



STAFF REPORT
Board Meeting of November 19, 2025

AGENDA ITEM: 5-E

PREPARED BY: Dylan Stone, Principal Regional Planner

SUBJECT:

California Housing Law & Policy Update - Recap

Enclosure: No

Action: Information and Discussion Only

SUMMARY:

The California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG) hosted the California Housing Law & Policy Update on October 27, 2025, in Sacramento. The event provided a one-day intensive update on the latest changes in California housing law and policy, enforcement trends, and implementation strategies for local agencies and developers.

Sessions included a Legislative Year Round Up, reviewing major bills adopted in 2025 that affect planning, housing approvals, financing, and processing.

A What's Next for 2026 segment anticipated upcoming reforms and ongoing legislative momentum (noting that more than 400 housing-law changes occurred in the past eight years according to CALCOG).

Discussion panelists also went over technical and implementation issues related to housing including:

- Examining new CEQA exemptions for housing developments and how local agencies can apply them.
- How jurisdictions can maintain housing inventories while moving through RHNA (Regional Housing Needs Allocation) implementation.
- Addressing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) mitigation approaches, in context of housing development and regional planning.
- Best practices for using local/regional housing trusts to boost production

Key points raised during the session highlighted the pace of housing-law change in California being very rapid. CALCOG cited ~450 changes over eight years in housing law, underscoring the magnitude of regulatory evolution. This pace needs significant recognition from local agencies to support implementation: local agencies must not only track new laws (e.g., CEQA

reforms, permitting/streamlining) but also adjust internal processes, code, and staffing accordingly to stay compliant and capture opportunities.

VMT mitigation, housing trust funds, and exemptions were presented as practical tools – indicating that both regulatory understanding and operational tactics matter.

A presentation on 2026 and “what’s next” reiterated that the regulatory environment will continue to evolve; attending agencies should plan ahead rather than react only after laws are finalized.

Additionally, a presentation was given on the Archistar system for local government. Archistar provides AI-powered tools to help with planning by automating the building permit process, generating conceptual designs, and providing due diligence reports. For example, its eCheck solution analyzes designs against local zoning and building codes to flag errors and speed up the approval process by allowing users to pre-check plans before formal submission. The platform can also generate thousands of design concepts based on site data and assist with project management through additional Archistar tools.

More information, event agenda, speaker bios, recordings, and power point presentations from the California Housing Law & Policy Update are available on the CALCOG website at: <https://calcog.org/housing-update/>

FISCAL IMPACT:

No fiscal impact to the approved 2025-26 Overall Work Program and Budget.