin a construction career. These technologies could help the City meet its jobs/housing linkage goals within the San Mateo General Plan and Housing Element.

Local 217 is in a unique position to address many of the key ideas outline in the San Mateo Housing Element Update. By investing in the training and utilization of apprentices, performing outreach to ensure that the workforce closely mirrors the demographics of our local community, providing employer-paid healthcare for our members and their families, and promoting innovation in the residential construction sector, Local 217 is prepared to assist in closing the affordability gap in San Mateo and the Bay Area. We look forward to engaging City staff and elected leaders as the Housing Element moves forward and working cooperatively to bridge the needs of the City with the skills and tools of Local 217.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



Ed Evans  
Senior Field Representative  
Carpenters Local 217

CC: City Clerk: [clerk@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:clerk@cityofsanmateo.org)  
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