

# HOUSING AND PUBLIC POLICY STATEMENT

*Adopted by the Bay East Board of Directors – July 26, 2021*

The Bay East Association of REALTORS® believes homeownership is the foundation of our democratic system of government and deserves a preferred place in our system of values. It contributes to community responsibility, civic, economic, business, and employment stability, family security, and well-being. We also believe that every individual should have the opportunity to live in safe and decent housing. These objectives can best be served by a healthy housing market in an economic environment that fosters an ample supply of housing choices and accessible financing provided by both public and private lending sources.

With these goals in mind, the Bay East Association of REALTORS® advocates the following non-partisan positions on housing and community issues.

**Affordable Housing:** We recognize that the cost and availability of housing is intrinsically related to the supply and accessibility of financing. We therefore support:

- Local, State, and Federal programs which assist those who wish to attain housing, at all economic levels;
- Public support to attract private investment in housing affordable to low and moderate income households;
- Government-sponsored or insured programs which assist first-time homebuyers;
- Policies which promote a balance between open space and housing;
- Zoning which encourages the development of housing near employment and transportation centers.
- Policies which allow the free market to determine rates and prices of housing;
- Electoral approval of new or increased taxes related to residential real estate.

**Education:** We support policies that ensure quality public education throughout the region.

**Environmental and Water Policies:** Bay East supports environmental protection and preservation policies that encourage voluntary home-hardening and energy efficiency improvements, conservation and reclamation of water, recycling of materials and other voluntary options to extend the life of our landfills and to protect the quality of our air.

**Fair Housing:** Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity shall be provided to everyone who wishes to purchase or rent shelter, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, disability, family status or national origin. Furthermore, we subscribe to the Fair Housing Declaration between the National Association

of REALTORS® and the Department of Housing and Urban Development to promote the practice of Fair Housing in the rental and sale of real property.

**Homeownership:** Bay East recognizes homeownership is the most safe, secure and stable form of shelter and supports policies and programs that are a path to homeownership.

**Land Use Policies:** We support local planning and zoning policies that accommodate the development of adequate and affordable housing for individuals at all income levels including:

- Laws that zone adequate land for all types of housing;
- Policies that do not attempt to limit growth or restrict residential development;
- Zoning policies that encourage maximum site utilization, promote a balance of open space and housing, and reduce the per-unit cost of housing including: clustered housing, zero lot-line limits, and flexible set-backs;
- Policies that streamline the permit and approval process;
- Policies that encourage innovations in development and construction techniques and materials;
- Policies that promote the use of land for mixed-use development of affordable housing in conjunction with market value housing close to transit hubs; shopping; schools; and other community amenities.

We oppose unreasonable entitlement fees, land dedications, development moratoriums and downzonings.

**Municipal Finance and Resources:** We support municipal funding mechanisms that spread the burden of paying for services among all residents and businesses. We support the responsible use of municipal financial and staff resources.

**Public Safety:** We support policies that ensure reliable public safety strategies and services including police and fire protection and natural disaster relief that reflect the unique needs of each community within the Bay East service area.

**Rental Housing Policies:** We recognize and support the crucial role smaller, low-volume, “Mom and Pop” owners and managers of rental properties with four or fewer units play in providing safe, secure and affordable rental housing opportunities. We support regional and municipal policies which enable these property owners and managers to sustainably function as housing providers.

**Residential Real Estate Transactions:** We support the ability of homeowners and homebuyers to conduct real estate transactions as efficiently as possible and oppose intrusive regulations including excessive home or utility inspection and repairs triggered by the sale of a home. We oppose any transaction-related taxes including real property transfer taxes.

**Transportation:** We support a robust transportation infrastructure that provides safe and efficient options for Bay Area residents to access housing, employment, education, service, entertainment, and recreation throughout the region.

<https://bayeastaor.sharepoint.com/Shared Documents/General/Government Affairs/Housing Policy Statement/2021 Revision/Housing Policy Statement - 2021 FINAL.docx>

The Bay East Association of REALTORS® recognizes the high cost of housing in the San Francisco Bay Area. Our advocacy efforts including candidate endorsement and support seek to provide housing options to all individuals and families who wish to live in the Bay Area and strike a balance between real property interests and environmental concerns that will allow communities to plan for growth and to foster the well-being of all segments of the Bay Area's population.