Since 1969, California has required cities and counties to plan for their housing needs. The Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) process, part of Housing Element Law, determines the number and affordability of new homes each area must plan for every eight years. For the 2023-2031 cycle, the Bay Area must plan for 441,176 new units, with San Francisco needing 82,069. The process considers current and projected needs, including factors like population and job growth, overcrowding, and homelessness.

San Francisco's RHNA allocation is set through a State and regional process and cannot be changed once adopted. The State sets the overall target for the Bay Area, and a formal regional process chartered by the state, which includes representation from governments and stakeholders throughout the region, creates a methodology that allocates portions of the regional target to each city and county.

After receiving our RHNA allocation at the end of 2021, the San Francisco Planning Department updated the Housing Element portion of our General Plan to show how we will meet local housing needs; the updated Housing Element was adopted in January 2023.

### Requirements
Our legal obligation is to demonstrate we are creating capacity to meet our RHNA, but since we do not build housing, the state will not decertify us if the housing is not built. Instead, the failure to produce enough units may result in other actions. The City’s role lies in demonstrating that it can accommodate the 82,069 units over the RHNA period (2023 – 2031) accounting for both known development projects projected to be built during the period and the number of units that could be built on reasonably available parcels based on zoning rules. State guidelines necessitate that we plan for at least 15% more capacity than our RHNA production target, or about 94,300 units. The buffer is intended to account for uncertainty on the included sites.

### Expected Development
Under existing zoning rules and planned developments, we could count 58,100 units in San Francisco toward our RHNA capacity, based on data from our development pipeline and other expected projects, assuming favorable economic conditions. This total is comprised of a number of anticipated sources of development:

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[sf.housing.choice@sfgov.org](mailto:sf.housing.choice@sfgov.org)
Next Steps

The City of San Francisco has until January 2026 to complete the rezoning effort, although the Mayor’s Office and City agencies are working to implement the changes sooner, given the urgency of addressing San Francisco’s housing crisis (Housing for All). Earlier adoption will also give us more time for new housing to help meet our permitting targets; our Housing Element establishes that if permits are less than anticipated by halfway through the RHNA cycle (2027) additional rezoning or further reduction of other development constraints may be required. For more information on the rezoning process, and what happens if we do not fulfill our rezoning obligations, please see the “What Happens If We Don’t Rezone” two-pager.

1. Final Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) Plan: San Francisco Bay Area, 2023-2031
   https://abag.ca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2021-12/Final_RHNA_Allocation_Report_2023-2031-approved_0.pdf
2. SF Housing Element Update 2022. Appendix B: Sites Inventory and Rezoning Program
3. Mayor London Breed Launches Housing for All Plan
   https://www.sf.gov/news/mayor-london-breed-launches-housing-all-plan