

San Mateo County Coastside Farmworker Housing Needs Supplemental Information – February 2024

This supplemental information is provided to establish the context for and significance of the proposed “Stone Pine Cove” neighborhood for Half Moon Bay and San Mateo County farmworker households who support the agricultural industry in the San Mateo County coastal zone.

Overview - Farmworker Housing in the San Mateo County Coastal Zone:

Broadly, there is a lack of affordable housing in San Mateo County, especially on the coast. This is compounded by the lack of unit turnover at affordable housing developments in Half Moon Bay and unincorporated coastal San Mateo County. Farmworkers, who are some of the lowest paid employees in the region, sustain agriculture on the San Mateo County coastside. In addition to agriculture, many other Coastal Act priority uses such as accommodations and visitor serving-recreation, also provide low-wage service jobs. Thus, the demand for affordable housing for the local workforce who are often engaged in Coastal Act-related industries, is high overall, with farmworkers tending to be especially impacted due to their very low wages.

On the San Mateo County coastside, the overall dearth of units set aside for both the general low-income population and farmworkers in the area contributes to the lack of affordable housing for this Coastside population. This is not due to a lack of focus on affordable housing broadly or for farmworkers in particular. Focusing specifically on farmworker housing, affordable housing units planned or built in recent years include the following:

Moonridge: Moonridge is an affordable rental housing development for agricultural workers and their families earning up to 60% of Area Median Income and was developed by MidPen Housing with significant support from the County’s Department of Housing. Completed in two phases, the development welcomed residents in 1999 and 2001 for a total of 160 apartment homes including 80 three-bedroom and 48 four-bedroom units. The development includes a computer center, Head Start Center, basketball court, soccer field and community gardens. The development is located in unincorporated San Mateo County at the eastern boundary of Half Moon Bay’s city limits. This development is one of the few communities of this scale on the coast for low-income agricultural workers. The waitlist is currently closed due to the fact that the number of applicants has far exceeded the number of units available.

County Farmworker Housing Loan Program: The program was created in 2016 to help agricultural operators and landowners provide housing for very low-income farmworkers. The program lends funds to operators/landowners for the creation of new housing, rehabilitation of existing housing, or replacement of existing dilapidated mobile home units that have been used as farmworker housing in the past. To date, the program has completed 9 units, with 3 units currently under construction, and 4 units in the early pre-development stages.

Cypress Point: Cypress Point is a 71-unit development that in Moss Beach will serve low-income families on San Mateo's Coastsides. MidPen has committed to reserving 18 units for farmworker households, who represent a major portion of the workforce in the area but too often face housing instability or sub-standard conditions. Due to the complexity of funding, approvals, and construction, these needed homes will not be ready for several more years.

- *555 Kelly Avenue:* This City-owned site is located within Half Moon Bay's Town Center. It was enabled to be developed with affordable housing by the City's 2020 certified Land Use Plan update through a new Workforce Housing Overlay. The City solicited proposals in 2022 and has been working with the development team of Mercy Housing and Ayudando Latinos A Soñar (ALAS) on a new community comprised of 40 units and support services for extremely low-income older farmworker households. In addition to the site, the City has also contributed significant affordable housing funds as has San Mateo County to enable this project. The County has awarded funds to the City of Half Moon Bay to contribute to provide a pre-development loan to Mercy Housing for 555 Kelly, and we anticipate that the developer will apply for the next round of County Affordable Housing Funds. Due to the complexity of funding, entitlements, and construction, these needed homes will not be ready for several more years.

- *880 Stone Pine Road:* This City-owned site is located within Half Moon Bay's Town Center. It was enabled to be developed with affordable housing through the City's 2020 certified Land Use Plan update allowing agricultural use of the property, noting that farmworker housing has been acknowledged by the Coastal Commission and the City's Local Coastal Program as an agricultural use. At nearly 5 acres, this is a larger site that can accommodate modular housing units. Due to several factors, including that the site is in public ownership, centrally located, and of generous size, it became the clear best choice for replacement housing for farmworkers displaced by the January 23, 2023 shootings and other farmworker households for which there is great need as further described in this supplemental material. The "Stone Pine Cove" neighborhood at 880 Stone Pine Road was initially entitled through an Emergency Coastal Development Permit issued by the City of Half Moon Bay on December 11, 2023. This supplemental material is in support of the required follow-up Coastal Development Permit. Due to the demonstrated need, the project has received federal, state, local, and philanthropic funding. Since the shootings, the County of San Mateo and the City of Half Moon Bay have worked in concert as co-applicants to make this neighborhood a reality.

Agricultural Workforce Housing Needs Assessment

San Mateo County conducted a needs assessment in 2016 which made the following findings:

- The median income for farmworkers who live on farms was \$21,000 a year, which falls well within the County's extremely low-income category.
- 1,020 to 1,140 housing units for the agricultural workforce were presently needed.

Agricultural Worker Safety Task Force

San Mateo County established a task force after the January 23, 2023 shootings at two farms in Half Moon Bay and the unincorporated Coastsides. The Task Force is charged with inspecting farmworker housing on farms throughout the Coastsides to ensure that basic habitability standards are met. The Task Force, as of February 2024 has completed the following:

- Examined approximately 75% of the properties to be evaluated
- Inspected 105 farmworker housing units occupied by 304 farmworkers
- Determined that 28 farmworker units, housing 69 farmworkers did not meet minimum safety standards and required corrective actions.

The County's Task Force anticipates that it will continue to identify housing units that are deemed unsafe, unpermitted, and/or otherwise unable to be legalized in the future, creating an expanded need for additional affordable housing units. While it is difficult to know the result of ongoing inspections, if the trend continues, at the end of the task force's inspections, there may be as many as 130 farmworkers residing in substandard housing, in addition to the 19 households displaced by the shooting.