

Candidate Questionnaire Sebastopol

At-Large City Council*



Generation Housing envisions vibrant communities where everyone has a place to call home and can contribute to an equitable, healthy, and resilient North Bay. That vision is realized through the actions of our elected and appointed leaders across all ten jurisdictions of Sonoma County. Housing is top of mind for every leader, every sector, every community member that calls Sonoma County home.

This questionnaire is designed to offer Sonoma County residents an opportunity to hear from their candidates directly about their vision for the future of housing.

All candidates were given equal opportunity to respond to the questionnaire—inclusion in the questionnaire should not be considered as an endorsement by Generation Housing. This is meant to be an educational resource to residents and voters of Sonoma County.

***Incumbent Jill McLewis and Ian Hoff did not respond.**

About Generation Housing

Since January 2020, Generation Housing has built a reputable library of housing resources read and shared by elected officials, government staff, C-suite executives and community members of a diverse audience. Candidate responses will be shared on our social media channels, our website and mailing list of over 5,000 contacts.

Generation Housing does not endorse candidates running for office. This document will be an educational resource for voters and all answers shared irrespective of the candidate.

[Learn more](#)

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What role do you believe local government should play in meeting its RHNA requirements, and do you think it should stretch beyond RHNA to grow a true “housing continuum,” which means diverse housing opportunities across income levels to serve our community members as their housing and family needs and assets change over time?

I think RHNA is a great standard that Local Governments and Planners should consider, and yes it should stretch beyond State and Federal responsibility to include the unique needs of each community. Accessibility and Affordability is a local issue as the Federal Application is not necessarily true as a blanket number or requirement.

Local government must be an active driver in meeting Regional Housing Needs Allocations (RHNA). Sebastopol should view RHNA as a floor, not a ceiling. I support stretching beyond RHNA to build a true housing continuum. We need diverse housing types—from permanent supportive housing and missing middle townhomes to senior living—so residents can stay in Sebastopol at every stage of life. I will pursue reforms that allow our workforce and families to live where they work.

RHNA is the floor, and the city should meet it in good faith with realistic sites and predictable approvals. Beyond that, a true continuum takes partnership: pairing private development with public tools like ADU support, density bonuses, and grant funding. Because accessible housing is in short supply, we must incentivize accessible units as our population ages. I'll back practical steps that add starter homes and workforce housing while keeping growth paced to our infrastructure.

Local government should meet its RHNA goals by focusing on smart infill and keeping growth where services already exist. People's needs change over time, so yes, we should build a real housing continuum with options for different incomes and stages of life, while still protecting the land and character that make Sebastopol home.

In January of 2026 the Sebastopol City Council approved an ordinance that would allow the sale of ADU's: SF Gate reported on it, "Sebastopol became the first city in Sonoma County to adopt an ordinance allowing accessory dwelling units to be sold as separate homes, approving the measure on a 4-1 vote Wednesday night, city officials said.

I voted in support of this to help create more affordable housing ownership. Mayor McLewis was in opposition.

If a city does not meet its RHNA requirements the state can mandate the "Builders Remedy" where the City would lose oversight of a project, so it's very important to meet the requirements, In 2025 the Council set a goal to avoid the builders remedy.

How would you characterize the greatest set of challenges facing housing production? And what do you plan to do to help overcome these challenges?

Creating Housing that is of least impact on our environment, and natural resources while being the most economical for development and tenant affordability is the goal. For a Sustainable Community we must have all the pieces; community, economy and environment.

The greatest challenge is high costs. In Sebastopol, limited land requires creative infill. To overcome these challenges, I will look into rezoning underutilized commercial corridors for mixed-use residential development. I plan to reduce pre-development hurdles by advocating for pre-approved architectural plans for missing middle housing and Auxiliary Dwelling Units (ADUs), lowering costs for builders and accelerating construction of homes.

The biggest barriers are cost and time: high land and building costs, expensive financing, and slow permitting. We're also losing accessible housing as builders favor multistory townhomes over single-story homes, leaving fewer options for people with disabilities. New developments should plan a mix of accessible housing types from the start, not one or two token units tacked on. I'll push for faster approvals, fee cuts for affordable and accessible units, and state infrastructure funding.

Housing production faces big hurdles: high costs, limited land, and complex rules. In Sebastopol, we also work within our Urban Growth Boundary, which means focusing on smart infill. I'd help by streamlining approvals, supporting affordable projects, and partnering with groups who can build homes that fit our town's character.

In Sebastopol it's the availability of land and cost increases. However, Sebastopol has several new housing projects: Canopy, 8100 Valentine Ave will be roughly 1/2 ADUs, Habitat for Humanity completed 4 new houses, Gravenstein Commons is 80% complete, Pacific Knolls and Huntley Square are pending. Sebastopol has more affordable per capita than other comparable smaller Sonoma County cities. (See Sonoma County Community Development statistics.)

Generation Housing’s current initiative, **Housing for Healthy Communities**, is part of our effort to continue a move away from exclusionary zoning, and looks at two state laws, SB 10 and AB 1033, that we believe are perfect fits for the North Bay. SB 10 upzones to allow up to 10 units on all parcels within a half mile of transit hubs and infill parcels. AB 1033 allows the separate sale of ADUs as small homes through condoization. Both are great opportunities for increasing affordable-by-design homes as both rent and for-sale products, perfect for young families, middle income workforce, and seniors. Could we count on your support for adoption and/or implementation of these bills? Why or why not?

Yes I support these bills, but do not support the portion SB 10 that says “all parcels”...

Yes on AB1033, but SB10 is not appropriate for Sebastopol. In January of this year, the Sebastopol city council voted to opt in to AB1033. I agree with this action as I am supportive of AB1033 as a method for creating “affordable-by-design” homes. AB1033 opens up opportunities that can enable young families and other first time homebuyers a pathway into wealth-building homeownership. The housing options made possible from AB1033 can also be helpful in providing housing solutions for seniors.

Yes. Both laws are optional tools that let Sebastopol add modest, affordable-by-design homes without large new developments. AB 1033 creates ownership opportunities for young families and gives seniors a way to downsize without leaving their neighborhood. Many ADUs are single-story, which helps address our shortage of accessible housing. Because SB 10 is opt-in, the city can tailor it to our infrastructure and push for accessible units in new projects.

SB 10 and AB 1033 offer practical ways to add homes without sprawl by utilizing more infill near transit and giving ADUs a path to ownership. Those fit Sebastopol’s goals and our UGB. Yes, you can count on my support for exploring and implementing these tools in a way that protects community character while expanding housing choices.

See response above to Q.1 about my vote too support the sale of ADUs.

Streamlining housing development in the entitlement and permitting processes is a powerful tool in helping to attract developers and ensure the timely approval of projects and accelerate the overall production of housing. Do you support this call to action? Why or why not?

No. Not if it negatively impacts the Environment or causes an unnecessary impact on Natural Resources.

Yes, I support efficient, responsive and effective government services. Uncertainties due to bureaucratic flaws and delays increase housing costs. I will advocate for design standards to create predictable, ministerial pathways for code-compliant projects, reducing subjective pushback. By providing professional and clear permitting processes, we can signal to affordable and workforce housing developers that Sebastopol is a partner.

Yes. Delays and uncertainty add cost to every home, and those costs get passed on to buyers and renters. Clear objective standards, pre-approved plans, and predictable timelines let builders plan with confidence and bring projects in faster. Streamlining should not mean cutting corners. I'll support faster approvals for projects that meet our standards, and I'll push to reward developments that include a real mix of accessible units with priority review.

Yes, streamlining makes a real difference. Clear, predictable steps help good projects move forward faster and make it easier for builders to invest in the kinds of infill and affordable homes our community needs. I support improving the process while still keeping strong standards that protect Sebastopol's character and environment.

Local control over a building project is important, although it can slow it down. Sebastopol has a Design and Review board to ensure our projects look good and fit in with the city and our residents. The Woodmark housing project escaped City Review and there's been so many problems with it, including they only built half of the housing, and had major tenant problems.

There is work being done on a Housing Revenue Measure to be put on the 2028 Ballot. Do you support this effort? What do you believe your role in that effort is?

Yes. Housing affordability should be accessible for all income levels and backgrounds.

No. Public funding can be essential to bridge the gap for truly affordable housing. I will use my platform as a councilmember to raise public funding. To avoid losing dollars to interest payments when that funding is sorely needed for housing, I will work for a more progressive tax framework to achieve a sustainable revenue base that aligns tax contributions with modern wealth accumulation. I'll collaborate with regional partners to build a broad coalition to secure the funding needed for housing.

Yes, with strong accountability. A bond is one of the few tools that can fund affordable housing at the scale our region needs, and it helps leverage state and federal dollars. Voters deserve clear spending plans, independent oversight, and a fair share for smaller cities like Sebastopol. I'll advocate that bond-funded projects include a real mix of accessible units, so these dollars serve seniors and people with disabilities.

Yes, I support efforts that help create more affordable homes, and Prop 1 is a good example. It invests in housing for veterans, families, and people who need stable, affordable options. I'd want to see the final measure details, but I'm supportive of tools that expand housing while respecting Sebastopol's character.

I do not know enough about it to comment.

Housing is often listed as a top priority here in Sonoma County. What does it mean to you to govern in a way that is consistent with your priorities? For instance, are you prepared to make tough budgetary decisions consistent with that priority? If you have already held elected office, can you provide an example?

Housing in my opinion is a human right: to shelter, safety and amenities.

Sonoma County has had issues with under housing, housing affordability, housing going to vacation rentals, absurd inflation of housing pushing out local multi-generational habitants. I have witnessed both sides as developers lobby or gain political favoritism, and also witnessed the permitting and construction challenges. This has created unbalanced, unstable opportunities that is needed to provide equality to everyone.

Governing by priority means putting our budget and political capital where our mouth is. Housing cannot just be a talking point. I am fully prepared to make tough budgetary choices, such as prioritizing staff resources for retention of existing affordable housing and to equitably expand funding for additional affordable housing.

I have not previously held elected office.

Governing by my priorities means the budget reflects them. If housing is the priority, it gets funded first and protected when revenue is tight, even if it means saying no to other good projects. I haven't held office, but as a legal director and supervising attorney at nonprofits, I help people secure Social Security benefits that keep them housed. I've seen that keeping people housed costs less than rehousing them. On council, I'll fund housing for every stage of life and ability.

Housing is a top priority, and governing that way means backing it up with real choices, including tough budget decisions when needed. I'm prepared to do that. In my public service roles, I've consistently supported clear processes, responsible spending, and policies that help people stay housed while protecting Sebastopol's character.

It's super important to govern consistent with my priorities and community vitality and fiscal sustainability are big priorities for me. I've been on the Budget Committee for three years and a balanced budget is not only my priority but its a Council Goal.

Candidates were provided the opportunity to add any additional thoughts regarding housing. Substantive responses are provided here.

I want to be a partner in creating housing solutions for people at all stages of life and incomes while maintaining the quality of life that our citizens deserve.

What I bring is a lawyer’s skill set. State housing law changes every year, and cities that misread it face lawsuits and lose local control. I’ll read the fine print, ask hard questions, and help Sebastopol comply in ways that fit our community. After 15 years as an attorney, including in disability law, I know the gap between policy on paper and real lives. As a newer resident raising a young family here, I bring fresh eyes and a long-term stake in Sebastopol’s future.

Housing is a human right, and policy should reflect that. Governing with that priority means choosing people over profit, even when the decisions are hard. I’m prepared to make budget choices that keep residents housed, support affordable projects, and ensure Sebastopol remains a community where everyone has a place to live.