

STEWARDSHIP

Every generation inherits a community shaped by those who came before. None of us builds it alone, and none of us owns it forever. For a fleeting time, we become its stewards, entrusted to strengthen what we have inherited and pass it forward to those who follow. The measure of good planning is not simply what we build today, but if the community we leave is stronger, more resilient, and more enduring.

Communities are not transformed overnight. St. Helena is the product of generations. Its vineyards, neighborhoods, downtown, parks, tree-lined streets, and open landscapes did not happen by accident. They reflect decades of dedication that valued our built environment alongside thoughtful growth. The responsibility of this generation is not to preserve the city in time, nor to resist change, but instead to guide change in a way that strengthens the qualities that have always made St. Helena a remarkable place to live.

Today, St. Helena must provide housing for the people who sustain the community, families, teachers, healthcare workers, hospitality employees, first responders, local business owners, and future generations, while protecting the unique physical landscape, and form that define the city. These are not competing goals; approached thoughtfully, they are mutually reinforcing. A healthy community requires both opportunity and identity.

This Initiative is founded on a simple belief: growth should leave the community stronger than it was before. Every new neighborhood, every redevelopment project, every housing opportunity, every investment in public infrastructure, and every improvement to parks, streets, and open spaces should contribute to a more connected, more resilient, and more vibrant St. Helena. Good planning is not measured by how much is built. It is measured by whether each decision adds lasting value to the community as a whole.

That requires looking beyond individual projects. Every decision affects something larger than the property on which it occurs. Housing shapes the physical landscape. Streets shape walkability. Parks and open spaces strengthen public life. Green corridors support environmental health. Agriculture defines the city's setting and identity. The strongest communities recognize that these systems are interconnected and must be planned together.

For that reason, this Initiative is organized around four Community Elements— Agricultural Preservation, Neighborhood Preservation, Vibrancy, and Green Fingers. Together, they provide a common framework for shaping growth, directing investment, and coordinating land use, housing, infrastructure, the environment, and urban design. Rather than treating these priorities independently, they function as a single, integrated system, ensuring that each decision contributes to the long-term health of the community.

The chapters that follow are more than a collection of policies and regulations. They are a framework for stewardship, a commitment that every decision should strengthen the community we have inherited while creating new opportunities for the people who call St. Helena home today and for the generations who will call it home tomorrow.

This is how St. Helena chooses to grow.

ST. HELENA COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP INITIATIVE

A Civic Vision for the Long-Term Stewardship of St. Helena

Working Draft • Community Discussion Edition

June 2026

“Communities are remembered not for the regulations they adopt, but for the places they create.”

Prepared for Community Discussion

This document presents a proposed framework for guiding the long-term stewardship and evolution of St. Helena. It is intended to encourage thoughtful discussion regarding our community elements, housing, land use, and the City's future. As a working draft, it will continue to evolve through community dialogue and refinement.

Article 1 – Civic Vision

Establishes the community's shared vision, guiding principles, and long-term direction for the stewardship, preservation, and evolution of St. Helena.

Article 2 – Community Elements

Establishes the four Community Elements that together define St. Helena's physical form, identity, and pattern of growth.

Agricultural Preservation

Protects the productive agricultural lands, vineyards, rural landscapes, and natural resources that define St. Helena's setting, economy, and identity.

Neighborhood Preservation

Guides the thoughtful evolution of established neighborhoods through context-sensitive development, incremental infill, adaptive reuse, and that understands and respects the existing fabric, scale, and walkability of established neighborhoods.

Vibrancy

Strengthens the City's commercial, civic, cultural, hospitality, and employment centers while accommodating mixed-use development, live-work environments, housing diversity, and the greatest concentration of community activity and development intensity.

Green Fingers

Establishes a connected network of parks, open spaces, creeks, trails, paseos, streetscapes, civic spaces, view corridors, and green infrastructure that links the Community Elements into one cohesive community.

Article 3 – Community Element Development Standards

Establishes objective development standards for each Community Element that guide the appropriate uses, intensity, scale, form, and pattern of development while reinforcing the unique character and purpose of each element.

Article 4 – Citywide Community Development Standards

Establishes objective standards that apply throughout St. Helena to reinforce and strengthen the public realm, and provide consistent expectations for development regardless of Community Element.

Article 5 – Implementation

Establishes the procedures for administering and implementing the Community Elements Plan through clear, predictable, and objective review processes.

Together, these five components create an integrated framework that preserves what makes St. Helena unique while providing clear, objective guidance for how the community grows, evolves, and endures over time.

ARTICLE 1

Civic Vision

THIS IS HOW ST. HELENA CHOOSES TO GROW

Communities are remembered not for the regulations they adopt, but for the places they create.

This Civic Vision is not about regulating growth. It is about guiding the long-term evolution of St. Helena so that each generation strengthens the City's enduring community structure and leaves an even better place for the next.

A Statement of Stewardship

Every generation inherits a remarkable community. Our responsibility is neither to preserve it unchanged nor surrender it to indiscriminate change, but to steward its evolution with wisdom and intention so that the next generation inherits a St. Helena that is stronger, more connected, more resilient, and more distinctly itself.

Housing is part of that responsibility. So is preserving the qualities that make St. Helena extraordinary. These are not competing obligations; they are complementary ones when guided by a clear vision rooted in place.

Foundational Principles

Place Precedes Policy

Planning begins with the unique fabric, history, landscape, culture, and people of St. Helena—not with standardized regulations or generic development models.

Community Structure Precedes Land Use

The enduring relationships between agriculture, neighborhoods, downtown, public spaces, and the Green Fingers Network form the City's framework. Land use is a tool for strengthening that framework, not redefining it.

Stewardship Precedes Development

Growth is not measured simply by the number of homes or buildings created, but by whether each generation leaves St. Helena stronger than it found it.

For many years, St. Helena has been told that California's housing laws leave little choice but to accept increasingly standardized patterns of development. While providing additional housing is both a civic responsibility and an important community need, how that housing contributes to the fabric and long-term health of the community remains a local responsibility.

This Civic Vision rejects the false choice between preserving our community and embracing indiscriminate change. Instead, it asks a different question: How can every new home, every street, every building, every public investment, and every neighborhood strengthen the qualities that make St. Helena worth preserving?

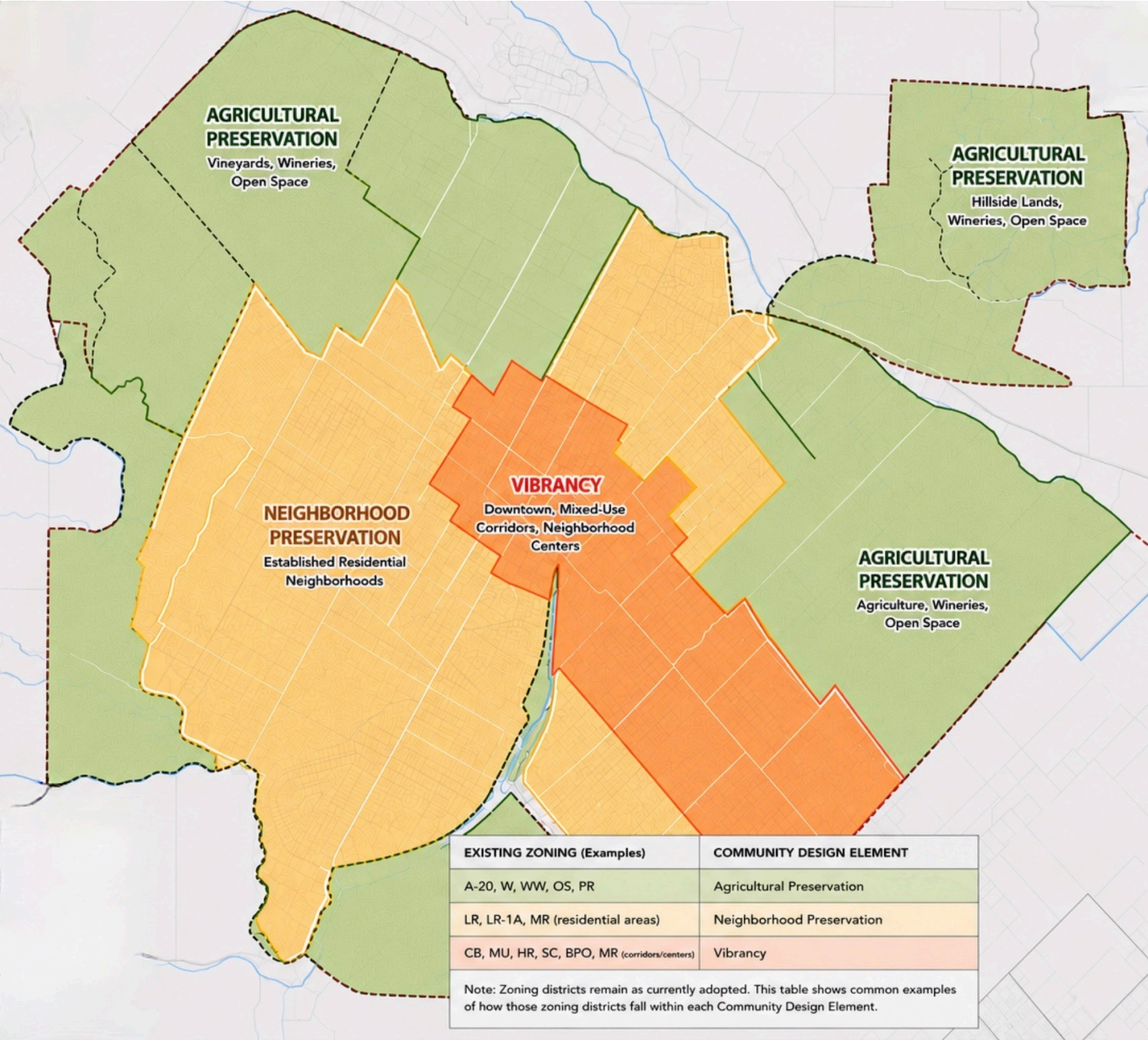
Planning therefore begins not with zoning maps or housing production targets, but with the enduring structure of the community itself.

St. Helena occupies a rare and remarkable place where agriculture and art, practicality and creativity, craftsmanship and innovation, hospitality and humility coexist. That uncommon balance is one of the City's greatest strengths. It has shaped the community for generations and should continue to guide its future.

Housing, architecture, transportation, economic development, parks, infrastructure, and public investment should work together to reinforce this enduring structure rather than evolve independently.

ARTICLE 2

Community Elements



- AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION**
Protect and sustain agricultural lands, wineries, open space, natural resources, and rural character.
- NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION**
Preserve the scale, character, and livability of established residential neighborhoods.
- VIBRANCY**
Foster a vibrant, walkable, and inclusive downtown and mixed-use areas that support commerce, culture, and community life.

EXISTING ZONING (Underneath Overlay)
All existing zoning designations remain in effect. This overlay does not change permitted uses, densities, lot sizes, or development rights.

- MAP LEGEND**
- City Limits
 - Urban Limit Line
 - Parcels
 - Waterways

- NOTES**
- This map establishes the boundaries for the three Community Design Elements used to apply objective design standards and public realm expectations.
 - Zoning districts remain unchanged and continue to regulate land use, density, lot size, setbacks and other development standards.
 - See General Plan Chapter 3 and Community Design Standards for applicable policies and standards.

Agricultural Preservation

Purpose

The purpose of the Agricultural Preservation Element is to protect and strengthen the productive agricultural lands, vineyards, rural landscapes, and natural resources that define St. Helena's identity. This Element preserves the City's agricultural heritage while ensuring that farming, environmental stewardship, and the scenic landscape remain fundamental components of the community's long-term ecosystem.

Unlike the other Community Elements, Agricultural Preservation focuses on conserving the working landscape that surrounds and shapes the City. It establishes policies and standards that protect agricultural productivity, ecological function, environmental resources, and the visual relationship between the City and its surrounding countryside.

About the Agricultural Preservation Element

The Agricultural Preservation Element encompasses vineyards, farmland, ranches, rural residences, creek corridors, habitat areas, scenic roadways, and the open landscapes that establish St. Helena's unique setting. These lands are not simply undeveloped areas—they are an active working landscape that supports the local economy, reinforces community identity, protects environmental resources, and distinguishes St. Helena from surrounding communities.

This Element recognizes that agriculture and rural residential uses coexist within the agricultural landscape. The emphasis is not on preventing all change, but on ensuring that future development preserves agricultural viability, protects natural resources, maintains scenic quality, and reinforces the City's historic relationship with its surrounding landscape.

Relationship to the Community Elements

Agricultural Preservation is one of the four Community Elements established by this General Plan. While the Neighborhood Preservation Element guides context-sensitive neighborhood evolution and the Vibrancy Element accommodates the City's greatest concentration of activity, employment, mixed-use development, and housing intensity, the Agricultural Preservation Element preserves the working landscape that defines St. Helena's identity and establishes the setting for the community as a whole.

Within Agricultural Preservation areas, the Green Fingers Network is expressed through vineyards, farmland, creek corridors, habitat connections, agricultural buffers, rural lanes, scenic roadways, and view corridors that connect the City to its surrounding landscape.

Together, these Elements preserve the environmental, economic, and cultural resources that have shaped St. Helena for generations.

Citywide Objectives

The Agricultural Preservation Element advances the following objectives by:

- Preserving productive agricultural lands and vineyards.
- Supporting the long-term viability of agriculture.
- Protecting creek corridors, habitat, and natural systems.
- Maintaining scenic rural landscapes and important public views.
- Reinforcing compatible transitions between urban and agricultural areas.
- Preserving the environmental and cultural resources that define St. Helena's identity.

Neighborhood Preservation

Purpose

The purpose of the Neighborhood Preservation Element is to preserve and strengthen St. Helena's established neighborhoods by guiding context-sensitive development that respects neighborhood built environments, reinforces walkability, and supports a diverse range of housing opportunities compatible with the surrounding built environment.

Recognizing that most of the City's neighborhoods are substantially developed, this Element focuses on thoughtful reinvestment, incremental infill, adaptive reuse, and neighborhood-scale housing that enhances the community while maintaining the qualities that make St. Helena's neighborhoods distinctive.

Unlike the Agricultural Preservation and Vibrancy Elements, the Neighborhood Preservation Element emphasizes compatibility of scale, form, and context so that change occurs as a natural extension of the existing neighborhood fabric.

About the Neighborhood Preservation Element

The Neighborhood Preservation Element encompasses St. Helena's established residential neighborhoods, neighborhood-serving institutions, parks, schools, local streets, and public spaces that together form the everyday fabric of the community.

Rather than accommodating large areas of new growth, this Element recognizes that future housing opportunities will primarily occur through incremental and context-sensitive development. These opportunities include infill development, accessory dwelling units, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, cottage courts, small-lot neighborhoods, missing middle housing, adaptive reuse of existing buildings, and carefully designed neighborhood-serving mixed-use where appropriate.

The objective is not to preserve neighborhoods unchanged, but to allow them to evolve in ways that respect their established scale, development pattern, landscapes, and relationships to surrounding properties.

Relationship to the Community Elements

Neighborhood Preservation is one of the four Community Elements established by this General Plan.

While the Agricultural Preservation Element protects the working landscape and the Vibrancy Element accommodates the City's greatest concentration of activity, employment, mixed-use development, and higher-density housing, the Neighborhood Preservation Element provides the framework for compatible neighborhood evolution through context-sensitive design and incremental infill.

Within neighborhoods, the Green Fingers Network is expressed through tree-lined streets, neighborhood parks, community greens, trails, community gardens, stormwater landscapes, paseos, and view corridors that strengthen neighborhood identity, environmental resilience, and walkability.

Together, these Elements create neighborhoods that can evolve over time while preserving the qualities that contribute to St. Helena's distinctive ecosystem.

Citywide Objectives

The Neighborhood Preservation Element advances the following objectives by:

- Preserving neighborhood scale.
- Encouraging context-sensitive infill development.
- Supporting neighborhood-scale housing diversity, including accessory dwelling units, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, cottage courts, small-lot development, and other missing middle housing.
- Encouraging adaptive reuse where compatible with neighborhood fabric.
- Strengthening neighborhood walkability and connectivity.
- Expanding tree canopy, landscaping, parks, and neighborhood public spaces.
- Supporting housing opportunities for households of varying ages and life stages while maintaining neighborhood compatibility.

Vibrancy

Purpose

The purpose of the Vibrancy Element is to cultivate a dynamic and welcoming community by strengthening St. Helena's commercial districts, civic spaces, employment centers, cultural destinations, and public gathering places. This Element supports a thriving local economy while reinforcing the City's unique identity and quality of life.

The Vibrancy Element also provides opportunities for a broad range of housing types, including mixed-use, live-work, upper-story residential, workforce housing, and higher-density residential development in locations that are well served by infrastructure, services, employment, and public amenities.

The Vibrancy Element is also the City's primary jobs-housing strategy. Because these areas contain the greatest concentration of employment, commerce, civic institutions, and daily services, they are the most appropriate locations for accommodating a broader range of housing opportunities and the City's greatest residential intensity. Locating housing within walking distance of employment reduces automobile dependence, supports local businesses, shortens commutes, strengthens economic resilience, and helps preserve the scale and fabric of established neighborhoods by directing growth toward the places best equipped to support it.

Unlike the Agricultural Preservation and Neighborhood Preservation Elements, the Vibrancy Element focuses on places where commerce, housing, employment, culture, and civic life come together to create active, walkable districts throughout the day and evening.

About the Vibrancy Element

The Vibrancy Element encompasses downtown streets, neighborhood commercial districts, civic buildings, plazas, public greens, restaurants, wineries, hotels, offices, employment centers, cultural institutions, mixed-use districts, and public gathering places that serve residents and visitors alike.

These areas are intended to accommodate the City's greatest concentration of activity and provide the flexibility necessary to respond to changing economic, housing, and community needs. In addition to supporting commerce and civic life, the Vibrancy Element is the preferred location for mixed-use development, live-work environments, upper-story residential, adaptive reuse, workforce housing, and the City's greatest residential intensity because these areas provide the closest proximity to employment opportunities, public services, retail, restaurants, civic destinations, and community amenities.

By concentrating more intensive development within walkable activity centers, the Vibrancy Element supports housing production while preserving the scale of established neighborhoods and protecting the surrounding agricultural landscape.

Relationship to the Community Elements

The Community Elements are intentionally complementary. Agricultural Preservation protects the landscape that defines St. Helena. Neighborhood Preservation guides the thoughtful evolution of established residential areas. Vibrancy accommodates the City's greatest concentration of employment, commerce, civic activity, and housing opportunity, allowing growth to occur where

residents can live closer to work and daily services. Together, these Elements improve jobs-housing balance while reducing development pressure on established neighborhoods and agricultural lands.

Within Vibrancy areas, the Green Fingers Network is expressed through plazas, paseos, courtyards, green streets, shaded sidewalks, rooftop gardens, public greens, and view corridors that create memorable public places and connect destinations throughout the City.

Together, these Elements establish complete, walkable districts where commerce, housing, culture, recreation, and civic life reinforce one another.

Citywide Objectives

The Vibrancy Element advances the following objectives by:

- Strengthening downtown and neighborhood commercial districts.
- Supporting local businesses, employment, tourism, and cultural destinations.
- Encouraging mixed-use and live-work development.
- Accommodating the City's highest residential densities in appropriate locations.
- Expanding housing opportunities through upper-story residential, workforce housing, adaptive reuse, and flexible building types.
- Creating active pedestrian-oriented streets, plazas, courtyards, and gathering places.
- Reinforcing St. Helena as the civic, cultural, and economic heart of the community.
- Improve the City's jobs-housing balance by concentrating the greatest housing opportunities within walking distance of major employment, commercial, civic, and cultural destinations.

Green Fingers

Purpose

The purpose of the Green Fingers Element is to establish and preserve a connected citywide network of landscapes, public spaces, green infrastructure, and pedestrian connections that unite St. Helena's Community Elements. This network strengthens community identity, protects natural resources, enhances environmental resilience, and creates an interconnected system of places that supports everyday life.

Unlike the other Community Elements, the Green Fingers Element does not describe a particular land use or district. Instead, it provides the landscape and public realm framework that connects them into one cohesive community.

About the Green Fingers Element

The Green Fingers Network is a continuous system of natural landscapes, parks, open spaces, streetscapes, trails, paseos, civic spaces, green infrastructure, and public gathering places that extends throughout St. Helena. Rather than functioning as isolated features, these interconnected places form a living network linking agricultural lands, neighborhoods, downtown, schools, parks, and civic destinations.

The Green Fingers Network supports ecological health, environmental resilience, walkability, recreation, stormwater management, public views, and memorable public spaces while strengthening the physical and social fabric of the community.

Relationship to the Community Elements

The Green Fingers Network is one of the four Community Elements established by this General Plan. While Agricultural Preservation preserves the landscape, Neighborhood Preservation guides compatible neighborhood evolution, and Vibrancy accommodates the City's greatest concentration of activity and housing flexibility, the Green Fingers Element establishes the interconnected network that links each of these places into one unified community.

The Green Fingers Network is expressed differently within each Community Element while advancing common citywide objectives for connectivity, environmental stewardship, resilience, public space, and community identity.

Citywide Objectives

The Green Fingers Element advances the following objectives by:

- Connecting neighborhoods, agricultural lands, downtown, parks, schools, and civic destinations.
- Protecting natural landscapes and ecological systems.
- Restoring habitat, creek corridors, and green infrastructure.
- Expanding parks, trails, paseos, and public open spaces.
- Preserving important public views and landscapes.
- Creating an interconnected, resilient, and walkable community.

ARTICLE 3

Community Development Standards

Table 3-1 Agricultural Preservation Standards

Minimum Lot Area	1 acre
Minimum Lot Width	70 ft
Residential Density	1-5 dwelling units per acre
Building Height	30 ft
Lot Coverage	35%
Maximum Gross Floor Area	
Lot Size	Maximum Gross Floor Area
Less than 7,000 sq ft	2400 sq ft
7,000–7,999 sq ft	2400 sq ft
8,000–8,999 sq ft	2700 sq ft
9,000–9,999 sq ft	2950 sq ft
10,000–10,999 sq	3300 sq ft
11,000–11,999 sq	3480 sq ft
12,000–12,999 sq	3640 sq ft
13,000–13,999 sq	3780 sq ft
14,000–21,999 sq	3900 sq ft
22,000–28,999 sq	4950 sq ft
29,000–35,999 sq	5475 sq ft
36,000–43,559 sq	6000 sq ft
Front Setback	20 ft ($\leq$ 25 ft building height); 30 ft ($>$ 25 ft building height)
Side Street Setback	20 ft ($\leq$ 25 ft building height); 30 ft ($>$ 25 ft building height)
Side Setback	10 ft ($\leq$ 25 ft building height); 15 ft ($>$ 25 ft building height)
Rear Setback	20 ft ($\leq$ 25 ft building height); 30 ft ($>$ 25 ft building height)

Table 3-2 Neighborhood Preservation Standards

Minimum Lot Area	6000 sq ft
Minimum Lot Width	45 ft; 32 ft for small lot development
Residential Density	5.1–16 dwelling units per acre
Building Height	30 ft Ground floor maximum ceiling height: 15 ft
Lot Coverage	40% / 55% New small lot development
Maximum Gross Floor Area	
Lot Size	Maximum Gross Floor Area
Lots < 6,000 sq ft	1995 sq ft
Lots 6,000-9,999 sq ft	2945 sq ft
Lots 10,000-14,999 sq ft	3705 sq ft
Lots 15,000-19,999 sq ft	3971 sq ft
Lots > 20,000 sq ft	4000 sq ft
Front Setback	20 ft; 12 ft for small lot development
Side Street Setback	15 ft for structures $\leq$ 25 ft in height; 20 ft for structures >25 ft in height
Side Setback	5 ft minimum setback; combined interior side setbacks: 15 ft for structures $\leq$ 25 ft in height; 20 ft for structures >25 ft in height
Upper Floor Side Setback	9 ft when adjacent to an Agricultural Preservation or Neighborhood Preservation Element
Rear Setback	20 ft for structures $\leq$ 25 ft in height; 30 ft for structures >25 ft in height

Table 3-3 Vibrancy Standards

Minimum Lot Area	7,000 sq ft 3,000 sq ft for new small lot development
Minimum Lot Width	20 ft
Residential Density	16.1–45 dwelling units per acre
Building Height	42 ft
Lot Coverage	100 %
Front Setback	0 ft
Side Street Setback	0 ft
Side Setback	0 ft
Upper Floor Side Setback	0 ft
Rear Setback	0 ft

Table 3-4 Green Fingers Standards

(Reserved/needs further discussion/development)

The Green Fingers Element establishes the standards that preserve and strengthen St. Helena's interconnected network of green spaces, landscaped corridors, vineyards, creeks, parks, trails, paseos, and view corridors that extend throughout the community. Rather than functioning as isolated open spaces, these landscape systems are intended to create continuous environmental and visual connections that reinforce neighborhood identity, improve walkability, protect natural resources, and frame the City's distinctive relationship with its surrounding agricultural landscape.

The Green Fingers standards guide how development contributes to this network through coordinated landscape design, tree preservation and planting, open space integration, habitat protection, pedestrian connections, and the preservation of significant public views. Together, these standards ensure that St. Helena's landscape becomes a defining organizing element of the community, providing environmental resilience, recreational opportunities, and a lasting sense of place for future generations

Landmark Views and Community Touchstones. The Green Fingers Network shall preserve the distinctive places where St. Helena's identity is most clearly experienced, vineyards that extend into the town, historic estate gateways, framed views to the surrounding landscape, and other green breaks that connect the community to its agricultural setting. These touchstones are essential components of the City's physical environment and shall be identified and protected through objective standards.



HOW THE GREEN Fingers NETWORK IS EXPRESSED IN EACH COMMUNITY ELEMENT

AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION <i>Landscape • Ecology • Rural Heritage</i>	NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION <i>Living • Walkable • Everyday Places</i>	VIBRANCY <i>Civic Life • Activity • Social Spaces</i>
Vineyards & Farmland – Working landscapes that define St. Helena's identity and economy.	Tree-Lined Streets – Street trees that provide shade, beauty, and neighborhood identity.	Civic Plazas & Greens – Public spaces for gathering, events, and community life.
Vineyard Edges – Transitions that respect agricultural lands and protect their productive use.	Pocket Parks – Small gathering spaces within easy walking distance.	Paseos – Pedestrian passages that connect buildings, streets, and open spaces.
View Corridors – Vistas to vineyards, hillsides, mountains, and the surrounding landscape.	View Corridors – Views to natural features, hillsides, and vineyards that shape the sense of place.	View Corridors – Views to hillsides, vineyards, and landmark features.
Habitat Corridors – Natural linkages that support wildlife and biodiversity.	Greenways – Linear open spaces that connect neighborhoods and destinations.	Courtyards – Semi-public open spaces that create intimate gathering places.
Creek Restoration & Riparian Corridors – Healthy waterways and riparian areas.	Neighborhood Trails – Pedestrian connections that promote walkability and recreation.	Outdoor Dining & Active Frontages – Streets and spaces that support commerce and social activity.
Scenic Roads & Rural Lanes – Rural routes that reveal the landscape and support agriculture.	Stormwater Landscapes – Green infrastructure that captures, treats, and infiltrates stormwater.	Festival Streets – Streets designed to host markets, parades, and community celebrations.
Agricultural Buffers – Vegetated buffers and windbreaks that protect crops and define edges.	Community Gardens – Spaces for growing food, building community, and education.	Shaded Sidewalks & Green Streets – Comfortable, walkable streets that prioritize people.
Hedgerows, Drainage Swales & Tree Canopy – Natural features that manage water, soil, and microclimate.	Mid-Block Pedestrian Connections – Shortcuts and paseos that knit neighborhoods together.	Public Squares – Flexible urban spaces for daily life and special events.
	Neighborhood Greens – Local greens and open spaces for play, relaxation, and gathering.	Rooftop Gardens & Rooftop Gathering Spaces – Elevated green spaces that expand greenery and outdoor access.

ONE NETWORK. MANY FUNCTIONS.

The Green Fingers Network advances these core functions everywhere in the City.



CONNECT
Link people, places, and landscapes.



BUFFER
Softens transitions and protect sensitive edges.



RESTORE
Support ecology, water quality, and climate resilience.



FRAME
Reveal views and celebrate local identity.



ACTIVATE
Create inviting spaces for walking, gathering, and play.



MANAGE WATER
Use natural systems to capture, clean, and slow stormwater.



BUILD SHADE
Expand tree canopy and improve comfort for all.



SUPPORT HABITAT
Enhance biodiversity and strengthen ecosystem health.

The Green Fingers Network is the connective framework that strengthens agriculture, enriches neighborhoods, animates downtown, and sustains St. Helena for generations to come.

ARTICLE 4

Citywide Community Development Standards

Purpose

The Citywide Community Development Standards translate the community's vision into a coordinated framework of General Plan policies and implementing Municipal Code provisions that apply throughout St. Helena. While the Community Elements establish the desired physical form and identity of the city, these standards provide the regulatory tools necessary to implement that vision in a consistent, predictable, and equitable manner. Together, they address citywide planning issues that extend across all Community Elements, including transitions between neighborhoods, housing strategies, accessory dwelling units, inclusionary housing, ownership-neutral housing opportunities, small-lot and multifamily development, flag lots, exemptions, definitions, and other development regulations necessary to ensure that future growth supports the long-term stewardship of St. Helena.

(Reserved/needs further development)

Transition between Elements Chapter *(see appendix A)*

Housing Strategy Chapters *(see appendix A)*

Revised ADU JADU ordinance *(see appendix A)*

Revised Inclusionary Ordinance *(see appendix A)*

Ownership Neutral Ordinance *(see appendix A)*

Small Lot Development standards *(see appendix A)*

Multifamily Development Standards *(see appendix A)*

Flag Lot Standards *(see appendix A)*

Exemptions *(see appendix A)*

Definitions *(see appendix A)*

ARTICLE 5

Implementation

Purpose

The Implementation Article establishes the procedures, administrative responsibilities, and ongoing actions necessary to carry out the Community Vision, Community Elements, and Citywide Community Development Standards. It provides the framework for applying, interpreting, monitoring, and periodically updating the General Plan and Municipal Code to ensure that the City's long-term vision remains effective, responsive, and consistently implemented as St. Helena evolves over time.

(Reserved/needs further development)

APPENDIX A

ARTICLE 4

Citywide Community Development Standards

(Reserved/needs further discussion/development)

Citywide Development Standards

The Citywide Development Standards establish the objective regulations that apply across St. Helena regardless of Community Element. While each Community Element contains standards that reinforce its unique identity, these citywide standards provide a consistent framework governing the relationships between elements, the application of common development regulations, and the implementation of housing and neighborhood policies throughout the community.

Together, these chapters promote predictability, fairness, and high-quality design by establishing objective standards that regulate development based on physical form, neighborhood context, and measurable performance rather than subjective judgment. They ensure that new development contributes to a cohesive and interconnected community while preserving the qualities that define St. Helena as a vibrant living community.

The Citywide Development Standards consist of the following chapters:

- **Community Transition Standards** – Establishes objective requirements governing the interface between adjoining Community Elements to ensure gradual transitions in building scale, development intensity, landscapes, and the public realm.
- **Ownership-Neutral Development Standards** – Ensures that objective development standards are applied consistently based on physical form rather than ownership structure, tenure, or method of property conveyance.
- **Inclusionary Housing and Mixed-Income Housing Program** – Establishes citywide requirements and flexible compliance options to ensure residential development contributes to housing opportunities across the affordability spectrum.
- **Accessory Dwelling Unit and Community Housing Program** – Encourages ADUs and JADUs as a preferred neighborhood-scale housing strategy while ensuring consistent implementation of state law and objective local standards.
- **Small Lot Development Standards (Reserved)** – Establishes objective standards for compact lot development that supports attainable housing.
- **Multifamily Development Standards (Reserved)** – Establishes objective design and site planning standards for multifamily residential development.
- **Flag Lot Development Standards (Reserved)** – Establishes objective standards for the design, access, and development of flag lots.
- **Exemptions (Reserved)** – Identifies objective circumstances under which specific development standards may be modified or exempted consistent with this title.
- **Definitions (Reserved)** – Provides definitions and interpretation of terms used throughout this title to promote consistent administration and application.

Transition between Elements Chapter

(Reserved/needs further discussion/development)

CHAPTER 17.XX

COMMUNITY TRANSITION STANDARDS

17.XX.010 Purpose

The purpose of the Community Transition Standards is to establish objective requirements governing the interface between adjoining Community Elements. While each Community Element contains standards that define its individual characteristics, this chapter establishes how those elements work together as a unified citywide system.

Rather than relying on subjective determinations of compatibility, these standards provide clear, measurable requirements that guide changes in building scale, development intensity, setbacks, landscape treatment, and public realm improvements wherever Community Elements meet. The standards are intended to create gradual transitions that reinforce neighborhood compatibility, preserve the City's visual and environmental characteristics, strengthen the Green Fingers network as a citywide organizing feature, and ensure that growth contributes positively to the overall form and identity of St. Helena.

Together, these transition standards unify the Community Elements into a coordinated framework that balances new development with the preservation of the qualities that define St. Helena as a distinctive and livable community.

17.XX.020 Legislative Findings

The City Council finds that:

- A. St Helena is defined not only by the individual qualities of each Community Element but also by how those elements relate to one another.
- B. Abrupt changes in building scale, intensity, and site design can diminish neighborhood compatibility and cohesiveness and sustainability.
- C. Objective transition standards provide greater predictability for property owners, applicants, and the community than subjective compatibility determinations.
- D. Landscape, open space, streets, and the Green Fingers network are essential components of successful transitions between differing development patterns.
- E. Appropriate transitions allow the City to accommodate growth while preserving the qualities that define St. Helena as a living community.

17.XX.030 Applicability

The provisions of this chapter shall apply whenever development occurs on property located adjacent to, or across a public street from, a different Community Element.

Where the standards of two Community Elements differ, the transition requirements of this chapter shall apply in addition to the standards of the applicable zoning district.

17.XX.040 General Transition Principles

Transitions between Community Elements shall:

- A. Create a gradual change in building scale and development intensity.
- B. Preserve the visual characteristics of adjoining neighborhoods.
- C. Reinforce walkability and pedestrian connectivity.
- D. Preserve important view corridors and community vistas.
- E. Incorporate landscape and tree canopy as transition features.
- F. Strengthen connections to the Green Fingers network.
- G. Utilize objective and measurable standards.

17.XX.050 Lower Intensity Transition Standard

Where adjoining Community Elements establish different maximum standards for building height, setbacks, lot coverage, or development intensity, development located within the designated transition area shall comply with the lower-intensity standard unless otherwise specifically authorized by this title.

Transition areas may include objective step-backs, increased setbacks, landscape buffers, reduced building massing, or other measurable design techniques established by the applicable Community Element standards.

17.XX.060 Green Fingers Transition

Where a Green Fingers Element occurs between, adjacent to, or intersects another Community Element, the Green Fingers standards shall serve as the primary landscape transition.

Transition improvements may include:

- A. Native landscaping.
- B. Tree canopy expansion.
- C. Habitat restoration.
- D. Agricultural buffers.

- E. Creek setbacks.
- F. Multi-use paths and trails.
- G. Paseos and pedestrian connections.
- H. Stormwater treatment landscapes.

The Green Fingers network shall function as both a community amenity and a citywide transition system.

17.XX.070 Building Form Transition

Where buildings of greater permitted height or intensity adjoin lower-scale development, transition techniques may include:

- A. Upper-story step-backs.
- B. Increased side or rear setbacks.
- C. Reduction in building mass adjacent to property lines.
- D. Lower-scale building elements along neighborhood edges.
- E. Roof forms and architectural articulation that reduce perceived building scale.

17.XX.080 Landscape Transition Standards

Landscape transitions should reinforce the identity of adjoining Community Elements while softening changes in development intensity.

Transition treatments may include:

- A. Tree rows.
- B. Orchard plantings.
- C. Native landscape buffers.
- D. Community gardens.
- E. Agricultural edge treatments.
- F. Bioswales and green infrastructure.
- G. Public open space connections.

17.XX.090 Public Realm Transitions

Transitions between Community Elements shall preserve and strengthen the public realm through:

- A. Continuous sidewalks and pedestrian pathways.
- B. Bicycle facilities where appropriate.
- C. Paseos and mid-block connections.
- D. Public gathering spaces.
- E. Streetscape improvements.
- F. Connections to parks, schools, Downtown, and civic destinations.

17.XX.100 View and Visual Characteristics

Development occurring within transition areas shall preserve and reinforce important public views, including:

- A. Vineyard landscapes.
- B. Mountain backdrops.
- C. Green Fingers corridors.
- D. Civic landmarks.
- E. Significant tree canopies.

Transition standards shall seek to frame rather than obstruct these visual resources.

17.XX.110 Objective Transition Matrix

The Community Development Director may apply the following transition principles where Community Elements meet:

Transition Between Elements	Primary Transition Strategy
Downtown → Neighborhood	Lower building height, upper-story step-backs, landscape transition
Mixed-Use → Neighborhood	Increased setbacks, tree canopy, pedestrian connections
Neighborhood → Green Fingers	Green Fingers standards govern transition area
Neighborhood → Agricultural Edge	Landscape buffers, orchard or vineyard transition, open space
Commercial → Green Fingers	Public open space, habitat restoration, trail connections
Higher Intensity → Lower Intensity	Lower-intensity standards applied within transition area

The City Council may expand or refine the Transition Matrix by resolution as additional Community Elements are adopted.

17.XX.120 Administration

The Community Development Director shall administer this chapter.

The City Council may adopt:

- A. Transition area maps.
- B. Objective measurement methodologies.
- C. Landscape specifications.
- D. Building transition standards.
- E. Green Fingers implementation guidelines.
- F. Administrative procedures consistent with this chapter.

17.XX.130 Intent

It is the intent of the City that Community Elements function as an interconnected citywide system rather than isolated planning districts. These Transition Standards are intended to ensure that changes in scale, intensity, landscape, and public realm occur gradually and predictably through objective standards that preserve neighborhood compatibility while supporting thoughtful growth.

By coordinating the relationships between Community Elements, this chapter strengthens the physical structure of St. Helena and advances the long-term vision of a resilient, connected, and enduring living community.

Ownership-Neutral Development Standards

(Reserved/needs further discussion/development)

17.45.025 Ownership-Neutral Application of Development Standards

The City Council finds that the purpose of zoning and development standards is to regulate the physical form of development and the resulting built environment.

Standards governing lot dimensions, lot width, setbacks, building separation, lot coverage, open space, frontage, building placement, massing, scale, and similar development characteristics are intended to shape the physical environment experienced by residents, neighbors, and the public.

The City further finds that these physical outcomes are determined by the arrangement, scale, intensity, and relationship of buildings, streets, and open spaces rather than by ownership structure, tenure, financing method, subdivision status, or method of conveyance.

Accordingly, residential developments producing substantially similar physical forms and development patterns should produce substantially similar physical outcomes and shall be subject to substantially equivalent objective development standards regardless of whether the development is proposed as rental housing, fee-simple lots, condominiums, airspace condominiums, community apartment projects, stock cooperatives, planned developments, mixed-tenure developments, or other ownership structures.

Whenever a residential development creates individual fee-simple lots, airspace condominium units, condominium units, or other separately conveyable ownership interests, all objective development standards applicable to lots within the zoning district shall apply to each created lot, parcel, unit, or ownership area unless expressly modified by a Planned Development ordinance, Specific Plan, Precise Development Plan, or objective exception expressly authorized by this title.

Where multiple dwelling units are developed on a single parcel without creation of separate ownership lots or units, objective development standards shall be applied through equivalent building separation, setback, open space, lot coverage, building envelope, or similar standards that achieve substantially equivalent physical outcomes.

Any modification, adjustment, alternative compliance method, or exception affecting lot dimensions, lot width, setbacks, lot coverage, building separation, frontage, open space, or similar objective standards shall be expressly identified in the approval record and supported by objective criteria contained within this title.

No objective development standard shall be deemed waived, modified, or inapplicable by implication.

The City shall neither impose nor waive objective development standards solely because a project is proposed as rental housing, ownership housing, condominium housing, townhouse housing, or another form of tenure or ownership.

17.45.030 Applicability

This chapter shall apply to:

- A. Projects within the Workforce Housing Overlay District.
- B. Projects within the Housing Opportunity Sites Overlay District.
- C. Projects within the Missing Middle Housing Overlay District.
- D. Projects utilizing Neighborhood Scale Housing Incentives.
- E. Mixed-use residential developments.
- F. Multifamily residential developments.
- G. Other projects identified by this title.

Where conflicts exist between this chapter and another provision of this title, the more specific objective standard shall govern.

Housing Strategy Chapters

Housing Strategy Initiatives

(Reserved/needs further discussion/development)

While the Citywide Development Standards establish the objective regulations that apply throughout St. Helena, the Housing Strategy Initiatives provide the implementation tools that advance the City's long-term housing vision. Together, these initiatives establish a coordinated system of overlay districts, incentive programs, housing contributions, preservation strategies, funding mechanisms, and community partnerships designed to expand housing opportunities while reinforcing the livability of St. Helena.

Rather than relying on a single housing solution, these initiatives employ a complementary set of strategies that support neighborhood-scale development, workforce and affordable housing, adaptive reuse of underutilized properties, preservation of existing housing resources, and long-term housing affordability. Working together, they create a comprehensive framework that balances housing production with neighborhood compatibility, economic vitality, environmental stewardship, and responsible community growth.

The Housing Strategy Initiatives consist of the following chapters:

- **Chapter 17.42 - Workforce Housing Overlay District (WHO)**
Creates incentives and objective standards for workforce and mixed-income housing in appropriate locations.
- **Chapter 17.43 - Housing Opportunity Sites Overlay District (HOS)**
Encourages housing on underutilized, redevelopment, and opportunity sites through adaptive reuse and context-sensitive development.
- **Chapter 17.44 - Missing Middle Housing Overlay District (MMHO)**
Expands neighborhood-scale housing choices through compatible housing types such as duplexes, cottage courts, courtyard housing, townhomes, and similar forms.
- **Chapter 17.44A - Neighborhood Scale Housing Incentive Program**
Rewards projects that achieve housing capacity through neighborhood-compatible design, smaller homes, open space preservation, tree canopy and walkability.
- **Chapter 17.46 - Community Housing Contribution Program**
Establishes flexible compliance options that support housing production, preservation, workforce housing, and long-term housing stewardship.
- **Chapter 17.47 - Residential Community Housing Contributions**
Provides a proportional contribution framework through which higher-value residential development helps support community housing objectives.
- **Chapter 17.48 - Housing Trust Fund and Community Land Trust Program**
Establishes permanent funding and stewardship mechanisms to create, preserve, acquire, rehabilitate, and maintain long-term affordable housing.
- **Chapter 17.49 - Community Housing Preservation and Acquisition Program**
Preserves existing affordable and workforce housing, supports strategic acquisition, prevents displacement, and promotes long-term housing stability.

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT AND COMMUNITY HOUSING PROGRAM

(Reserved/needs further discussion/development)

17.51.010 Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to encourage the creation of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (JADUs) as an important component of the City's long-term housing strategy.

The City finds that ADUs and JADUs provide one of the most context-sensitive forms of housing production available and can expand housing opportunities while strengthening neighborhoods.

This chapter is intended to:

- A. Expand housing opportunities.
- B. Support aging in place.
- C. Encourage multigenerational living.
- D. Improve housing opportunities for local workers.
- E. Support Housing Element implementation.
- F. Promote efficient use of developed land and existing infrastructure.
- G. Preserve neighborhoods through incremental housing growth.
- H. Preserve St. Helena as a living community.

17.51.020 Legislative Findings

The City Council finds that:

- A. ADUs are an effective and neighborhood-compatible form of housing production.
- B. ADUs contribute to housing affordability and housing diversity.
- C. ADUs provide housing opportunities for family members, caregivers, seniors, local workers, and other residents.
- D. ADUs support aging in place and multigenerational living arrangements.
- E. ADUs utilize existing infrastructure efficiently.
- F. State law encourages ADU creation and limits local barriers.
- G. ADUs are an important component of the City's housing strategy.
- H. All ADU and JADU configurations provide equivalent housing benefits.
- I. Unnecessary distinctions among ADU types increase housing costs and reduce housing production.
- J. ADUs and JADUs provide one of the most cost-effective forms of housing production available.
- K. Fee exemptions should be administered to provide certainty to property owners.
- L. Lawfully established exemptions should remain associated with the property and dwelling unit.
- M. Preserving exemption certainty promotes housing production and Housing Element objectives.
- N. State law frequently authorizes exemptions from development standards including floor area, lot coverage, setbacks, parking, density, and similar regulations, and preserving those exemptions supports long-term housing opportunities.

ARTICLE I - GENERAL POLICIES

17.51.030 Accessory Dwelling Units as a Preferred Housing Strategy

The City shall encourage ADUs and JADUs as a preferred form of context-sensitive housing production and shall seek to remove unnecessary barriers while maintaining objective standards consistent with state law.

17.51.040 Equal Treatment of Accessory Dwelling Units and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units

A. The City shall administer and apply this title in a manner that affords equal treatment to all ADUs and JADUs authorized by state law.

B. Except where expressly required by state law, the City shall not impose different development standards, permit procedures, fees, review criteria, utility requirements, occupancy restrictions, or operational requirements based solely upon whether an ADU or JADU is attached, detached, converted, newly constructed, or otherwise configured.

C. ADUs and JADUs providing equivalent residential use and function shall be subject to the same objective standards and procedures unless a distinction is expressly required by state law.

D. The City shall not interpret silence in state law as authorization to impose additional requirements upon one category of ADU or JADU.

E. No preference or disadvantage shall be created solely on the basis of unit configuration.

F. This section shall be liberally construed to ensure consistent implementation of state housing law.

ARTICLE II - INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITY POLICIES

17.51.050 Utility Connections

Except where expressly required by state law, the City shall not require separate utility connections, utility meters, utility laterals, utility services, capacity charges, connection fees, infrastructure upgrades, or similar utility-related improvements solely because a dwelling unit qualifies as an ADU or JADU.

ADUs may share utility services with a primary dwelling unit to the maximum extent permitted by law.

17.51.055 State Law Consistency

This chapter shall be interpreted and administered consistent with California ADU law, as amended. Administrative interpretations shall be narrowly construed when they have the effect of limiting, delaying, conditioning, or increasing the cost of ADU or JADU development.

17.51.057 ADU and JADU Exemptions and Vested Rights

- A. ADUs and JADUs shall be exempt from development impact fees to the maximum extent authorized by state law.
- B. An ADU and a JADU shall each be independently eligible for fee exemptions authorized by state law.
- C. An ADU containing up to 1,200 square feet shall not be subject to development impact fees except as otherwise required by state law.
- D. Any exemption, waiver, reduction, modification, or relief lawfully granted or recognized for an ADU or JADU pursuant to state law or this title shall run with the property and remain valid for the life of the dwelling unit.
- E. The lawful establishment of an ADU or JADU shall not reduce, consume, extinguish, offset, or otherwise diminish the right to construct, enlarge, remodel, reconstruct, replace, or maintain a primary dwelling to the maximum extent otherwise permitted by this title.
- F. The existence of an ADU or JADU shall not be used to reduce allowable floor area, building area, lot coverage, development capacity, or other residential development rights otherwise available to the primary dwelling except where expressly required by state law.
- G. The lawful existence of an ADU or JADU shall not be used as a basis to require future conformity with development standards from which the dwelling unit was previously exempt.
- H. Protected exemptions include, but are not limited to:
1. Floor area limitations.
 2. Floor area ratio limitations.
 3. Lot coverage limitations.
 4. Density limitations.
 5. Open space requirements.
 6. Setback reductions or exemptions.
 7. Parking reductions or exemptions.
 8. Height allowances.
 9. Impact fee exemptions.
 10. Any other development standard exemption, waiver, modification, or protection authorized by state law.
- I. Such exemptions shall remain valid notwithstanding expansion, remodeling, reconstruction, or transfer of ownership of the property.
- J. Nothing herein exempts future development from objective requirements related to water availability, water neutrality, wastewater capacity, public infrastructure capacity, Building Code requirements, Fire Code requirements, health and safety standards, or other applicable provisions of law.

ARTICLE III - COMMUNITY HOUSING OBJECTIVES

17.51.070 Workforce Housing Opportunities

The City may establish voluntary programs encouraging ADUs that provide housing opportunities for households earning between 30 percent and 120 percent of Area Median Income.

17.51.080 Aging in Place and Multigenerational Housing

The City shall encourage ADUs that support aging in place, caregiver housing, family housing, multigenerational living arrangements, housing opportunities for persons with disabilities, and independent living opportunities for seniors.

17.51.090 Housing Diversity

ADUs are recognized as important contributors to housing diversity, neighborhood stability, incremental housing growth, affordability, sustainability, and resilience.

ARTICLE IV - INCENTIVES

17.51.100 Accessory Dwelling Unit Incentive Program

The City Council may establish programs encouraging ADU development, including reduced permit fees, expedited permit processing, pre-approved plans, technical assistance programs, Housing Trust Fund assistance, Community Land Trust partnerships, rehabilitation assistance, and other incentives authorized by law.

17.51.120 Pre-Approved Plan Program

The City Council may establish a voluntary pre-approved ADU plan program.

ARTICLE V - OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

17.51.125 Accessory Dwelling Unit Development Standards

A. Maximum Size. An ADU may contain up to 1,200 square feet of habitable floor area.

B. Setbacks. ADUs shall maintain minimum side-yard and rear-yard setbacks of four (4) feet.

C. Height. ADUs shall be permitted at the maximum height allowed by state law.

D. Privacy Standards. Any window or door located within five (5) feet of a side or rear property line shall utilize obscured glass, a fixed non-transparent panel, glazing located at least six (6) feet above adjacent grade, or another equivalent objective privacy treatment.

E. Bedrooms. The City shall not establish a maximum number of bedrooms for an ADU. Bedroom count may be limited only by Building Code, Fire Code, water-neutrality requirements, utility

capacity limitations, and other objective infrastructure standards authorized by law.

F. Equal Application. These standards shall apply equally to attached, detached, conversion, garage-conversion, internal, and newly constructed ADUs unless a distinction is expressly required by state law.

17.51.130 Objective Review

ADUs and JADUs shall be reviewed and approved using objective standards consistent with state law. The City shall avoid discretionary review processes not authorized by state law.

17.51.140 Relationship to Other Housing Programs

ADUs may contribute toward implementation of Housing Element objectives, workforce housing goals, community housing stewardship goals, aging-in-place objectives, housing diversity goals, anti-displacement objectives, and other adopted housing policies.

ARTICLE VI - ADMINISTRATION

17.51.150 Administration

The Community Development Director shall administer this chapter.

17.51.160 Annual ADU Program Review

The Community Development Director shall periodically review ADU production, Housing Element implementation progress, workforce housing needs, permit processing procedures, incentive program effectiveness, and opportunities to further facilitate ADU development.

17.51.170 Intent

It is the intent of the City that ADUs and JADUs become a central component of St. Helena's long-term housing strategy. ADUs and JADUs are intended to complement workforce housing, affordable housing, missing-middle housing, housing preservation, Community Land Trust programs, and other housing strategies established by this title.

Revised Inclusionary Ordinance CHAPTER 17.30

INCLUSIONARY HOUSING AND MIXED-INCOME HOUSING PROGRAM

(Reserved/needs further discussion/development)

17.30.010 Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to ensure that residential development contributes meaningfully toward the creation and preservation of housing opportunities for households across a broad range of income levels.

The City finds that maintaining a diverse and economically sustainable community requires housing opportunities for local workers, families, seniors, caregivers, public employees, agricultural employees, hospitality employees, health care workers, educators, and other households that contribute to the social and economic life of St. Helena.

This chapter is intended to:

- A. Promote mixed-income residential communities.
- B. Expand housing opportunities across the affordability spectrum.
- C. Support implementation of the Housing Element.
- D. Improve jobs-housing balance.
- E. Preserve St. Helena as a living community.
- F. Provide flexible compliance mechanisms that encourage housing production while advancing community housing goals.

17.30.020 Legislative Findings

The City Council finds that:

- A. Housing affordability is essential to maintaining the social and economic diversity of the community.
- B. Many households employed within the City are unable to secure housing within the community due to escalating housing costs.
- C. Residential development should contribute proportionately toward addressing local housing needs.
- D. Mixed-income housing developments promote economic diversity and community stability.
- E. Housing opportunities should be available across the affordability spectrum, including extremely low-income, very low-income, low-income, moderate-income, and workforce-income households.
- F. Flexible compliance pathways can support housing production while advancing housing affordability objectives.

17.30.030 Applicability

This chapter shall apply to all residential development projects creating five (5) or more dwelling units.

Residential development projects containing fewer than five (5) dwelling units shall be exempt from the inclusionary housing requirements of this chapter.

Nothing in this section shall exempt a project from any other housing contribution requirement established by this title.

17.30.040 Inclusionary Housing Requirement

Residential development projects shall provide affordable and workforce housing units according to the following schedule:

Project Size	Required Affordable / Workforce Units
5-19 Units	20%
20-49 Units	30%
50+ Units	40%

Affordable and workforce housing units shall:

- A. Be constructed concurrently with market-rate units.
- B. Be distributed throughout the development to the maximum extent feasible.
- C. Be comparable in exterior appearance and overall quality of construction to market-rate units.
- D. Be provided in whole units, with fractional units rounded upward to the next whole unit.

17.30.050 Affordability Distribution

Affordable and workforce housing units shall be distributed among income categories as follows:

Income Category	Allocation
Extremely Low Income	15%
Very Low Income	25%
Low Income	25%
Moderate Income	20%
Workforce Income (100%-120% AMI)	15%

The City Council may modify affordability allocations by resolution when necessary to address changing housing needs or Housing Element objectives.

17.30.060 Alternative Compliance

The City may approve one or more alternative compliance methods when the alternative provides a housing benefit equivalent to or greater than the otherwise applicable requirement.

Alternative compliance methods may include:

- A. Off-site affordable housing development.
- B. Workforce housing development.
- C. Land dedication.
- D. Community Land Trust participation.
- E. Acquisition and preservation of existing housing.
- F. Housing Trust Fund contributions.
- G. Other housing benefits approved by the City.

The City Council shall make findings that the alternative compliance method provides an equivalent or greater public benefit.

17.30.070 Economic Feasibility Review

An applicant may request modification of the inclusionary housing requirement upon demonstrating through substantial evidence that compliance would render the project economically infeasible.

The request shall include a project-specific financial feasibility analysis prepared at the applicant's expense.

The City may retain independent consultants, at the applicant's expense, to review submitted analyses.

Any approved modification shall be the minimum adjustment necessary to permit economically feasible development.

17.30.080 Long-Term Affordability

Affordable housing units required pursuant to this chapter shall be subject to recorded affordability restrictions approved by the City.

Rental units shall remain affordable for not less than fifty-five (55) years.

Ownership units shall remain affordable for not less than fifty-five (55) years or for the longest period permitted by law.

The City may require regulatory agreements, deed restrictions, resale controls, monitoring requirements, and enforcement provisions necessary to ensure continued affordability.

17.30.090 Incentives

Projects exceeding the minimum inclusionary housing requirements established by this chapter may be eligible for incentives including:

- A. Density incentives.
- B. Reduced parking requirements.
- C. Fee reductions.
- D. Expedited permit processing.
- E. Housing Trust Fund assistance.
- F. Other incentives established by resolution.

17.30.100 Administration

The Community Development Director shall administer this chapter.

The City Council may adopt:

- A. Administrative procedures.
- B. Affordability standards.

- C. Application requirements.
- D. Monitoring procedures.
- E. Alternative compliance criteria.
- F. Other implementing regulations consistent with this chapter.

17.30.110 Relationship to State Law

This chapter shall be interpreted and administered consistent with applicable state and federal law, including:

- A. California Density Bonus Law.
- B. The Housing Accountability Act.
- C. California Housing Element Law.
- D. Fair Housing laws.
- E. Any successor statutes.

To the extent state law provides greater rights or protections, state law shall control.

17.30.120 Intent

It is the intent of the City that residential development contribute toward housing opportunities serving households across the affordability spectrum.

This chapter is intended to promote mixed-income communities, improve jobs-housing balance, support workforce housing, and preserve St. Helena as a diverse and economically sustainable living community.

Small Lot Development standards

(Reserved/needs further discussion/development)

Multifamily Development Standards

(Reserved/needs further discussion/development)

Flag Lot Standards

(Reserved/needs further discussion/development)

Exemptions Exceptions

(Reserved/needs further discussion/development)

17.24.030 Encroachments into Required Setbacks

Buildings and structures may encroach into required setbacks only as expressly authorized by this section. The provisions of this section authorize limited encroachments into required setbacks only and do not modify or waive any other applicable provision of this Code. All encroachments shall remain subject to all other applicable building and zoning regulations.

The standards of this section do not apply to patios, walkways, or other similar paved surfaces constructed at finished grade.

A. Allowed Building Encroachments

The following building encroachments into required setbacks are permitted:

1. The maximum encroachment into the required setback shall not exceed **two (2) feet**.
2. No building encroachment shall exceed **fifteen (15) feet** in length, measured parallel to the adjacent building wall.
3. An encroachment may occur at any elevation, including from finished grade.

B. Elevated Open Floor Areas

Open floor areas, including decks, porches, balconies, landings, stairs, fire escapes, and similar unenclosed structures with a finished floor elevation greater than **eighteen (18) inches above finished grade**, may encroach into a required front or side setback provided that:

1. The maximum encroachment into the required setback shall not exceed **six (6) feet**.
2. The encroachment shall occupy no more than **fifty percent (50%)** of the required setback area.

C. At-Grade Open Floor Areas

Open floor areas with a finished floor elevation of **eighteen (18) inches or less above finished grade** may encroach into a required setback by a distance not exceeding **one-half of the required setback otherwise required**.

D. Administrative Exemptions

The Community Development Director may approve the following structures and site improvements within required setbacks:

1. Accessibility improvements, including ramps, lifts, railings, and similar facilities required to provide accessible access.
2. Ornamental gate archways not exceeding **eight (8) feet** in height and **twelve (12) feet** in width.
3. Trellises and pergolas not exceeding **eight (8) feet** in height and **sixty (60) square feet** in area.
4. Planters, light standards, windbreaks, sun screens, outdoor fireplaces, ponds, ornamental features, flagpoles, arbors, landscaping, and similar site improvements.

The following buildings and areas are exempt from max. building gross floor area:

- i. One covered parking space with a max. floor area of two hundred (200) sf;
- ii. Nonhabitable accessory buildings with a max. floor area of one hundred twenty (120) sf;
- ili. A nonhabitable basement or attic: and
- iv. A balcony, porch, deck, or similar structure, whether covered or uncovered

Definitions

(Reserved/needs further discussion/development)