



To: Capitola City Council

Date: March 25, 2025

Re: Capitola 2024 APR – Santa Cruz YIMBY Comment (Agenda #8.C)

The Housing Element process ensures that all California jurisdictions make a good-faith effort to plan for their housing needs over an eight-year period. We acknowledge the City of Capitola's submission of the 2024 Annual Progress Report (APR) and welcome the opportunity to provide feedback.

We've valued the collaboration with Capitola planning staff, the City Council, and the Planning Commission to support Housing Element implementation. We commend the City for adopting several zoning amendments that address deliverables due in both 2024 and 2025.

Nearly 80% of Capitola's housing stock is more than 30 years old, and over half of households are low-income—conditions that make housing stability a pressing issue for many residents. We appreciate the City's steps to address this, including outreach around the potential redevelopment of Dakota Apartments, emergency assistance to prevent evictions and foreclosures, and efforts to preserve affordability in mobile home parks. In a community where housing pressures affect a broad swath of residents—many of whom are low-income and face significant cost burdens—these policies are essential. They aren't just good planning; they help real people stay in their homes.

In 2025, the City must act with urgency. This year includes several key Housing Element deliverables tied to the future of the Capitola Mall site. The Mall is critical to the City's plan to meet its 6th Cycle RHNA obligations, including nearly half of total units and two-thirds of affordable housing. The Mall is a large complex project and without progress, the City may face further loss of local control and the need to identify new low-income housing sites. Delays won't just risk state compliance—they'll mean fewer homes for people and families who want to live near where they work, go to school, or build community.

We support community participation—but Housing Element implementation requires leadership and a focus on results. The goal of these programs and zoning reforms isn't just to follow state law—it's to deliver homes for real people. In some cases, like the RM zoning updates, community feedback has derailed objective analysis and skewed progress. We urge the City to center the long-term housing needs of Capitola residents—both current and future—especially when the work is politically challenging.

We're encouraged that "Attainable Housing" is one of the City's six Strategic Plan priorities, and we hope to see that commitment reflected in clear, timely action. With continued leadership and support for staff, Capitola can create space for more people to live and thrive in the community they love.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide comments.

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Santa Cruz YIMBY Mission: We envision a community where our neighbors of all ages, cultures, abilities, and incomes, can make Santa Cruz County their home. In response to the ever-increasing cost of living, we advocate for more affordable housing to meet the needs of our growing population.

Santa Cruz YIMBY is a chapter of YIMBY Action, a 501(c)(4) nonprofit organization.