

2010-2020 San Diego County Housing Element Update

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a Housing Element?

The Housing Element is a mandatory component of the General Plan that deals specifically with a jurisdiction's housing needs and establishes policies and programs to meet these needs for all economic segments of the population. Components include:

- Goals & Policies
- Inventory of potential sites available for the construction of multi-family housing.
- Background Report on community outreach efforts, county demographics, housing issues, achievements during the last housing cycle, etc.
- Implementation Plan measures to achieve the Housing Element goals & policies

Why is the Housing Element being update less than two years after adoption of the General Plan Update?

State law requires that Housing Elements be revised 18 months after SANDAG adopted the last regional transportation plan (RTP) in November 2011.

What changes to the Housing Element are being proposed?

The last update to the Housing Element was 18 months ago as part of the comprehensive General Plan Update. The County's housing goals, policies and programs were extensively changed at that time. This draft revision does not propose any changes to the goals, policies or the land use map. The primary changes are revisions to the Background Report to update tables, figures, and analyses to reflect the 2010 census and an update of the Sites Inventory to accommodate a larger RHNA number for moderate income housing opportunities.

What is the RHNA?

RHNA is an acronym for "Regional Housing Needs Assessment." The "RHNA Number" is developed by the state on a countywide basis. It forecasts the number of housing units needed at various levels of affordability to accommodate future population growth through 2020. SANDAG coordinates with the County and incorporated cities to divide up the countywide RHNA, with each assuming a share of the housing responsibility. Since the unincorporated areas are more rural in character and lack transit, the County's allocation of housing is mostly composed of Moderate and Above Moderate Income housing, while the more urbanized cities have a greater share of the Low and Very Low Income housing.

My property is listed on the draft Sites Inventory. What does that mean?

The Sites Inventory is a listing of properties in the unincorporated County that are suitable for the development of multi-family housing within the next eight years. These properties typically have the following attributes:

- The General Plan/Zoning allows a density of at least 10.9 units/per acre.
- The property is vacant or underutilized.
- The property has minimal environmental constraints.

Does this draft Housing Element change anything about my ability to develop my property?

No.

Are the properties identified in the draft Sites Inventory committed to provide subsidized housing?

No. The Sites Inventory does not commit the property to any type of future development. It simply demonstrates that the County has enough land zoned at sufficient densities to provide housing opportunities for future population growth at all income-levels.

What does “underutilized” mean?

Underutilized property is land that has not been developed to its full capacity. To be considered underutilized, property must meet at least two of the following criteria:

- The assessed value of the land is greater than the assessed value of improvements.
- The primary improvements were built at least 30 years ago.
- The number of existing units could be tripled.

What happens if the County does not have enough available sites to meet future housing demand (RHNA)?

If the unincorporated County cannot demonstrate that it has sufficient available land zoned for multi-family development, State law requires that it must rezone enough additional land at higher densities to meet the projection.

Why is multi-family zoning so important?

State law assumes that land zoned for higher densities (multi-family development) will produce housing at more affordable prices than property zoned for single-family homes. The State housing projection (RHNA) for the unincorporated County through 2020 is 22,412 units. The County must demonstrate it has enough suitable land at the appropriate densities to accommodate the projected number of units for each income level (2,085 affordable to Very Low Income households, 1,585 affordable to Low Income households, 5,864 affordable to Moderate Income households and the remainder affordable to Above Moderate Income households).

In San Diego County, housing developments targeted for very low income households are typically built at densities of at least 24 units per acre. Housing developments targeted for low income households are typically built at densities of at least 20 units per acre. Housing built at densities of at least 10.9 units per acre is affordable to moderate income households. Generally single-family homes are affordable to above moderate income households

What is affordable housing?

Typically affordable housing means rental or sales prices that are affordable to households whose annual income is less than 120 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI). The 2012 AMI for San Diego County was \$75,900 annual income for a family of four. This means that in 2012, half of households in the County made more and half made less. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the California Department of Housing and Community Development (State HCD) update the AMI annually.

The 2012 AMI for a household of four would be designated as follows:

- Above Moderate income: Greater than \$91,080 (>120% AMI)
- Moderate income: \$60,720 – \$91,080 (80% – 120% AMI)
- Low Income: \$37,950 – \$60,720 (50% – 80% AMI)
- Very Low income: \$22,800 – \$37,950 (30% – 50% AMI)
- Extremely Low Income: Less than 22,800 (<30% AMI)

These limits change depending on the number of people in the household. For additional information see <http://www.hcd.ca.gov/hpd/hrc/rep/state/inc2k12.pdf>

IMPORTANT DATES

February 28, 2013	Public Comments on Draft Due
March 1, 2013	Planning Commission Hearing
April 24, 2013	Board of Supervisors Hearing
April 30, 2013	Adoption Deadline
July 23, 2013	Deadline for State Approval